

Introduction

By: Elden McNabb

Jesus said, **"My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself."**

John 7: 16,17. Our Lord Jesus Christ took not upon Himself to put forth a doctrine of His own. Rather, as the servant of God, He faithfully delivered the words of the one who sent Him. Gal. 4:1.

Jesus told His disciples before He left, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John 20:21. Therefore, we have diligently searched to find out The Doctrine of Christ. Now, with thankfulness in our hearts, we set forth that doctrine for your edification.

In Heb. 7:11,12,19, the Apostle Paul declared that it was the inability of the Levitical priesthood to bring about the perfection of God's people that made the coming of Jesus necessary. Thereby we better understand Paul's instance, in Heb. 6:1,2, that perfection is the goal. That is what Paul is referring to in Phil. 3:14, where he urges us on toward "the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

To say "The Doctrine of Christ" is to say that this doctrine is set forth for the perfection of God's Elect, "the Church which is His Body." (Eph. 1:22,23) The Doctrine of Christ is "the plummet," in Zechariah 4:10, giving us cause for rejoicing in that the standard of faith and uprightness for God's elect has been found.

Paul said, "Therefore leaving the principles of *the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.*"

Heb. 6:1. As

he continued in verse two, he named the six principles of the doctrine of Christ: 1) Repentance from dead works; 2) Faith Toward God; 3) Baptisms; 4) Laying On of Hands; 5) Resurrection of The Dead; 6) Eternal Judgment.

Therefore, there are seven facets of the doctrine of Christ, Perfection being the seventh.

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All believers in Jesus Christ can, and should, be edified by the truths herein set forth. However, *in no way do we mean to imply that conformity to all of these things is necessary unto redemption for all who accept Jesus Christ as their saviour.*

As a father giving instructions to his young son, the Apostle Paul gave a solemn admonition to a young bishop who was one of his own converts to the faith. He told him to, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. 4:16. We know that adherence to some doctrine, as any other *work*, does not merit redemption nor forgiveness of sins for anyone. Rather, Paul is talking about maintaining our justification before God by obedience to his instructions.

In his second epistle to Timothy, Paul explained that this *saving* doctrine is to be found in both the Old and New Testaments. He said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and *is profitable for doctrine. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"
2 Tim. 3:16.

Most, if not all, believers adhere to some doctrine; some of which is scriptural, and some of which is not. As Jesus said, they "do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." Consequently, we sometimes set forth doctrine without knowing all of the scriptures on the subject. When we do so, we set forth doctrine "the commandments of men." Of course, all doctrine which is set forth with understanding of the scriptures is good and edifying, whether it be doctrine concerning redemption, holy living or The Doctrine of Christ.

Not For Everyone

Why, then, take a select group of His teachings and make a special issue of them, and call them The Doctrine of Christ, as Paul did in Heb. 6:1-2? The Old Testament is shadow of *the* good things *which were* to come in the New Testament era. (Heb. 10:1) Under Moses, there was **the law** in general **and** with it "**The Covenant,**

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the ten commandments." (Exod. 34:28) Israel "took their vows" with God at Mount Sinai. They were unfaithful to that vow by their idolatry and God gave them a writing of divorcement. (Jer. 3) Then according to Paul's explanation in Romans chapter seven, more than four-hundred years later when Jesus died on the cross, Israel suffered the devastation of the prophecy "Ye shall know my breach of promise." (Num. 14:34) Jesus died on the cross that we "might be married unto another, even Christ." We who? All Christians? Nay, but some Christians must be the bridesmaids, and others must be the guests at the wedding.

It is obvious by Isaiah 35:8 that not all who believe in Jesus Christ are wise, and those who are not wise are not required to attain unto perfection. The mercy of God reaches out to all of us, and His forgiveness is great toward us all but there are rules by which we all must stand before God. Those rules are not the same for everyone. We know thereby that Heb. 6:1-2, was not written for all Christians, including "wayfaring men, though fools." For whom then was it written?

God told us, in Leviticus Chapter 22, that a freewill offering did not have to be perfect to be accepted, but that *an offering for a vow had to be perfect if it were to be acceptable*. It is that qualification which is, doubtless, applicable to those who present themselves for acceptance in the beloved. It is also apparent from Matt. 19:11 that all of the things which Jesus taught were not applicable to all believers. When Jesus' disciples seemed perplexed at a comment which he made about divorce and remarriage, He appeased them with these words of explanation. *"All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given."*

In Eph. 5:27, Paul compared Christ and the Church to a man and his wife. As he did so, he said, "That (Jesus) might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Therefore, someone must "go on unto perfection." How shall this be achieved? By the Doctrine of Christ, when "unto her (is) granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." 1 Cor. 9:24. God has given us the means of obtaining that prize. It is contained in this unique document: "The Doctrine of Christ." The process of election is not yet complete. There are both individuals and groups in the race today. But they must strive by God's rules. They must find out "the mystery of his will," to know exactly what it is that God wants us to do and how he wants it done. Therefore, let us be as those "more noble" saints at Berea, who searched the scriptures to see whether those things were so. Acts 17:10,11.

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding." 2 Tim. 2:5-7.

Repentance from Dead Works

The First Principle of the Doctrine Christ

All of mankind, in their time, are physically **alive** but stand in this condemnation that they are **dead**

in trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1; Matt. 8:22. The Apostle Paul mentioned this condition in 1 Tim. 5:6. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." This condition exists, because of Adam's disobedience to God in the garden. Thereby, "Sin entered into the world, and

death

by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12 Since that time every person is born with a carnal nature; living in service to the flesh instead of to the inner spiritual man. The carnal mind is always out of step with God. A person who is carnal will not be, nor can be, subject to the law of God..

For this reason, God has devised a plan by which we can be reconciled to Him and break loose from the bondage of sin. For the first two thousand years after the fall of Adam, God let men sort of do as they pleased, and thereby allowed the terrible effects of sin to be demonstrated. After about sixteen hundred and fifty years, when man's iniquity had become so bad that He could not bear to hear of it, God sent a flood to rid the world of all of that corruption. However, He saved a few men alive and told them to replenish the Earth.

God waited until the end of that first two thousand years, which was still before Earth's population had again grown to any great numbers. Then God began a two thousand year program to reveal His plan for the reconciliation between Himself and His alienated creation. First, God chose Abraham and gave him a covenant of the circumcision of the flesh. In doing so, God revealed that man has a growth over his heart which has changed his nature and prevents him from being righteous and pure before God. That veil of carnality blinds our spiritual eyes. Because of it, we sin and separate ourselves from God, unable to do the good that we would do, nor refrain from the bad that we know we should not do. Therefore, that veil of carnality must be removed by a divine act of God: a spiritual circumcision.

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Fewer than five hundred years after His visitation with Abraham, when men had, once again, began to multiply upon the Earth. God raised up Moses to lead us in the next step toward our reconciliation with Him. God gave to Moses a code of law which was twofold in its purpose. That law was designed to show all men, everywhere, how bad sin actually is and to impose a just punishment for each sin. At the same time it provided a prophetic shadow of what God was going to do to restore men to a pure conscience. That law, being a shadow of the work of God to come, prophesied of the atonement for sin which was to come by Jesus Christ, God's Son.

Almost four thousand years from the creation of Adam, God sent forth His son, Jesus Christ, into the world to execute the final step to our reconciliation with our heavenly Father. Jesus came as the reality of what God was showing to us by the law of Moses. Under Moses, the Israelites were commanded to offer, for a sin offering, a lamb without blemish. When Jesus came, He offered himself as a sacrifice which was pure, perfect, sinless for the forgiveness of our sins. The plan to reconcile man back to God was complete. Jesus has come and He is "*the way, the truth, and the life.*"

" Jesus also said that He had come so
that we might have life,
and that we might have it more abundantly."

One day the Apostle Paul was in Athens, speaking to the philosophers on Mars Hill. As he spoke, he explained to them how God viewed the idolatry and other sins of that first four thousand years of man's life on Earth. He said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; *but now commandeth all men every where to repent:* Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto *all men*, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

God was very displeased with the errors of mankind for all of that time before Jesus came. He corrected them in various ways, and made examples of some of them, such as Sodom and Gomorrah, as a warning "unto those that after should live ungodly." But God knew how men were and how they had gotten to be that way. Therefore the Psalmist David prophesied in Psalm 103, "He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so *great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*"

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"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

Now Jesus has made peace between through the blood of his cross, to reconcile all things unto God. And you, who before were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, He has now *"reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight."* Eph. 2:1-5,8.

No matter how sorry for their sins someone might have been before Jesus Christ came, they could not change their nature. They continued to sin, and to bring sorrow upon themselves, their families, and others against whom they had sinned. But now Jesus has come, and by the sacrifice of His life upon the cross, we can receive a change in our nature. We can be rid of our carnal nature and put on the nature of God our Father. But if we are to do so we must accept the sacrifice which Jesus made by His death on the cross, as the atonement for our sins, and ask God for forgiveness..

We have no excuse now. The way has been made, and God now commands us all to repent and be cleansed from our iniquity. We must acknowledge our wayward condition, and repent of the ungodly deeds which we have done. We need what the Apostle Paul called "godly sorrow" that "worketh repentance unto salvation." When we become truly sorry for our offences against God, and turn from our ungodly ways, seeking His forgiveness, He will change our hearts and fill us with a love that only He can give. 2 Cor. 7:10.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," because He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 1 John 1:9; 2 Pet. 3:9. John the Baptist pointed the way, when he told some candidates for baptism to "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3:8. True repentance from dead works is readily seen in the altered actions of the worshiper.

Again I say, God now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man, Jesus Christ, whom He

has ordained. Acts 17:30,31.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," and that you may be a partaker of all of the benefits which God has given us by this new and living way in Jesus Christ. Acts 3:19.

Faith Towards God

The Second Principle of the Doctrine of Christ

This second principle of the doctrine of Christ embodies much more than believing and becoming a baptized follower of Jesus Christ. That act of faith is but the first feeble step of a long journey. As a newborn baby, the believer should "desire the sincere milk of the word" that he may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our lord and saviour Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18) By receiving with meekness the engrafted word, the worshiper increases in knowledge and understanding which automatically increases faith. (Rom. 9:19)

Paul discussed this principle in his epistle to the beloved of God who were in Rome. He said, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And again, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God **revealed from faith to faith.**" (Rom. 10:17; Rom. 1:16,17) It is in direct relation to this that we must view his next statement: "The just shall live by faith."

Paul is not talking here of being born again by faith, but rather, remaining justified by walking in light as God opens it to our understanding. Conversely, if we don't walk in the light as He opens our understanding to it, we will fall out of favor with God, and spiritual darkness will overtake us. The Father in heaven reveals His truth to the believers, in part, from time to time. The disciples are then held responsible to progress in that faith by accepting that new light and walking in it. The words of Jesus, in John 8:31,32, emphasize the point well. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;** and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Paul got his understanding of this doctrine from the law and the prophets. He said, "This I

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confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." (Acts 24:14) Again he said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." (2 Tim. 3:16) Peter also understood, for he admonished us to **"be established in the present truth."** (2 Pet. 1:12) Perhaps Peter was alluding to Prov. 4:18. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that **shineth more and more unto the perfect day** ." Truth never ceases to be truth, but from time to time, God reveals truth which was previously hidden. Hence the term "the present truth." One good example of this is the fact that The Father was not known by His name Jehovah until the days of Moses. (Exod. 6:2,3)

Jesus asked the question, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) The scriptures show clearly that there will be some "believers" who are living at the time of the coming of Jesus. (See 1 Cor. 15:51,52; Matt. 24:45-47) So the real intent of His question is, "Will there be any who believe, with Paul, in all things which are written in the law and the prophets? Will there be anyone with the kind of faith which Peter demonstrated in Acts 1:20-23, to stand up and declare the immediate relevancy of some Old Testament prophecy, and assert that we *must fulfill* that prophecy *now*?" (Col. 1:25)

Jesus said in Rev. 1:3, "Blessed (are) they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." In this case the word "keep" means "to do," rather than to preserve. Therefore, there must be a group of people who "hear" (understand), and fulfill the prophecies in the Bible which concern our moment in prophetic history, including those in the book of Revelation.

The beloved John said, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from The Father." (2 John 4) And to John the Baptist, Jesus said, "For thus it becometh *us* to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3:15)

We see, therefore, that the just shall live by faith, as the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection."

Introduction to

The Doctrine of Baptism

In this third principle of the doctrine of Christ, some of the baptisms are more obvious than others, but, with taking heed unto the doctrine, we can soon discern all seven of them.

Some are levels of personal spiritual progress, others are more steps of faith: that is, seeing the revelation of it in the scriptures and walking in that light. Just as these baptisms are different in nature, so are they ministered and received in various manners: such as *Water baptism* by immersion, Matt. 3:15;

Sanctification (baptism of the blood)

by sprinkling, Heb. 10:22; and

the Holy Ghost baptism

by pouring, Joel 2:28.

The Old Testament foreshadows these Grace Age experiences in "divers washings" and "sprinkling," which were "imposed on them until the time of reformation." Heb. 9:10. (See Heb. 10:1) This is especially so in the case of the cleansing of the leper. In Lev. 14:2-7, He said, "This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing." The priest shall "command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds: And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed: And he shall sprinkle (the blood) upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy *seven times*."

In the case of Naaman, a Gentile, The Lord used a different figure, but revealed the same principle. Elisha sent instructions to Naaman by his servant: "Go and *wash in Jordan seven times*, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." 2 Kings 5:10-14. Even so, if we are to be fully cleansed from our spiritual leprosy, and be made a sacrifice acceptable to God (Rom. 15:16), we also must experience, not one, two, or three, but *seven baptisms*.

Here we shall deal with them in the most likely sequence in which the devotee will experience them. They are: 1) Water Baptism, 2) Baptism Into Jesus Christ, 3) The Baptism With The Holy

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Ghost and Fire, 4) The Baptism of Suffering, 5) Baptism Into The Body, 6) Baptism Unto The Man of God, 7) The Baptism of Burning.

Water Baptism

The First of the Seven Baptisms

John came "preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke 3:3. This baptism was water, as is shown in his own words in Luke 3:16, "I indeed baptize you with water."

When some came to be baptized, who apparently had not repented, he rebuked them. He said, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3:7,8.

The comments of three of Jesus' disciples, in Mark 1:5, Matt. 3:16, and Rom. 6:3-11, show that This baptism is administered by pushing the penitent beneath the surface of the water, and bringing him up again. As He said, they "were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan. And Jesus, when He was baptized, *went up straightway out of the water.*"

"Know ye not, that so many of us that were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism

into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of The Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if

we have been planted together in the likeness of His death,

we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."

Peter said, in 1 Pet. 3:20,21, that in the flood, "eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even *baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God),*

by the resurrection of Jesus

Christ."

It is impossible for the

ritual of water baptism to wash away sins.

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Rather, it is by the public demonstration of raising up to a new life spiritually that we make ourselves strong to overcome the destructive influence of the flesh.

When we publicly declare our faith by submitting to water baptism, we are separated from our old lives and the influences of our ungodly associations, even as Noah and those with him were saved from the evil of "that world."

Baptism into Jesus Christ

The Second of the Seven Baptisms

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" (Rom. 6:3)

This baptism is sometimes called "Sanctification." In Heb. 12:24, it is called "the blood of sprinkling." By this work of grace, through faith, we "put off the old man with his deeds." (Col. 3:9; Rom. 5:1,2) We trade the old nature, which is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," for "the new man" of Ephesians 4:22-24.

In order to experience this marvelous operation of God in our hearts, we must first be alive in Christ through repentance and faith. Circumcision of the flesh was done on the eighth day to show us that it was an experience for the living, and not a part of the birth experience..

It is only through the application of His blood to our hearts that we can truly destroy the works of the flesh. "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." (Heb. 10:22) As He also said in Heb. 9:13,14, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more *shall the blood of Christ, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*" This is what he meant when he said, *"By one offering He hath perfected for*

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ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14) Our conscience is purged, and therefore, perfected and free to serve God. Our old, inner, nature has been destroyed through faith in that blood which he shed for us.

The Apostle Paul makes this point so well in Heb. 7:11,19. He said, "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise? For *the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.*"

Rom. 6:4,6 tells us that "we are buried with Him by baptism into death. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." This *baptism into death* is one of the great marvels of the New Covenant. It is this experience that gives us victory over the sinful nature that we were born with. Under the Old Covenant, natural circumcision was a requirement for all males, if they were to continue to be citizens of the nation of Israel. Being born an Israelite was not enough. Likewise, being born again is not enough today. (Gen. 17:14)

For us to remain "fellow citizens with the saints," in God's Holy Nation, we must submit ourselves to God for spiritual circumcision. (Eph. 2:19) We must circumcise the foreskin of our hearts. Deut. 10:16. We must rid ourselves of the carnal mind which "is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:5-8) As he said, "*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.*" (Col. 2:11)

In Heb. 10:10, and 1 Thess. 4:3, He uses the term "Sanctification" for this experience. "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Then, "we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies **might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.**" (Luke 1:74,75)

The Baptism with the Holy Ghost

The Third of the Seven Baptisms

"The Promise of The Father"

The ancient prophets and the close friends of our Lord agree that *the great promise of God* was to be a special outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Isaiah records it thus,

"I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring."

(Isa. 44:3) Ezekiel wrote, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And

I will put My Spirit within you

, and cause you to walk in My statutes." (Ezek. 36:26,27) And Jesus said in John 14:17, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." The baptism with the Holy Ghost was and is the promise of God, but it is given only to those who have already let God change their hearts.

John the Baptist declared, "I indeed baptize you with water, but *He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.*"

(Matt. 3:11) When that time came, Jesus said, "I send

the promise of My Father

upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

(Luke 24:49) In John 7:37-39, Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given.)" (See also Acts 1:4,5; Acts 2:38,39)

The Holy Ghost has many works and functions. We will talk about five important ones here: 1) The Revealing of The Whole Counsel of God, 2) Assistance In Prayer, 3) Giving of Other Gifts, 4) The Sign, 5) The Fire.

1) The Revealing of The Whole Counsel of God: "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, *He*

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will guide you into all truth:

for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." (John 16:13)

In 1 Cor. 14:21, Paul quoted Isa. 28:11 as a prophecy of the Holy Ghost baptism. That passage plainly shows that the knowledge and righteous doctrine of God would be revealed in a people who speak with the tongues of men and of angels. Let's look at a more complete quote here. "Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people." (Isa. 28:9-11)

Paul also said, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. *God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit:* for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. We have received the Spirit of God, *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. 2:7-13)

In his epistle to the Church at Ephesus Paul is equally plain. "To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by The Church the manifold wisdom of God; according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:10,11)

2) **Assistance In Prayer:** "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of The Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:26,27)

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit, in The Spirit he speaketh mysteries. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself. If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." (1 Cor. 14:2-4,14)

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As we give ourselves in prayer, the Holy Ghost begins to inspire us with words to speak. We may understand what the Spirit is saying, and we may not. Whichever is the case, we should always use discretion as to when and where we pray or sing in the Spirit. (1 Cor. 14:12-20,22,27,28,39,40)

3) **Giving of Other Gifts:** There are many other gifts which operate by of the power of this baptism. They are enumerated in Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-10,28-31, and Eph. 4:11. They include ministerial prowess and supernatural manifestations such as the gifts of tongues, miracles, prophesying, etc.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." (1 Cor. 12:4,11) "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and *gifts of the Holy Ghost*,
according to
His own will." (Heb. 2:4)

4) **The Sign:** "Tongues are for a sign." In 1 Cor. 14:22, Paul said, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now *see and hear*."
." (Acts 2:32,33. See again Isa. 28:9-11) What you see is people rejoicing and cavorting as if they had drunk too much alcohol. What you hear is the same people speaking with the tongues of men and of angels, and prophesying.

We find this manifestation with everyone who was mentioned in the scriptures as having been baptized with the Holy Ghost. These examples include Acts 2:4; those in Samaria in Acts 8:14-18; Paul and others at Corinth in 1 Cor. 14:14-18; Cornelius and others in Acts 10:44-46, and the former disciples of John in Acts 19:1-6.

5) **The Fire:** It is this utterance by the unction of the Holy Ghost that is the fire. As he said, "*Cloven tongues like as of fire* sat upon each of them, and they began to speak with other tongues." James gave credence to this fact, for he said, "The tongue is a fire." (James 3:6)

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Men everywhere fight this manifestation; preferring that we simply "let our light shine." When Stephen spoke, being "full of the Holy Ghost," they stoned him to death. They are still trying to put out the fire today.

It was only at the initial outpouring of the Holy Ghost that God gave the supernatural manifestation of tongues of fire. He did so to show that when His servants would speak, by the Spirit, with the tongues of men and of angels, and also prophecy in their own language, those words would burn as a fire to bless or to condemn. That manifestation was not there when the saints at Ephesus received the Holy Ghost. But the fire was there, for we are told that "The Holy Ghost came on them; and *they spake with tongues and prophesied.*"

Peter said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39. So *The Promise*, with all its visible manifestations, was not a promise to the Jews only, nor was it for some other select group of believers. It is a blessing to be desired and received by every person who is called of God in this age of Grace.

The only requirement that God makes is that we be sanctified, and that we desire with all our hearts to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. As Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6)

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." (Luke 11:13.)

The Baptism of Suffering

The Forth of the Seven Baptisms

"I have a baptism to be baptized with." Luke 12:50. Jesus is obviously referring here to His imminent suffering, as a baptism.

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The sufferings of our Saviour were a prophetic necessity. As it is written, "God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets that Christ should suffer." (Acts 3:18) "It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10)

Suffering is an essential part of the qualification process for the eventual rulership of the world, and other glorious rewards, with Christ. There shall be martyrdom for some, and, at the very least, ridicule and rejection for others. As He said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12) Therefore, Paul said of Jesus, "*for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.*" (Heb. 12:2) Likewise, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2:12)

Paul well said, we are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*"

(Rom. 8:17,18) Jesus' sufferings, and His alone, affect our redemption. But if we share in the fellowship of His suffering, we can anticipate sharing also in His reward. (Philip. 3:10-16) The resurrection and eternal life are not a reward, they are the gift of God.

1 Pet. 4:1, shows that the Baptism of Suffering is one of the rituals leading to our cleansing and perfection. I Quote, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

Early in His ministry, Jesus said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." (Matt. 5:10-12) Later, when Jesus was asked by the apostles, James and John, if He would promise them specifically that one of them would get to sit on His right hand and the other on His left, in His glory, He asked them the all important question. "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" And they said unto Him, "We can." (Mark 10:34-40)

Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.

Baptism into the Body of Christ

The Fifth of the Seven Baptisms

"By one spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12:13) Two factors are involved here. First, *there is a body* which is The Church. (Eph. 1:22,23) Second, *a person becomes a part of The Body by a baptism.* This

is the baptism to which Paul refers in Ephesians 4:1-6.

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body

, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

One Lord,

one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

The Body: The Lord uses the human body to represent The Church just as He uses the temple, and Jerusalem, and Zion.

In Eph. 4:15,16, he said, "Christ: from whom *the whole body fitly joined together and compacted* by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Paul got this partly from Psa. 122:3. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compacted together." Again, in Eph. 2:21,22, he said, "In whom all the building

fitly framed

together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are

builded together

for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Obviously these statements can in no way be used to describe Christianity in general.

Of all the cities in Israel, God chose Jerusalem to "put His name there." Even so, of all the groups in Christendom, God will yet choose one group from among all of the groups which make up Christianity, to put His name there. (Mal. 3:16-18) Later, in His prayer with His Twelve, He said to the Father, "*Keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me. While I was with them in the world,* *I kept them in Thy name.*"

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(John 17:11,12). They were the spiritual city which God had chosen to put His name there.

All the redeemed are noted in The Book of Life, but those in the Body of Christ are written in another book also. This is made clear in Rev. 22:19. "God shall take away his part out of The Book of Life, and out of the Holy City." The same point is made in Heb. 12:22,23. "*Ye are come unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn which are written in heaven.*"

It is certain that no man on earth, except Jesus Christ, can determine whose name can, or cannot, be in The Book of Life. However, the scriptures clearly show that *The Church has the authority, yea the responsibility, to bind to, or to loose from, membership in the Body of Christ*. As Jesus said. "whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:15-20) It is in this light only that we can comprehend the words of Jesus in John 20:23. He said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

In Peter's day not all who were added to the Lord were anxious to become part of The Body of Christ. For after the death of Ananias and Sapphira, "great fear came on all The Church, and upon as many as heard these things." They were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. "*And of the rest durst no man join himself to them;* but the people magnified them, *and believers were the more added to the Lord,* multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:11-14)

The Baptism: Shortly before Jesus left, "He gave authority to His servants." Mark 13:34. That included the authority to bind believers to The Church. As Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." (Matt. 18:18-20; John 20:23, and 1 Cor. 5:12,13)

Once The Church has made a covenant with a person, God then writes that persons' name in "the Book of the Holy City," in heaven. Rev. 22:19. This binding is referred to as a Baptism in both 1 Cor. 12:13 and Eph. 4:4,5. He shows in 1 Cor. 12:13, that it is the "Spirit" of The Body that does the baptizing. He mentions the ceremony which is used to accomplish this union in Isa. 62:5. "As a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee." This is evidently The Bride of Christ, for he goes on to say, "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." So, *increase of The Body is made when believers make a covenant with*

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The Church.

By taking the covenant with The Body of Christ, one receives "a place and *a name better than of sons and of daughters*:
an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." (Isa. 56:5)

In Heb. 10:1, he said the law was a shadow of good things to come. It is of particular note that God made two covenants with Israel under Moses: one at Sinai and the other in Moab, immediately before they took of the land of promise. He commanded Moses to make a covenant with the children of Israel, "beside the covenant which He made with them in Horeb." (Deut. 29:1,12-15) Even so, the covenant of salvation which we received by Him is not the only covenant to be taken under Christ Jesus. He also said in Psa. 25:14, "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and He will show them (not sinners) his covenant.*"

If we hope to enter into that promise and inherit the world, we must be joined to The Body of Christ by the baptism of His covenant, which He has given to His messenger and forerunner. This covenant is sealed by the shaking of the hand and the agreement of as many as two or three, who have the authority of Christ. (Isa. 13:2; Ezek. 17:18; Ezra 10:19, and Matt. 18:16-20)

Baptism unto the Man of God

The Sixth of the Seven Baptisms

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and *were all baptized unto Moses* in the cloud and in the sea; *and did all*
eat the same spiritual meat."
(1 Cor. 10:1-4; Deut. 33:1)

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Baptism unto The Man of God was not for Moses' day only, or for his and Jesus' day only. This is readily seen in the light of Heb. 13:7,8,17. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

This passage clearly shows that *when God gives His word to a man, for the people, and it includes with the authority to rule over them.* He is not given the responsibility to feed them only, but to lead and feed them. It also shows that God worked that way under the law and continued to do so in the days of the early disciples of Christ, and that He will continue to do so forever.

Paul is making a reference here to Eccl. 3:14,15, "*Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.*" God never changes. (Mal. 3:6)

In Col. 1:25, Paul showed himself to have been in just such a position of stewardship. He said, "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is *given to me for you*, to fulfill the word of God".

In Numbers chapter 16, Korah challenged The Man of God, saying there was no need of a ruler because the people were holy. Because of his defiance, God caused an earthquake to swallow up him and his fellow insurgents. *God then performed a miracle with Aaron's rod to certify, beyond doubt, that He had chosen Aaron to rule the people under Moses.* Aaron's rod budded and brought forth almonds. Numbers chapter seventeen.

According to the testimony of Peter and Jude, God does not work any differently now, even though we are baptized with the Holy Ghost. They said, "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished, chiefly *them that despise government. Presumptuous are they, self willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*" (2 Pet. 2:9-13) "These despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Woe unto them for *they have perished in the gainsaying of (Korah).*" (Jude 8,11) It would not have been possible for anyone to be referred to as "like Korah" in the day of grace unless there were someone "like Moses and Aaron."

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God changes the principle a little in Joshua, but the wise can see. When the time came for Moses to pass from the scene, Moses prayed, "Let the Lord set a man over the congregation, which may lead them; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd." In response, "The Lord said unto Moses, *Take thee Joshua the son of Nun*, (He was of the tribe of Ephraim.) and set him before all the congregation; and *give him a charge in their sight*.

And thou shalt

put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient."

(Num. 27:15-20)

That event was a shadow of the time when Jesus would appoint Peter the responsibility of finishing the building of The Church and is applicable to James, Jude and the others who have had oversight of the house of God since that time. Before He ascended Jesus commanded Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, feed My sheep." *Thus He "gave him a charge in their sight," and made him ruler over His household to give them meat in due season.*

(Matt. 24:45-47) Jesus did that to fulfill, and set in motion certain scriptures, especially Exod. 29:29,30, Num. 27:18-23, John 14:12, and Gen. 4:25. So Peter put on the mantle of our Lord, which he wore for seven years or more, until he passed it on to James, when Jesus appeared to Peter the second time, in fulfillment of 1 Kings 9:2,3.

In Matt. 24:37-47. Jesus spoke to his Apostles about our day, and gave them to understand that He would have the same system of government, which He had set up in His Apostles and Prophets, in operation at the time of His return. He said, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? *Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."*

(Matt. 24:45-47)

In John 17:1,9-11, Jesus said to the Father, "I pray for them which Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We are." As He prayed, He was aware that the unity of the faith could be achieved only by the brethren submitting to the man appointed to rule over them. This is the point He made in Psa. 133:1,2. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even Aaron's beard."*

(Don't forget Numbers chapter seventeen). Therefore, a few days after Jesus was raised from the dead, He "gave authority to His servants, and *commanded the porter to watch."*

He didn't say porters as of many, but "the porter." That is, the man who He "has made ruler over His household." (Mark 13:34) Peter was apparently one of those servants whom Jesus set to be the watchmen over them.

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Jesus said to them, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." Thereby He passed His authority on to them. (See the following passages. Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18; John 20:23; John 21:15-22, and John 20:17,26,27.)

About seven years after Peter was charged with the oversight of The Church, he finished the work of perfecting The Church for Jesus. At that time Jesus appeared to him again, and filled the house with His glory. (Exod. 29:29-30; 1 Ki. 9:1,2; Acts 4:31) While Jesus was with them at that time, He anointed His brother James ruler over the house, and Peter continued as The Apostle to the Jews and as the right hand man of James. (1 Cor. 15:7; Acts 15:7-21)

Those holy men adhered to the instructions in Deut. 17:8-13. When a matter arose which was too hard for them to settle on the local church level (the matter of the circumcision of the flesh), "They came to the place which God had chosen: unto the judge and the priest (James and Peter) that were in those days." They came together "unto the priests the Levites" (the apostles and elders) to consider the matter."

After much disputing, Peter, with the keys of the Kingdom of God, declared how that God had began the conversion of the Gentiles by him, and the Judge (James) passed sentence. Then they wrote the decrees which were to be read in the churches and to be kept by them. (Acts 15:1-20)

As he was passing sentence, James made a statement which could be for no other reason but to validate his authority to do so. He said, *"For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."* (Acts 15:21)

Much is said in the scriptures about this precept: chiefly about Christ Jesus and The Man of God at the end of the age, who will restore The House of God and be ruling it when his Lord comes back. Just as they were baptized unto Moses, so must the congregation of the Lord be baptized unto The Man of God today. When the people asked Jesus, in John 6:28,29, what they needed to do to work the works of God, His answer was not concerning Him alone, nor was it about how to obtain redemption. But it was applicable to anyone whom God would send, including John the Baptist. He said "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom He hath sent." This baptism is very closely related to the Baptism Into The Body, because a person is baptized into the Body by a covenant. That covenant, together with a volume of prophecy, is given to The Man of God for them. (Col. 1:25; 2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 11:1; Mal. 3:1-3) However, as with Moses

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and Jesus, the Baptism is really sealed by sharing in their journey with God. With Moses it was "in the cloud and in the sea. With Jesus, in direct parallel to the shadow in Moses, it is the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and water baptism.

When the believers join together with God in a covenant, they must also do so with The Man of God whom the Lord has made ruler over His household. God shows this in the allegory of Joash, King of Judah. Jehoiada the priest "brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him. And *"Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's People; between the king also and the people.*

And it came to pass, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord." (2 Kings 11:12,17 and 2 Chron. 24:1-4)

The Baptism of Burning

The Seventh of the Seven Baptisms

"I will purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin. "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof *by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.*"

(Isa. 1:25 and Isa. 4:3,4)

The holy scriptures show that when Jesus Christ shall come to take unto Him His great power, and reign upon the earth, He will be greeted by a people who are pure, perfect, sinless. Those people will be "the Bride." (Rev. 19:6-8; Eph. 5:26,27) The other believers who are alive and remain at that time shall be bridesmaids or guests at the wedding. Matt. 22:1-10; Matt. 25:1-10; Rev. 19:9.

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This perfection of "The Elect" is to be accomplished by a purifying process which he calls a "burning," and is accomplished by The Man of God whom God shall raise up for that time. (Num. 8:5-7; Mal. 3:1-4) Once The Man of God has risen in the hearts of the elect, and they have been baptized unto him, he can begin to perfect them with the Baptism of Burning

God showed this in a figure in Moses' day, when He made the Levites His Elect, out of all Israel, and gave them as a gift to Aaron and his sons. Aaron purified those Elect Levites so they could do the service of The Sanctuary, then *they were offered as an offering before the Lord*. (Num. 8:6,7,13-21) Moses, also, was commanded to "sprinkle water of purifying upon them," then they were to wash their own clothes. (Num. 8:7; Num. chap. 19)

In Malachi God applied that election to the time when the Lord shall come suddenly to His temple (Church) at the end of the age. He said, "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple (let us not confuse 'the Lord' Who is coming with 'the messenger' who is to prepare for His coming), even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

"But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? *For he is like a refiner's fire,*

and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver:

And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver,

that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord,

as in the days of old, and as in former years."

(Mal. 3:1-4) Even as the tribe of Levi was God's elect from among His people Israel in the Old Covenant, God is speaking here concerning His elect from among His people who are serving Him under the New Covenant. His is speaking of the time when the spiritual sanctuary, which Peter built with lively stones, shall be built again in these last days and shall be purified, and made white.

It was the apostle Peter who accomplished this purifying in the "days of old, in former years." In Christ's stead, he brought The Church to perfection during that first seven years after the ascension of our Lord. In reference to the work of perfecting the Church, Peter said, *"the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God:*

and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4:17) It was in this setting which Ananias and Sapphira brought their unholy offering and laid it at the feet of that New Covenant altar of twelve apostles.

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The Elect must be judged first, then the rest of the believers, and, after that, God will judge the world in righteousness. To accomplish that, God will raise up a man with "The testimony." That testimony is a volume of prophecy which shall be given to him for the elect to fulfill. (2 Chron. 23:11) That man will fulfill that volume of prophecy, and espouse a people to Christ. (2 Cor. 11:2)

It was the apostle Paul who was given the work of laying the foundation for the perfection of the Gentile Church. He said, "According to the grace given unto *me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon.*"

(1 Cor. 3:10) Many others have build upon the name of Jesus, in the past two thousand years, but only one man will fulfill the prophecy and finish the work for which Paul laid the foundation.

Sometimes Paul made statements which make it sound as if he will finish the Gentile House and present it to the Lord. However, he expected us to comprehend them in the light of 1 Cor. 3:10. With this view we can understand what Paul meant in 2 Cor. 11:2, Col. 1:23-29 and Rom. 15:15-18. He said, "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

Again Paul said, "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is *given to me for you,*

to fulfill the word of God;

even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations. But now is made manifest to His saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (that is,

Christ formed in you,

as he said in Gal. 4:19.) "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom;

that we may present every man

(Obviously not every person in the world, nor even every Christian.)

perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour,

striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." (Col. 1:26,28,29)

In Rom. 15:15-18, Paul said, Grace is given to me of God, "that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, *that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable,*

being

sanctified by the Holy Ghost. "

to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."

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Paul was making a direct allusion to the words of the Lord in Lev. 22:17-25 and Isa. 60:7.

"For a vow "it shall be perfect to be accepted," even "from a stranger's hand."

"They shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory."

Even as Water Baptism is called the baptism of repentance, *so also the Baptism of Burning is the baptism of perfection.* (Matt.

3:11; Mark 1:4) Just as Water Baptism was committed to John to prepare the people for the advent of our Lord's first coming, so

the Baptism of Burning shall be committed to The Man of God at the end, to prepare The Elect for the advent of His second coming.

Of this messenger He said, "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And *he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver:*

and he shall purify the sons of Levi, (The elect, who will do the work of this sanctuary) *and purge them as gold and silver,*

that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." (Mal. 3:2,3)

Thus shall the prophecy in Daniel 12:10 shall be fulfilled, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." Then shall also come to pass Rev. 19:6-9. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. *And to her was granted* that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

"Let us go on unto perfection. *This will we do if God permit.*" Heb. 6:1,3.

Laying on of Hands

The Fourth Principle of The Doctrine of Christ

From ancient times, men of God used the act of laying on of hands for a religious ritual. They did so before and after Moses, and Christ Jesus and his followers in the New Testament continued the practice. (See Gen. 48:1-22 and Num. 27:12-23)

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The Purpose

By the works of His hands, God made the Heavens and the earth, and all that is in them. (Gen. 2:2; Psa. 102:25; Psa. 95:5; Psa. 8:6; Job. 34:19) Although God finished His works of creation (Heb. 4:3), He still has works which must be done which pertain to His word and will. From time to time He sends someone, usually together with a group of workers, to fulfill His word and will, and performs His works by their hands. The Apostle Paul is one good example, mentioned in Acts 19:11. "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

God made Jesus "to have dominion over the works of His hands." (Psalm 8:6) And Matthew told us that Jesus "taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matt. 7:29) Jesus transferred that dominion to His disciples when He left. He foretold of the transfer in the parable in Mark 13:34. He said, "The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left His house, and *gave authority to His servants*, and to every man his work, *and commanded the porter to watch*."

Those disciples "spake
the word of God with boldness, And
by the hands of the apostles

were many signs and wonders wrought among the people." (Acts 4:29-31; Heb. 2:3,4; Acts 5:12)

In Mark 16:14-20, and Heb. 2:4, God tells us that those healings and other wonders were a sign of, and a witness to, that authority. As He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *And these signs shall follow them that believe; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover*." And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

So, the work of God which is done by those whom God sends, is witnessed by Him, through the laying on of their hands.

Examples Of Its Use

When we think of "wonderful works," we generally think of such things as healing or raising of the dead. Yet, one of the great marvels of the ministry of Jesus was that He ordained twelve, then seventy men, and immediately they began to preach and to perform wonders in like

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manner as He did.

The effect of ordination is but one of the several wonders which are accomplished by the laying on of the hands of those who are sent from God. (Acts 6:1-8; Luke 10:1-17) We shall deal with five examples here.

The Transfer of Authority: The Scriptures show that when Jesus was ready to depart, He ordained Peter to take His place, commanding him to feed His sheep and His lambs. He didn't specifically say that He laid His hands on him, but we know the consistency of God. John 21:15-17.

Jesus appointed Peter to be the Shepherd over the Church when He charged him to, "Feed My sheep." (John 21:16) That fact is made clear in Matt. 24:45. Quote, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, *whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?*"

Paul said, "Remember them which have the rule over you," because "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday (under Moses), and today (the early church), and forever (even now)." (Heb. 13:7-8)

Ordination: We have already mentioned the marvelous results of Jesus ordaining His twelve and seventy. He gave that authority into the hands of His servants, and we see them exercising it throughout the book of the New Testament.

In Acts 6:1-8, the congregation chose Stephen, Philip, and five others. *The apostles laid their hands on them, and Stephen, full of faith and power, did great miracles among the people.* Also, one of those seven, Philip the evangelist, went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them: the people hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. Unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them, and many that were lame, were healed. (Acts 8:5-8; Acts 21:8)

Imparting Blessings: This wonder is demonstrated in the Old Testament by Jacob blessing Joseph. *Jacob laid his hands upon the heads of Joseph's sons, "and he*

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blessed Joseph, and said, God bless the lads; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. . . . He (Manasseh) also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: But truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations." (Gen. 48:1-22)

Later we see the effect of this blessing upon the head of Ephraim by the fact that his descendants became the dominant tribe of the ten-tribe northern kingdom. (See 1 Ki. 11:31) Although, the descendants of Manasseh did rule from time to time.

Jesus continued the practice of laying on of hands, and the people obviously expected it from The Man of God, for "they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and He took them up in His arms, *put His hands upon them*, and blessed them." (Mark 10: 13-16)

Imparting Gifts: There are at least three kinds of gifts which are given with the laying on of hands: The baptism with the Holy Ghost, Spiritual Gifts, and Gifts of the Ministry.

The Apostles Peter, John and Paul each laid their hands on believers, and imparted unto them the gift of the Holy Ghost. We could assume that other of the Apostles did so as well. This was not typical of other ministers, such as evangelists. Otherwise, Philip, the evangelist, would have imparted the gift of the Holy Ghost to those new converts in Samaria, but he did not. (See Acts 8:5-24; Acts 21:8; Acts 19:1-6)

Paul said he wanted to visit Rome that he might "impart unto (them) some spiritual gift." (Rom. 1:11) He also reminded Timothy to "Stir up the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, *with the putting on of my hands*." (2 Tim. 1:6 and 1 Tim. 4:14)

Healing: I have listed healing last here, because Paul shows us, in 1 Cor. 12:28, that these other things which we have mentioned are more important. Healing is, at best, a temporary blessing.

Jesus healed many times by the laying on of His hands. Some good examples are in Mark 5:23,24,38-43; Mark 6:5; Mark 7:32-37; Mark 8:23-25. Then, before He left, He told His

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disciples, "*They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*" (Mark 16:15-18) *They did so, and many were healed.*

(Acts 5:12; Acts 9:17; Acts 28:7-9)

However, miracles of healing were not always prominent in the works of God. For instance, "John did no miracle," though he was in the spirit and power of, the great miracle worker, Elijah. (John 10:41. See also John 5:36 and Eccl. 3:1-3) Nor did Jesus heal all the sick folks with which He came in contact. In Luke 4:40, Jesus "laid His hands on everyone of them, and healed them." Yet, in His own country, "He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them." (Mark 6:5)

What Jesus did was finish the work which His father had given Him to do. So when disciples of John the Baptist came to ask Him, "Art thou He that should come?" Jesus referred to His miracles of healing as part of the proof of His identity. (Luke 7:19-23) Because of prophecy, those miracles proved that He was sent from God. Therefore, He answered them in terms which He knew John would understand. (Isa. 35:4-6)

The Resurrection of the Dead

The Fifth Principle of The Doctrine of Christ

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psa. 17:15) "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

The resurrection is the great hope of the followers of Jesus Christ. There is, however, a necessary condition which must precede such hope. *Before there is a resurrection there must first be death.* The glory of the resurrection is comprehended only to the extent that we understand what death is and where the dead are.

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The rhetoric which we commonly hear, in mention of a "dear departed," refers to their being in heaven with Jesus, or with some other relative who has also died. We may also hear, in the same discussion, that the person is going to get up in the resurrection when Jesus returns. That is to insist that the person is not really dead, but has simply gone to another dimension, and will eventually come back to yet another dimension. If that is the case there will not be a resurrection, because there cannot be a resurrection of the living.

Death: One of the first things we need to understand about death is that people do not go to heaven when they die. Long after the ascension of Jesus, the Apostle John declared that Jesus' experience of ascending into heaven was unique in the history of mankind. He said in John 3:13, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." (Your red letter edition may have this statement in red, but you can see, by the statement itself, that Jesus could not have said it.)

Peter agreed with John, in Acts 2:34. "David is not ascended into the heavens." It is written, therefore we must believe, that Jesus alone has risen from the dead immortal. Yes, He alone has ascended. You may ask, "What about 2 Cor. 12:1-5? Paul's vision, which he related there, was concerning the experience John Zebadee was to have later during his period of exile. John related that experience for us in Rev. 4:1,2. It was an exceptional, personal experience of a living believer who was thereby given a marvelous revelation concerning the life and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was not about an experience of death.

Where, then, are all the others who have died? Job said, "O that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave, until Thy wrath be past. All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." (Job 14:13,14) He knew that only the resurrection would bring him forth from the grave, and places the time of his expected resurrection after the wrath of God has been poured out upon the children of disobedience. (Isa. 30:30) Isaiah 26:20, shows that the righteous who are living at that time must wait for that same prophetic event. He said, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: **hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.**"

If the resurrection is to be already past during the time of God's indignation, God would simply hide us in immortality. But we must hide ourselves, and wait for our change until God has vented His indignation upon His disobedient children.

Jonah also speaking, as it were from the grave, said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me." (Jonah 2:2,6) He makes the point here that the dead, even the righteous dead, are in prison: captives. Later,

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when Jesus died, He went and preached to them, and moved the captives to a more accommodating place of confinement, to await the resurrection. In Zech. 9:11, He said, "As for Thee also, by the blood of Thy covenant I have sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." In Paul's words, "He led captivity captive." He did not lead them into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." (Eph. 4:8,9; Rom. 8:21) Peter, also testified saying, "Jesus, was (brought back to life) by the Spirit: By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." (1 Pet. 3:18,19)

To reveal this mystery, God used the figure of the brazen altar which Moses made for the burnt offerings. The altar itself being a type of the earth upon which the blood of many martyrs has been sacrificed. In Rev. 6:9, God told us where those martyrs are. John reported, "I saw ***under the altar***

the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." In that prophetic, Old Testament shadow, "(Moses) made the altar of burnt offering, . . . And he made for the altar

a brazen grate of network under

the compass thereof beneath unto the midst of it." (Ex. 38:1-4) This brazen grate is another figure of the bars of the earth of which Jonah spoke.

Job agrees that the dead are behind bars. He said, "Where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it? ***They shall go down to the bars of the pit***, when our rest together is in the dust." (Job 17:15,16) But he found his hope, saying, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19:25,26) Now that we know this truth we are able to understand why God would look "under the earth" to try to find someone to open the book which was sealed with seven seals. (Rev. 5:1-3) He searched among the living and the dead.

When Jesus shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, then shall He execute the proclamation of "liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isa. 61:1) He provided for the opening of the prison when He was here the first time, and spake of the hour to come, "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28,29) That glorious day is swiftly approaching.

The Psalmist David Prophetied of Jesus on this wise saying, "He hath broken the gates of brass." (Psa. 107:16) Jesus likewise said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18) "Now is Christ

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risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. "For as in Adam all die, even so

in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. 15: 20-23)

All of mankind who have ever lived shall stand before their creator, and "shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." (1 Pet. 4:5) "That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:10) God will accomplish this over an extended period of time of more than a thousand years. He will begin by raising only the righteous, for "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:4-8) Although there is one statement in Daniel 12:1-3, which seems to indicate that there will be some special exceptions to this rule. There are actually two resurrections: one when Jesus first returns, the other when He has ruled the world for a thousand years or more.

The First Resurrection: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6)

The Apostle Paul so eloquently anticipated our glorious change. He said, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:16-25) Paul continued his exultation in 1 Cor. 15:43,44, saying, "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body!" Those spiritual bodies are now in heaven waiting for God to bring them to us, to clothe the righteous dead in them, when they are raised from the dead. (1 Thess. 4:14) In 2 Cor. 5:1,2, Paul explained it even more clearly. He said, "We know that" if we die, we have a new, immortal body "in the heavens." We are "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house (body) which is ***from heaven.***"

In 1 Cor. 15:51-55, Paul mentioned a very important promise to those who are yet alive at the advent of the second coming of Jesus. He said, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." He made the point so well in Rom. 8:11. "If the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Of course the resurrection will occur before those of us who are yet living shall be changed. (2 Cor. 4:14 and 1 Thess. 4:15-17)

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The question arose in Paul's day, "With what body do they come" out of the grave? And Paul used four different metaphors to explain it: celestial and terrestrial bodies; the Sun, the Moon and the stars; flesh of four different creatures; and different kinds of grain. (1 Cor. 15:35-42)

In 1 Cor. 15:37,50,38, Paul stated an obvious, yet revealing, fact. He said, **"Thou sowest not that body that shall be,**

"but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." Once this body has undergone corruption it will not ever be brought forth unto incorruption. In Paul's words,

"Neither does corruption inherit incorruption."

Those who have known corruption will have to be given new bodies.

That is why it was necessary for Jesus to arise in fewer than four days.

When Jesus died, if corruption had set in, He would have had to obtain another body, thus making it impossible for him to fulfill the promise to David. "God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell,

neither His flesh did see corruption."

(Acts 2:30,31)

Though the resurrection of all the righteous shall be glorious, the glory of some shall be greater than that of others. Part of that glory will be seen in the bodies which it pleases God to give them. Various scriptures point this out. Isaiah prophesied of Christ as casting into the earth different grains. (Isa. 28:23-26) Jesus himself referred to the children of the kingdom as wheat in one of His parables. (Matt. 13:24-30,37-43) Likewise, Daniel compared the resurrected saints to the Sun and stars. (Dan. 12:2,3)

In these passages, Isaiah, Daniel and Paul, all assert that there will be different glories given to different saints in the resurrection. That these different glories will be given, according to merit, is shown in Heb. 11:35. "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; ***that they might obtain a better resurrection."***

John also said, in 1 John 3:1-3, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

It would be erroneous to expect God and Jesus to give equal rewards to all of His children, for some make an effort to purify themselves while others do not.

Paul used the Sun and the Moon to represent The Church: The Moon to represent The Church

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of the New Testament, and the Sun to represent The Gentile Church at this end of the Age of Grace. He used the stars to represent all of the other saints: showing that the bodies of risen believers will vary in glory, just as there are differences in the magnitude of the stars. (See Songs of Solomon 6:10) As Paul also said, "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. "So also is the resurrection of the dead." (1 Ki. 6:23-27; Isa. 6:2,3; Jud.. 13:12-31; Heb. 13:2 and 1 Cor. 15:40-42)

The Last Resurrection: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:5)

When Jesus has had His "day," and Satan has been judged (Rev. 20:4-11), the hour will come "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28,29) The sea shall give up the dead which are in it, and death and Hell shall relinquish the dead which are in them. The books being open, all of these shall be judged, and whosoever is not found in The Book of Life shall be cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-13) So aught men to "fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28)

I remain as John. I still do not know exactly what it is that we shall be. But I do know, by these wonderful words which God has written for our comfort, if we are to be as He is, we must live a holy and pure life, by the grace for which He suffered and died.³ And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Therefore, let us purpose in our hearts to be among those who are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. 2:13)

Eternal Judgment

The Sixth Principle of The Doctrine of Christ

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This subject is the same as any subject in the Bible, in that it requires some rightly dividing, if we are to properly understanding of it. Because we have a tendency to equate the word judgment with punishment, when Paul says, "Eternal judgment," our minds *hear* "eternal punishment." As a result, we tend to miss the fact that many who come before the throne of God's judgment will be judged worthy of eternal life and other exceeding great rewards. Punishment and damnation will be meted out, but that is by no means all that is implied here. Therefore we must first deal somewhat with the title of the subject.

The judgment to which Paul refers is more clearly understood by his statement in 2 Cor. 5:10. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, *whether it be good or bad.*"

Likewise, the word eternal is somewhat misleading. It should be understood more in the sense in which it is used in Jude 6 and 7. He said, the angels that fell with Lucifer are "reserved in **eve** **rlasting chains**

under darkness

unto the judgment

of the great day." Sodom and Gomorrah also suffered "the vengeance of *eternal fire.*"

That fire is apparently not still burning.

Jonah said in Jonah 2:6, "The earth with her bars was about me *for ever.*" The reader must *hear* the words "until the resurrection." This doctrine, indeed, concerns what I sometimes call "*the Age of Judgment.*"

The age of judgment begins with the judgment of The Church during the two periods of its operation, both in the first century A.D., and in this "last time." It ends with The Judgment of the Great Day. (Jude 6; 1 Pet. 4:17)

There are four major phases of the Age of Judgment. They are: 1) The Judgment of The Elect, 2) The Judgment of The Other Saints, 3) The Judgment of The Nations, and 4) The Judgment of The Great Day. God will not judge the nations until He has judged the believers. That judgment partly involves a period of persecution. 1 Pet. 4:1, shows that the persecution will serve, partly to purify the righteous, "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." Jesus said, in Luke 11:49-51, that it would also serve to justify God in pouring out His wrath upon the ungodly.

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The Judgment of The Elect

In 1 Pet. 4:17, the Apostle Peter announced the beginning of judgment among The Elect in his day. Indeed, very harsh judgment was executed upon two members of The Church, Ananias and Sapphira, who laid an unholy offering upon that holy altar of twelve Apostles. In Heb. 13:10, God told us that there was an altar in that New Testament temple, and Exod. 20:25 and 1 Kings 18:31-32, show the New Testament altar to be the twelve apostles. (Exod. 29:37; Acts 4:34 through Acts 5:11 and 1 Pet. 2:5)

Other Christians knew that such harsh punishment was associated with Peter and that Church, and they would not join that organization. As it is written, *"Of the rest durst no man join himself to them:*
but the people magnified
them. And *believers were the*
more added to the Lord
, multitudes both men and women." (Acts 5:11-14)

God's immediate judgement of the elect is also seen in 1 Cor. 11:20-31. Paul told us that many members of the body had become sick, and many had died, because they ate and drank the Passover (Actually the Lord's Supper) unworthily, "not discerning the Lord's body." However, he countered with the words, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

The apostle Paul also showed the distinction between the Judgment of The Elect and that of other Christians, from the standpoint of the authority which Jesus gave them when He left.

(Mark 13:34) The Elect have the authority, and the responsibility, to pass judgment about who may, or may not, be part of their work and reward. (John 20:23; Matt. 18:15-20) No mortal man can possibly determine whose name is written in the Book of Life, or the Book of Life of The Lamb. Therefore, we know that God is speaking about whoever's name shall be entered in, or blotted out of, the Book of The Holy City. (Rev. 22:19; Heb. 12:22-24)

We see, therefore, that the judgment of God's Church, as concerns bringing it to perfection, is given to the members themselves. This is fact is shown in 1 Cor. 5. He told them not to eat the Passover with a member who was known to be unworthy, because of some sin of the flesh. He instructed them to turn that wicked person out of The Church, so that the "Spirit of The Church"

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might be saved. (Eph. 4:4; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2:1-5) He said, "With such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? *Do ye not judge them that are within?* But them that are without, God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (1 Cor. 5:12,13; Matt. 18:15-20) However, he cautions us that the authority to judge bears with it the requirement that the people who execute that judgment must be blameless, *"having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."* (1 Cor. 10:6)

The works of the flesh are to the body of Christ what a terminal illness is to the human body. The Church was the "new man," of Eph. 2:14-15, and, as such, could die, if something contrary to its spirit was allowed to remain in it. The words of Prov. 20:27 and James 2:26 apply to this "new man" the same as they do the us humans.

When The Church is in existence, the authority to bind and loose is inherent in it at all times, but God seems to execute immediate punishments only during certain predestined periods of time. As in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, The Church fulfilled the prophetic intent of the feast of unleavened bread. During its first seven years The Church was without leaven. During that time, or shortly thereafter, the leaven of covetousness cost Ananias and Sapphira their lives. (Exod. 12:14,15) They inherited the curse of Heb. 6:1-8, Lev. 15:31, and 1 Cor. 3:16,17.

Not only were severe punishments meted out, but specific rewards were promised to some. For example, in Matt. 19:28, Jesus told His twelve apostles exactly what their rewards will be during His rulership of the world for a thousand years. He told them, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, *ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"

When Jesus comes, the saints will judge the world. Therefore, The Elect must be judged before He comes. (1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 2:26,27) We are now approaching the second fulfillment of the feast of unleavened bread; at which time God will conclude the judgment of The Elect. (2 Chron. 30:20-27) ***At that time it shall be determined who shall sit upon those other twelve thrones which are foreshadowed in Rev. 4:4.***

The Bride the Lamb's Wife must now awake from her sleep, and conclude the judgment of The Elect, so our Lord can come for His glorious church. (Isa. 52:1,2; Eph. 5:14,25-32)

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The Judgment of The Other Saints

Once The Elect have been judged, God will then begin to judge the other believers. In Matt. 22:2-10. They are the bad and good guests at the marriage of the king's son. They are the "ten virgins, wise and foolish," of Matt. 25:1-13. They are a multitude "both of men and women," as in Acts 5:1-14. They are the "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," who "stood before the throne, and before The Lamb, clothed with white robes and *palms in their hands*." (Rev. 7:9; John 12:12,13)

Their judgment is partially expressed by Jesus in Luke 12:32-48. He said, "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, *shall be beaten with many stripes*."

But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, *shall be beaten with few stripes*.

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." I believe that the persecution during the time of the prophecy of the two witnesses, in Rev. 11, relates to that judgment.

The Judgment of The Nations

God said unto Jesus in the second Psalm, "Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen (Gentiles) for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psa. 2:8-9)

The world hated Jesus and killed Him, "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." (Heb. 10:12,13; Psa. 110:1)

"Enoch also, the seventh from Adam prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, *to execute judgment upon all*, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (Jude 14-15)

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This judging of the nations is prophesied of in Dan. 7:9-12, and again in Matt. 25:31-46. Before we consider these passages we need to understand the words of Jesus in John 5:22,23. "The Father judgeth no man, **but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:** that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

Also, in Dan. 4:25, we see that "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Apparently it is Jesus who shall *"sit,"* and not the Father. The earth has always been under God's control, else how could He give it to Jesus.

Now hear Dan. 7:9-12. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down (set), and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. The judgment was set and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts (the first three nations mentioned in the chapter), they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."

Jesus further enlightens us in Matt. 25:31-41. "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered **all nations:** and He shall separate them one from another." To some of those nations, Jesus shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." To other nations He shall say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

That these are nations, and not individuals, is evident from their replies. Some said, When did we ever do anything for you? A Christian would never ask such a question. No, the ones on the right hand are not Christians, but rather, nations which have treated Christians well.

Those on His right hand continue for a time, but eventually Jesus and those with Him, some of whom are mentioned in Rev. 2:26,27 and Rev. 20:1-4, shall conquer the whole world and establish new national boundaries dictated by Deut. 32:8. There shall then be twelve nations on earth, and Jesus shall sit, the King of Kings. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." (1 Cor. 15:24,25)

The Judgment Of The Great Day

"The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6)

There is a revelation hidden in the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, the eighth day of which is called "the great day." (John 7:2,37; Lev. 23:34-36) The seventh day (millennium) is "The Lord's Day," but the Feast of Tabernacles reveals the eighth millennium as "The Great Day." At that time Jesus will judge the rest of mankind. He will resurrect all of the dead who did not arise in the first resurrection, He will then judge them, as well as Satan and the angels which fell with him. (Rev. 20:5-15) At that time some of those, who had part in the first resurrection and the change, shall sit, together with Jesus, and experience the words of Paul, who said, "know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3)

When Jesus accomplishes the first resurrection, rewards will be given to the saints. At that time, Jesus will convey the reward, which He mentioned in Matt. 8:11, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, as well as some others. He will reward the elect, living and dead, as well as the other believers which are "alive and remain" unto his coming. At that time the twelve Jewish Apostles shall become the Priests of the Earth (Matt 19:28), and the twelve Gentile Apostles shall become the kings of the earth (Isa. 60:10), and so forth. (1 Cor. 6:2; 1 Tim. 4:7-8 and 2 Pet. 1:11)

At the end of the seventh millennium, at the Judgment of The Great Day, Jesus will conclude His mission of "judgment upon all." The remainder of all of the people who have ever lived shall stand before God's great throne of judgment and give account of themselves, and be judged of their words and deeds in this life. (Jude 1-15) Then God shall "render to every man according to his deeds."

"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29) This latter resurrection will occur some time after the seventh millennium has ended. For God said, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, to gather them together to battle." (Rev. 20:5-8) Satan obviously cannot accomplish that in a few days.

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Once carnal man shall have proven his proclivity to follow after evil, this last time, and Satan shall have finished his work, Jesus will execute the final judgment. For after living under the auspices of Jesus' righteous and benevolent rule, the world shall again choose the wicked one, and justify God's wrath upon them.

In that resurrection, those whose names are written in The Book of Life, shall inherit life. At that time, "as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." (Rom. 2:8-16)

The Apostle John "saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which was The Book of Life. And *whosoever was not found written in The Book of Life* was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:12,15)

Then shall be fulfilled that saying, "The day of the Lord will come, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3:10-13)

Perfection

The Seventh Principle of The Doctrine of Christ

Let Us Go On Unto Perfection

The perfection of God's elect is one of the fundamental reasons that Jesus came and gave

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himself to be the perfect sacrifice. And very early in His ministry He gave His disciples commandment concerning its attainment. **"Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."** (Matt. 5:48) It is apparent that Jesus persisted in this theme, because just before His crucifixion, **He prayed to the Father to make His disciples "perfect in one."**

In Heb. 7: 11,19, Paul explained that it was necessary for Jesus to come and to change the system so that God's people could attain unto perfection. He said, **"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood**
, (for under it the people received the Law,) **what further need was there that another priest should rise**
after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For **the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did;**
by the which we draw nigh unto God."

We are not talking about some high ideals which are beyond our reach as mortals. **The goal of the life hidden in Christ is perfection;**

it was only the means of its attainment which was in question. It is one of the main aspects of the plan of God for mankind. God knew that the law could not accomplish that goal, but He gave the law to Israel as a schoolmaster to teach them of the things which God would accomplish in Jesus Christ.

There are at least three aspects of perfection mentioned in the Holy Scriptures:

- 1) The Perfecting of The Conscience
- 2) The Perfecting of The Personal Life
- 3) The Collective Perfecting of The Saints.

The Perfecting of The Conscience

Paul said, "We speak wisdom among **them that are perfect.**" (1 Cor. 2:6) This is a clear declaration that some of those who followed Paul were already perfect in some sense: Apparently they had received sanctification of the spirit. (2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 10:14)

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God accepted those who believed in Him, both before and during the administration of the Law. However, there was no change in the nature of the worshiper. He was still carnal, and weak in the face of temptation. Without Jesus Christ, man has an inherent carnal nature. He can neither do the good he should do, nor resist the temptation to do evil. The Law of Moses could not help mankind to overcome this deficiency. As Paul said in Heb. 9:9, "**The Law could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.**"

The strength to overcome was not available. But "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. 5:6)

The change in the person who receives this benefit in his heart is quite marvelous. It is referred to several different ways in the scriptures: having an **operation on your heart**, being transformed by

e renewing of your mind

, being

raised from the dead

, etc. (Deut. 10:16; Rom. 6:1-11; Rom. 12:1,2 and 1 Pet. 1:22,23)

Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And again, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" (Rom. 7:24,25; Rom. 8:1-9)

"the Law having a shadow of good things to come, **that the worshipers once purged should have no more conscience of sins.**

Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. For by one offering **He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**"

(Heb. 10:1-14)

Therefore, when we have yielded our lives to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith and have submitted to the circumcision of our hearts, He perfects our conscience (sanctifies our spirit). Then, and only then, can we follow our Lord unto the perfecting of our lives.

The Perfecting of the Individual Life

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"Dearly beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves** from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**"

(2 Cor. 7:1) Obviously you must

have

holiness before you can perfect it by "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God**

." (Rom. 12:1) In this instance God called the condition of our experience in Jesus Christ

"holiness." Then He showed that we must work at developing and improving our lives; perfecting our attitudes and manner of life, if we are to be "accepted in the beloved."

How shall we accomplish this? "By taking heed according to the word of God." (Psa. 119:9) And He whose prayers are always heard cried unto God for His Elect, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." (John 17:17)

The Collective Perfecting of the Saints

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us go on unto perfection.**" (Heb. 6:1,2)

Jesus instituted the doctrine of perfection, and the Apostle to the Gentiles enlarged on it, and pointed the way to its attainment. Perhaps he was thinking of Prov. 4:18, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And again Paul said, "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith." (Rom. 1:17)

The Holy Ghost was sent unto God's "handmaidens and servants" for much more than to give them another blessing, or to complete the gospel. It was to work with us **until we all (Jew and Gentile) come "to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man."**

(Eph. 4:8-13) He is talking about that "one new man," in Eph. 2:15-22; and that new man is "The Church." (See John 16:13 and 2 Tim. 3:16,17). Therefore, once we have received a revelation of "all truth" we can, and must, be perfected in it, because light is given for us to walk in. (1 John 1:7; John 12:35,36)

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By the Spirit of God, the Apostles of Christ knew how to understand and fulfill prophecy. (Acts 1:20-22) **We must fulfill prophecy also, for it is a part of our work and perfection**, and is essential for the perfecting of those who did the prophesying. For he said, "They without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:39,40)

Peter showed clearly in Acts 3:20,21, that Jesus will not return until we have accomplished that prophetic work which was spoken of by those prophets of old. He further admonished us to take earnest heed to the progress of prophetic fulfillment, so we will recognize and **accept the forerunner of Christ Jesus**

when he comes up before our face (Nahum 2:1) just prior to the return of our king. (2 Pet. 1:19-21; Heb. 13:8) It is this forerunner of Christ who, together with an anointed group of ministers, will lead us to perfection. (Mal. 3:1-6; Eph. 4:8,11-16) "When He ascended up on high, He . . . gave gifts unto men. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints

,
till we all come

in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

unto a perfect man

."

"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, **that He might present it to Himself a glorious church**, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but **that it should be holy and without blemish.**"
(Eph. 5:25-27)

AMEN