

REDEEMING THE TIME

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 1



WINTER 2019

HAVING THE MIND OF CHRIST

*"Let this mind be in you,
which was also in Christ Jesus ..."*

BY DOUGLAS R. ARDIS

Philippians 2:5-8 tells us: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

This is one of the greatest passages in all of the Bible concerning what we refer to as "the humiliation of Christ," or "the humility of Christ." It is noteworthy that this passage is given to us as an example concerning what it means to be humble. If we want to know what humility is, in other words, we must look to Christ. He is the supreme example of humility.

Continued on page 8

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has always subverted the Word of God to promote its vision of the Kingdom of God on earth — a largely socialist, here-and-now agenda. Recently, the WCC Executive Committee again misappropriated Christ's words to His church — "Behold I make all things new!" — to promote its dream of a "new world order."

REPORT ON PAGE 4



© 2018, Albin Hillier/WCC

*"THAT • I • MAY
Know Him..."*

BY BRAD K. GSELL

Knowing God, who He is, and our duty to Him are at the foundation of all Biblical teaching and are critical to our eternal salvation. The Westminster Shorter Catechism answers its very first question by telling us that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

The second question makes clear that man can never glorify God by his own devices, but that there is a "rule God has given us whereby we may glorify and enjoy Him." That rule is the Holy Scriptures.


In close progression, the answer to Catechism Question 3 tells us that "The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man." When studying the Scriptures, one will be hard pressed not to see — in every single verse — God's revelation of Himself and what He requires of us.

Evangelicals and Bible doctrine

Again this year, LifeWay Research and Ligonier Ministries teamed up to see just how astute self-identified Evangelicals¹ are concerning major Bible doctrines. The result is really quite alarming. When nearly a third of the self-identified Evangelicals polled said that "Religious belief is a matter of personal opinion; it is not about objective truth," there is little wonder that many are ignorant concerning basic doctrines of the Bible.

Continued on page 12

REFORMATION



Beginnings

PART VI

Martin Luther's Summons

BY MARK W. EVANS

Martin Luther's writings provided more than Scriptural knowledge. They awakened hearts to trust in Jesus Christ and to reject spiritual imposters. Luther's return to the Bible was a return to the means God provided for the true Church to persevere and prosper. Centuries of corrupt teachings and practices fell to the ground before the infallible Word of God. The world awakened to a new era of God-given liberty and to the advancement of civilization. The "forbidden Book" was opened, and its truths brought forth a glorious harvest.

Deliverance from the penalty and curse of sin through faith in Jesus Christ brought Martin Luther out of the horrible pit and miry clay. He now stood upon the solid rock, Christ Jesus. His heart burned within him to publish the truths that had set him

free and ignited a fire that no man on earth or devil in hell could extinguish. God's truth produced individual freedom that broke the chains of religious and political tyranny. Rome's guardians, glutted with their own power and security, were slow to recognize

Luther's return to the Bible was a return to the means God provided for the true Church to persevere and prosper. Centuries of corrupt teachings and practices fell to the ground before the infallible Word of God.

the threat. Always before, the population bowed to the claims and threats of the papacy. They believed the pope was the earthly Head of the Church.

Kings and their subjects trembled at his fraudulent pretense of papal sovereignty over souls. Before the time of Luther, many struck at the moral corruptions of the papacy, but Luther did more. He used the Scriptures to strike crushing blows at the foundation, refuting false doctrine, idolatrous worship, tyrannical government and persecuting discipline. The sacred Scriptures became, and still are, Rome's primary enemy. When Luther's expositions and applications of biblical truth were published and distributed, the false foundations of the papacy crumbled. Ecclesiastical potentates, civil tyrants, false theologians, wicked priests, monks, nuns, bishops, and cardinals were unable to prop up the quivering edifice.

Church historian J.A. Wylie explained the teachings of Luther concerning Rome's corruption: "By her dogma of *Pontifical supremacy* she had enslaved kings, princes, and magistrates. She had exalted the *spiritual* above the *temporal* in order that all rulers and all tribunals and causes, might be subject to her own sole absolute and irresponsible will, and that, unchallenged and unpunished by the civil power, she might pursue her career of usurpation and oppression."¹

Wylie continued: "Had she not, Luther asked, placed the throne of her Pope above the throne of kings, so that no one dare call him to account? The Pontiff enlists armies, makes war on kings, and spills their subjects' blood; nay, he challenges for the persons of his priests immunity from civil control, thus fatally deranging the order of the world, and reducing authority into prostration and contempt."²

In reference to Rome's spiritual supremacy, Wylie points out that the pope had placed himself above all bishops and made himself the supreme authority over the church, never to be challenged. In regard to the Bible, he wrote: "By her assumed sole and infallible right of interpreting Holy Scriptures, Rome had enslaved the people. She had put out their eyes;

she had bound them in chains of darkness, that she might make them bow down to any god she was pleased to set up and compel them to follow whither she was pleased to lead — into temporal bondage, into eternal perdition.”³

Luther declared: “Hearest thou, O Pope, not all holy, but all sinful? Who gave thee power to lift thyself above God and break His laws? The wicked Satan lies through thy throat — O my Lord Christ, hasten thy last day, and destroy the devil’s nest at

“I am ready to answer ... for it is not from a presumptuous spirit, or to derive any advantage, that I have taught the doctrines with which I am reproached: it is in obedience to my conscience and to my oath as doctor of the Holy Scriptures: it is for the glory of God, for the salvation of the Christian Church, for the good of the German nation, and for the extirpation of so much superstition, abuse, evil, scandal, tyranny, blasphemy, and impiety.”

Excerpt of a Letter from
Martin Luther to
Frederick III, the Elector
of Saxony

Rome. There sits ‘the man of sin,’ of whom Paul speaks, the son of perdition.”⁴

Intrigue followed intrigue to prevent Martin Luther from appearing before the emperor and the civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries gathered at the Diet of Worms, convening on January 28, 1521. The only one at

The sacred Scriptures became, and still are, Rome’s primary enemy. When Luther’s expositions and applications of biblical truth were published and distributed, the false foundations of the papacy crumbled.

peace seemed to be Martin Luther. He wrote the Elector: “If I cannot go to Worms in good health ... I will be carried there, sick as I am. For if the emperor calls me, I cannot doubt that it is the call of God Himself. If they desire to use violence against me and that is very probable (for it is not for their instruction that they order me to appear), I place the matter into the Lord’s hands. He still lives and reigns who preserved the three young men in the burning, fiery furnace. Let us only prevent the Gospel from being exposed to the scorn of the wicked, and let us shed our blood for it, for fear they should triumph. It is not for me to decide whether my life or my death will contribute most to the salvation of all. Let us pray God that our young emperor may not begin his reign by dipping his hands in my blood. I would rather perish by the sword of the Romans. You know what chastisement was inflicted on the Emperor Sigismund after the murder of John Huss. You may expect everything from me ... except flight and recantation. Fly I cannot, and still less retract.”⁵

When Luther received word concerning the impending summons, he wrote a second letter to the Elector: “I rejoice with all my heart, most serene Lord ... that his imperial majesty desires to summon me before him touching this affair. I call Jesus Christ to witness, that it is the cause of the whole German nation, of the universal Church, of the Christian world, nay, of God himself ... and of an individual, especially such a one as

myself. I am ready to go to Worms, provided I have a safe-conduct, and learned, pious, and impartial judges. I am ready to answer ... for it is not from a presumptuous spirit, or to derive any advantage, that I have taught the doctrines with which I am reproached: it is in obedience to my conscience and to my oath as doctor of the Holy Scriptures: it is for the glory of God, for the salvation of the Christian Church, for the good of the German nation, and for the extirpation of so much superstition, abuse, evil, scandal, tyranny, blasphemy, and impiety.”⁶

¹J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, Vol. 1 (New York: Cassell and Company, Ltd., n.d.), pp. 305-306.

²*Ibid.*, p. 306.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 306,308.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 308.

⁵J.H. Merle d’Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, Vol. II (New York: American Tract Society, 1847), pp. 182-183.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.



The Rev. Mark Evans is the Moderator of Faith Presbyterian Church, and is pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC.

REDEEMING THE TIME

Editor: Brad K. Gsell

Associate Editor: Mark W. Evans

Redeeming the Time is a quarterly publication with the purpose of encouraging God’s people and applying God’s Word to the issues of our day.

Individual copies are distributed free of charge, but the generous donations of God’s people are necessary for this ministry to continue. Checks may be made payable to “**Redeeming the Time**,” and mailed to: **P.O. Box 26281, Charlotte, NC 28221-6281**. All donations are tax deductible.

e-mail: redemptingthetime@bellsouth.net

Sponsored by Publication Fund • Bible Presbyterian Church • Charlotte, NC

Published January 2019

“All Things New”



© 2018, Albin Hillert/WCC

The World Council of Churches Continues Its Leftist Agenda for Creating a “New World Order”

BY BRAD K. GSELL

From November 2-8, 2018, the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met in Uppsala, Sweden, under the theme: “Behold, I make all things new!” This was a repeat of the theme of the Fourth World Assembly of the WCC, which also met in Uppsala, 50 years ago.

As in 1968, it soon became quite obvious that these words of Jesus Christ had been misappropriated to a far different message than was being conveyed by our Lord in Revelation 21:5. Instead of being the spiritual work of Christ culminating in “a new heaven and a new earth,” the words are used to bolster the WCC agenda for the immediate transfor-

mation of society into a grand socialist utopia.

Report of the General Secretary

WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit set the tone in his address to the Executive Committee. He told the delegates that Revelation is “not a book we often refer to in the ‘ecumenical canon’ of texts we most often employ in our discussions and prayers.”

Tveit continued by saying that the Scripture used for the theme of their conference (“Behold, I make all things new”), in English, seemed “archaic” to him: “The perspective is the eschatological horizon, the new heaven and earth.” Lest there be any confusion

as to what exactly Tveit was meaning by calling this Scriptural phrase “archaic,” he continued immediately to say that the WCC had “turn[ed] ... toward a more modern approach to the world ... and urging the churches to focus more on the enormous challenges of *this* world” [emphasis his].

He continued that this “something new gave a stronger orientation toward participation and toward becoming the agent of change.”

He ridicules those he says have their focus on “pie in the sky bye and bye,” and cautions against being “too focused on the life after this one.”

Tveit concluded his address by stating: “... may God motivate and guide us in our planning and work,

in anticipation of the coming unity of humankind. Thy kingdom come!”

Statements passed heavily pushed a radical socialist agenda

The fruit of Tveit’s address can be seen in the seven statements passed at this November 2018 meeting. None of them dealt with the Gospel of Christ, but rather carried the following titles: “Statement on People on the Move: Migrants and Refugees”; “Statement on COP 24 and Just Transition to Sustainable Economy”; “Statement on Ecumenical Witness and Action for Primary Health Care for All: 40th Anniversary of the Alma-Ata Declaration”; “Statement on Reconciliation and Restoration in Ethiopia and Eritrea”; “Statement on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize”; “Statement on the Urgent Challenge of Economic Transformation: 10 Years After the Global Financial Crisis”; “Minute on the Impacts of Nuclear Weapons Testing in French Polynesia (Ma’ohi Nui), and Decolonization.”

Although some of these statements concerned matters we all should care about, it is apparent from reading them that the WCC is continuing on with its determined progressive agenda of seeking to bring their vision of “the Kingdom of God” on earth, while standing largely in opposition to the true “Kingdom of God,” as presented in the Bible.

The 1968 WCC World Assembly in Uppsala called for the establishment of the infamous Programme to Combat Racism. The emphasis was not to raise funds to support missions and to spread the gospel of Christ around the world — the only real cure for sin and injustice. Rather, millions of dollars of churchgoers’ donations were given directly to Communist guerrillas and revolutionaries around the world — particularly in Africa.

Many innocent people were murdered and freedoms vanished as cruel dictators came to power. This Libera-

tion Theology violently opposed free enterprise and promoted a socialist or communist agenda.

“Statement on People on the Move: Migrants and Refugees”

The 2018 Uppsala meeting came fast on the heels of the joint Roman Catholic-WCC Conference on Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration (see side bar on page 6), held in Rome from September 18-20, 2018.

Tveit continued by saying that the Scripture used for the theme of their conference (“Behold, I make all things new”), in English, seemed “archaic” to him: “The perspective is the eschatological horizon, the new heaven and earth.” Lest there be any confusion as to what exactly Tveit was meaning by calling this Scriptural phrase “archaic,” he continued immediately to say that the WCC had “turn[ed] ... toward a more modern approach to the world ... and urging the churches to focus more on the enormous challenges of this world” [emphasis his].

In fact, the Statement from Uppsala closely mirrors the “Statement on People on the Move: Migrants and Refugees,” coming from the conference in Rome.

It is quite interesting that this statement from Uppsala condemns only the United States by name. With the unspeakable human rights abuses in scores of nations around the globe,

it is quite obvious that the WCC continues in its anti-Americanism — similar to the brand of Liberation Theology so famously espoused by the Rev. Jeremiah Wright in his United Church of Christ congregation in Chicago.

The Committee acknowledges that some people may be “genuinely concerned and fearful,” and that governments “have the legitimate responsibility to control their borders, to ensure security, and to promote stability and prosperity for their citizens.” However, this cannot be taken seriously, since the rest of the report goes on to denounce such “rights.”

In a not-too-veiled attack on U.S. leaders, the Committee wrote: “Political figures and parties in several countries of the Global North have garnered support by playing upon people’s fears about the impact of migrants and refugees on their societies, economies and cultural identities.” The condescending phrase “playing upon people’s fears” is defined by one source as causing people to “override reason and prevent a critical assessment of [certain] policies.” It is commonly used to shut down debate, by saying that anyone who doesn’t agree with you obviously is not reasonable and that their opinion could not possibly be built upon rational and studied consideration. The report continues that if you cannot overcome your irrational fears, the WCC will accuse you of xenophobia and racism and call on people to “combat xenophobic and racist discourses that seek to exclude, stigmatize and criminalize migrants and refugees.”

The statement immediately goes to condemning the United States — by name — for sending troops to aid ICE in protecting our borders. Despite any right the WCC concedes for a nation to regulate its borders, the Statement continues: “Nevertheless ... all refugees and migrants, regular or irregular, are human beings each created in the image of God, children of God, sis-

Continued on page 6



"ALL THINGS NEW"

Continued from page 5

Roman Catholic-WCC Conference on Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration

The Roman Catholic-WCC Conference on Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration, held in Rome from September 18-20, 2018, virtually called for a borderless world. It declared that any country which desires to protect its borders "raises up national boundaries as idols." The statement proceeded to call for active political opposition to "populist initiatives incompatible with Gospel values. This should inspire political life and public discourse, and inform fundamental choices especially at the time of elections."

Continuing, the report states: "We commit ourselves to work together for the transformation of unjust structures and systems which perpetuate themselves on the grounds of stability and security, and which create cultures and conditions which exclude others and deny the equal dignity and rights of all."

Being true to the name of the conference, any who dare to disagree with them are dishonestly declared to be guilty of "racism" and "xenophobia." In line with this, they declared: "we seek to raise a narrative of love and of hope, against the populist narrative of hate and of fear." These churchmen actually believe that they are the possessors of "love and hope," and any who disagree with them in any way are instead hateful and fearful. This is dishonest, but it suits their purpose of avoiding any meaningful discussion.

The conference also called for "building social protection networks." This sounds very much like a description of "sanctuary cities," which are causing so much harm in the United States and elsewhere.

The report further declares: "While we seek and promote dialogue for the resolution of differences on any of the issues raised in this message, this core conviction is fixed and permanent." While these ecumenical churchmen are ALWAYS willing to compromise the very heart of the Gospel, deny the Scriptures, and accept heresy, if it will further their manmade quest for "peace and justice, here we have actually found a place where they have a "core conviction" which is "fixed and permanent"! The true Christian has the Word of God as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice," and holds it to be "fixed and permanent."

ters and brothers, with equal human dignity and rights regardless of their immigration status. To raise national boundaries and the nation state to an order of value above the recognition of the image of God in every refugee and migrant is a kind of idolatry."

We must ask if it is "idolatrous" if a nation wants to keep criminals, gang members, drug smugglers, and so forth, from coming across its borders. Is it wrong to stop would-be immigrants to determine if they actually are refugees, or if they just want a better lifestyle, or believe they can be supported to some degree by the taxes of hardworking U.S. citizens? Is it wrong for any country to defend its laws, and have consequences for lawbreakers — even if they are immigrants knowingly sneaking across borders without proper immigration status?

"Statement on COP24 and Just Transition to Sustainable Economy"

On its Statement on Climate change and the economy, the WCC says that "transformation of economic systems, deep behavioural change, and supportive national and global policies and institutional arrangements are needed now to avoid potentially catastrophic consequences of climate change." This time the words of Jesus Christ in John 10:10 are misappropriated. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," instead of being a precious promise of our eternal life in Christ, now is used to support climate change by "transforming" "economic systems," "behavior" and "institutional arrangements."

Christ's words, just a few verses earlier, in John 10:6, might apply well to these ecumenical dreamers: "but they understood not what things they were which he [Christ] spake unto them."



© 2018, Xanthi Motti/WCC

WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit greets Pope Francis during the Conference.

"Statement on Ecumenical Witness and Action for Primary Health Care for All"

Continuing with its socialistic advocacy, the WCC describes high quality healthcare as a "fundamental human right," and urged its members to fight for "effective national health structures, and to the realization of the vision of health for all." Elsewhere: "the WCC considers the highest attainable standard of health as a fundamental human right," and calls for "universal health coverage."

Although it does call on Christians to be involved first hand in caring for the sick, it mentions nowhere where the funds are to come from for this universal healthcare. In many places throughout this and other statements, socialistic government schemes are encouraged.

"Statement on the Urgent Challenge of Economic Transformation"

"The unconstrained greed of an unaccountable few" is the villain in this statement. Certainly, there has been abuse in capitalistic societies, and there must be protections to avoid criminal behavior. However, the WCC thinks there is a time when someone has "enough," no matter how diligent and savvy they have been in their labors.

What is needed is "a global financial and economic system that applies new economic indicators (other than the growth-centric gross domestic product)." To replace this pillar of capitalism must be done "to free up resources for social and ecological renewal."

The WCC Executive Committee "Renews its oft-repeated call for a new international financial and economic architecture for an economy of life that links finance to the real economy, accounts for social and ecological impacts, and sets effective constraints on greed."

It further "Encourages the efforts of the WCC, the World Communion

of Reformed Churches (WCRC), the Council for World Mission (CWM), and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) for a New International Financial and Economic Architecture (NIFEA)"

Some of these points, couched in pleasant but vague terms, might sound laudible, but the WCC socialist agenda peeks out from behind the curtain. "(1) taxation as a tool for promoting redistribution, accountability and sustainability and (2) regulating and democratising finance."

It must be remembered that the WCC has a long history of attacking capitalism and praising socialism and communism. The evidence is overwhelming. The words of Karl Marx would describe the general dogma of the WCC on these issues: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Conclusion

The true Bible-believing Christian most assuredly has great compassion for the poor, the hungry and the homeless. Countless millions of dollars have been given to relieve suf-

fering all over the world. Thousands of faithful missionaries have given of their lives to bring the precious gospel of Christ to the "uttermost part of the earth," and to relieve suffering in many ways.

Ephesians 4:28 tells us that a man who steals must stop his sin, "but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

The WCC grand ecumenical vision of governments stealing from him that hath to "redistribute" it to those who do not have, is NOT the teaching of the Word of God.

Instead of this false and futile here-on-earth utopian vision of the WCC, let us "abound to every good work" to help those in need, but put our confidence in Him who promises us: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful (Revelation 21:4-5). •

ICCC, WCC Announce Themes for World Assemblies

The International Council of Christian Churches will be holding its 20th World Congress from January 22-29, 2020, in Puerto Montt, Chile. The theme will be "God Is Love," from 1 John 4.

The World Council of Churches announced earlier this year that its 11th World Assembly will be held in 2021 in Karlsruhe, Germany. The proposed theme, recently announced by WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit, will be: "The Love of Christ Compels Us," from 2 Corinthians 5:14.

The ICCC theme was selected before there was any knowledge of the WCC theme.

In God's good providence, this will allow the ICCC to present the many Biblical aspects of God's love in the year before the WCC Assembly.

The many messages, statements and resolutions coming out of the ICCC Congress will be very useful in helping believers everywhere to study and understand this important Biblical teaching, in its various aspects, and to expose the false gospel and presentation of God's love by the WCC.

The ICCC theme verse will be 1 John 4:10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." •

HAVING THE MIND OF CHRIST

Continued from page 1

“Humility” is often defined as “the quality or condition of being humble.” “Humble” is an adjective defined as “marked by meekness or modesty in behavior, attitude or spirit; not arrogant or prideful. Showing deferential or submissive respect. Low in rank, quality or station.” An example is given in Webster’s 1828 Dictionary of “a humble cottage.”

We often speak of ourselves, or someone else, as having been “humbled,” usually meaning: “To curtail or destroy the pride of; to humiliate. To cause to be meek or modest in spirit. To give a lower condition or station to; abase.”

Here in this last definition is the idea in the passage before us. In the incarnation, Christ was given a lower station or condition under which to live. The Shorter Catechism summarizes this matter of Christ’s humiliation. It asks the question: “Wherein did Christ’s humiliation consist?” “Christ’s humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.”

So, if we are to be humble, we must know Christ as He is presented to us in the Gospels, in the New Testament.

Our text, in verse 5, states: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus....” That word “mind” is not speaking of the brain as an organ in our physical bodies, so much as the idea of having a disposition, or way of thinking. Think of it. Christ willingly gave up His preeminence in heaven, and for a moment in time stepped down voluntarily to take upon Himself flesh. Our Catechism states that one of the elements of Christ’s humiliation consists in “His being born.”

The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 2:1-4, before he goes into this matter of the humiliation of Christ, is quite clear that there is a connection between humility and lowliness of mind. There is a contrast between humility, and strife and vainglory. Humility goes a long way to help brethren to live peaceably together.

We are commanded not to do anything if it is going to lend to strife or vainglory. We are to be careful of our words. Paul, in verse 3, says we are to have “lowliness of mind.”

He continues, “Let each esteem other better than themselves....” Not that one is better than the other, but we are to consider one another, to put others first, if you will. We are not to look “every man on his own things”

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest” (Hebrews 2:17).

(verse 4). We are not to be so preoccupied with self that we are dulled to the needs and burdens of others.

If you are going to have the mind of Christ, you are going to be humble. Here, in this passage, Christ is presented as the supreme example of humility. And, the Apostle Paul admonishes us to consider the Lord Jesus Christ’s humiliation as a reason for us to be humble, as an example of what it is to be humble.

There are other examples of humility in the Bible, but Christ is the supreme example. He is humility incarnate. Verse 6 makes it clear that Christ is of the very nature of God; that is, Christ is God. What is true of God is true of Christ.

The word that we have translated “form” has the idea of “the permanent, constant being of a person.” The Greek word *μορφή*, translated “form,” when coupled with the previous word, has the thought that Christ

was, is and always will be God — “Who being in the form of God....” Hebrews 1:3 says: “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” “The express image of His person”: what is true concerning God is true concerning Christ.

In order for us to understand the mind of Christ, in order to understand the humiliation of Christ, we have to first understand who Christ is — that He is deity, He is God. Look back at our text, verse 6: “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God....” The word “equal” has the idea to be on the same basis with something or someone. Christ possessed all the qualities and attributes of God. He is on an equal basis with God. He is God.

In John 5:18, we have these words: “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.” You cannot help when reading the Gospels to see that Jesus’ enemies knew that He claimed to be equal with God. They understood to some extent what He claimed when He claimed to be God. He is God. He made the declaration. He proved it many times.

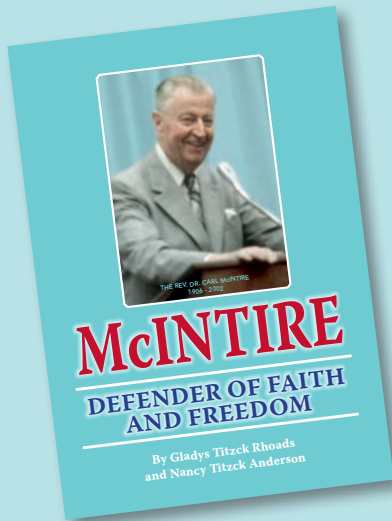
That word “robbery,” used here, has the picture of a thief seeking to snatch or take something that is not his. Jesus did not make false claims when He declared Himself to be equal with God, because He is God. Jesus said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). Jesus Christ’s claims to deity were true affirmations of who He was, who He is, and who He always will be. Jesus Christ says in John 10:30: “I and my Father are one.”

Verses 31-33 of that chapter say, “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those

Get Your Autographed Copy Today!

McINTIRE: DEFENDER OF FAITH AND FREEDOM

The author has graciously offered to donate all funds (minus shipping and handling costs) **for the support of *Redeeming the Time*.**



Hard Cover: \$28.00

\$23.00 + \$5.00 shipping and handling

(Regularly \$28.99 on Amazon before postage)

Paperback: \$21.00

\$16.00 + \$5.00 shipping and handling

(Regularly \$21.99 on Amazon before postage)

Carl McIntire was a founder of the Bible Presbyterian Church. For over 70 years he worked tirelessly to promote the historic Christian faith and to defend liberty. He helped found or lead a number of important ministries, including the American Council of Christian Churches, the International Council of Christian Churches, The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, Shelton College, Faith Theological Seminary, the *Christian Beacon*, and the 20th Century Reformation Hour, to name a few. The authors describe the triumphs and struggles of McIntire's amazing life and ministry.

Make check payable to:

Redeeming the Time • P.O. Box 26281 • Charlotte, NC 28221-6281

works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

Jesus did not seek to correct them. The critic and the unbelieving scholar, doing the devil's bidding, often tell us: "Jesus never claimed to be God. This is just something His disciples attributed to Him." We must wonder, what Bible are they reading?

Note the great contrast in verse 7. He who was very God "made Himself of no reputation and took on him the form of a servant." Now who are we talking about? Jesus Christ. We are to have the mind of Christ. This doesn't mean that we are like Christ because we have His mind, and we can perform miracles and walk on the water. These are some of the misguided things people say. Paul is very clear as to what he is talking about. We do not understand Christ's humility if we do not understand His exaltation, where He was before the incarnation.

Christ did not begin to be. The Son of God has always been. Note that the Son of God "took upon him...." It does not say He began to be when He was born. The Son of God took upon Himself the form of a servant. We have already encountered that word "form" in verse 6. "Form of God"; now, "form of a servant."

This is why we refer to Christ's incarnation as one aspect of His "humiliation." He who existed in eternity as God took upon Himself the form of a servant.

Matthew 17:1-2 tells us: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." In my limited mind, I'm thinking that what we have here is that flesh is peeled away for a moment, and Christ reminds us that He is God in the flesh. He is transfigured before them and "his face did shine

as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

Matthew continues in verses 3-5: "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Notice God didn't say, "Hear ye them."

You know how the Jews had elevated Moses to a place that Moses should not be. It was like they almost worshipped Moses. They also elevated Elijah.

Verses 6-8 continue: "And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said,

Continued on page 10

HAVING THE MIND OF CHRIST

Continued from page 9

Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.” Jesus became a man. He was born of a virgin.

One Christmas, I was witnessing to someone and we were talking about the virgin birth of Christ. This individual was offended to think that Jesus would be born, with all that is involved with human birth. Their thinking was that Jesus just came on the scene, that He was a prince. Needless to say, they have not yet come to Christ. They could not grasp the humility of it all.

That’s why the cross is such an offense to some people. “I must believe in a crucified Saviour? Not only must I believe in the work of another, but in another who was crucified?” “I’ll take my chances on my own merit,” is basically what they are saying. To the Jews, the cross was a stumbling-block. It is a stumblingblock to many Gentiles as well.

Why am I making a big deal out of this? Because, in our text, we see that He who was very God — there has always been the Father, Son and Holy Spirit — took part of our flesh and blood. He appeared in the nature and habit of man. He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, by His own consent.

We cannot say that our participation in the human nature is so. But Christ emptied Himself, divested Himself of the honors and glories of the heavenly world, to clothe Himself with the rags of human nature. He was in all things like to us.

Hebrews 2:14-16 is a great text. It says: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same;” You can see the writer of Hebrews going to great lengths to teach us that Jesus took upon Him our human nature, yet without sin.

He continues: “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”

Christ did not come as an angel. He came into this world as a man. He did not just suddenly come into this world by the blink of an eye. No, He was born and underwent all the miseries of this life.

In Isaiah 52:13, the words of God are recorded: “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.” Yet, by the time chapter 53 concludes, we read in verse 11: “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

He humbled Himself, and we are to have the mind of Christ. We are to be humble. It does not mean that we are to be “milquetoast.” Sometimes humility is misunderstood. Jesus definitely was not “milquetoast.” He spoke directly. He spoke the truth.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest” (Hebrews 2:17). Jesus understands. The Bible says that He does, and you can see Him ministering in the Gospels under all kinds of circumstances.

How would you have liked it if your kindred thought you were mad, that you were a lunatic, that you were crazy? That’s what His kinfolk thought of Him (Mark 3:21). Yes,

Jesus understands. We are told that Jesus washed the disciples’ feet. Peter was offended. In John 13:8, Peter said to Christ: “Thou shalt never wash my feet.” He could not deal with that. What did Jesus say? “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.”

Luke 22:24 says: “And there was also a strife among them [the disciples], which of them should be accounted the greatest.” Remember this is in the context of the Last Supper. Imagine them talking about this at the Last Supper before Christ’s suffering. How Jesus handled that situation was one of the great examples of humility in His life. Jesus could have said: “Don’t you know what I am getting ready to suffer. Don’t you know that I am getting ready to go to the cross to die for your sin.” No, He does not do anything like that. Instead, He says in verses 25-27: “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.”

Jesus had a way of standing things on their head. The Kingdom of God is not like the kingdom of man. In verses 28-30, He told the disciples: “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” My, the humility of Christ! “Let this mind be in you.”

We often refer to Isaiah as the Gospel of the Old Testament. Isaiah 42:1 tells us: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” Here we find that Jesus came into this world to be a Servant, though He was Lord of all.

God's Covenants

Retold in LEGO® Bricks

Cheryl Durand
Illustrated by Geneva Durand



Mrs. Cheryl Durand and daughter Geneva have just published *God's Covenants: Retold in LEGO® Bricks*. The 44-page book, designed for teaching children, begins by defining the term "covenant," and then goes through some of the major covenants between God and man recorded in the Scriptures, and how they apply to us today. Mrs. Durand wrote the text, and Geneva prepared all of the LEGO® creations to go with each lesson.

Bible truth is taught, combined nicely with questions, to spark discussion and facilitate further teaching opportunities, whether the book is being used in a classroom situation, or by a diligent young reader.

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Durand and their family are missionaries in southern Chile with The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

Available in English and Spanish
Full color • Large print • Large Softcover

For ordering information go to:
sermonaudio.com/gracemission

In Isaiah 52:13, the words of God are recorded: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Yet, by the time chapter 53 concludes, we read in verse 11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

The Bible teaches us that before exaltation there must be humility...." A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Proverbs 29:23).

The Bible teaches us that before exaltation there must be humility. Proverbs 15:33: "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility." Proverbs 18:12: "Before destruction the heart

of man is haughty, and before honour is humility." Proverbs 22:4: "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life." Proverbs 29:23: "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit."

What does Paul tell us in our passage, Philippians 2:5-16: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."



Rev. Douglas R. Ardis is a minister in Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church, and is pastor of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC.

"THAT I MAY KNOW HIM ..."

Continued from page 1

The results of our age of short sermons based on "Five Easy Steps" solutions (rather than doctrinal preaching), and a de-emphasis on full-orbed personal Bible study, are coming into stark relief.

We doubt that many respondents realize the implications of their errors. Some may even ask, "Well, those

When nearly a third of the self-identified Evangelicals polled said that "Religious belief is a matter of personal opinion; it is not about objective truth," there is little wonder that many are ignorant concerning basic doctrines of the Bible.

polled are not theologians, so does it really make that much of a difference?" We respond that it indeed makes a vital and critical difference, as seen in the Scriptures and throughout the history of the church. Two of the worst polling results dealt with the matter of Christ and the Holy Spirit and their relationship to the Father in the Godhead.

78% of "Evangelicals" believe that Christ is a being "created" by God

Sadly, 74% answered "Strongly Agree" to the question: "Was Christ the first and greatest being created by God?" Another four percent "Somewhat Agree[d]." In other words, a large majority of professing evangelicals hold to a belief which rocked the early church. It was called Arianism and was denounced as a heresy by the early church fathers.

57% of "Evangelicals" believe that the Holy Spirit is a "force," rather than a "person" of the Godhead

Of equal concern is that more than half of professing evangelicals believe that the Holy Spirit is a "force," rather than a "person" in the Godhead. This also was a major controversy in the early church, which heresy the early church fathers sought to correct.

Wrong beliefs concerning God and attempts to usurp His glory fill the pages of Scripture and go back to the time of the Creation

The Old Testament

At the very beginning of human history, man fell into the estate of sin and misery by disobeying God. Adam and Eve did not eat of the forbidden fruit just to try something new. No, Satan had enticed them with the false promise: "Ye shall be as gods."

The covetous desire of Satan was to usurp God's glory and to bring Him down from His eternal throne. The prophet Isaiah says concerning Satan: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14).

All through the Old Testament, there were many false gods, often made of wood, stone, or precious metals. We read of the frequent confrontations with the prophets of Baal, Dagon, Ashteroth, and so forth. Even God's own people sinned grievously in creating and worshipping a golden calf while Moses was on the mount receiving the Ten Commandments from God. It is no coincidence that the first four of these commandments deal with man's immediate duties to God, and the sin he commits when he

violates them. These are often called "the first table of the Decalogue":

1. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

4. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:3-11).

The New Testament

While Christ was on earth, and throughout the Apostolic period, there was much persecution. Amazingly, this primarily came from the Jewish religious leaders, who had the Scriptures, but were blind to what God taught about Himself. Those who should have known the most were the deepest in spiritual blindness. When Christ declared Himself to be God, they sought to stone Him.

In the book of Acts, we see the religious leaders going repeatedly against the Apostles, often to the civil authorities, because of what the Apostles

taught concerning God. Then, there were all the pagan Roman and Greek gods, with which the Apostles had to contend. The followers of Diana in Ephesus were stirred to great anger due to the teaching of Paul. Paul, on Mars Hill, contrasted the God of the Bible with their gods.

Controversy in Early Church History Concerning the Person of Christ

A plethora of false gods, and false teaching concerning Christ followed the Apostolic Age. Many cults arose, with able Christian apologists showing the error of their often bizarre teachings.

The question concerning Christ being God from all eternity came to a crisis point in the fourth century AD. Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, Egypt, taught that Christ was created by God at a fixed time. In other words, Christ did not always exist and He was different in substance from God. This seriously undermined the deity of Christ, the truth that Christ was indeed God from all eternity. Arius was opposed by Athanasius, then a deacon in Alexandria, who later became Bishop. This controversy affected the entire church throughout Africa, Europe and parts of Asia.

The Council of Nicea, meeting in 325 AD, repudiated the heresy of Arius, stating: "We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made."

The Athanasian Creed² declares: "The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated."

Most of the great creeds of the Church through the centuries, although not mentioning Arianism, include statements which carefully set them as opposed to it. The Westminster Shorter Catechism beautifully and succinctly answers Question 6, "How

many persons are there in the Godhead?": "There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory."

The Christian poet Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, in the fourth century AD, while this controversy was raging, wrote: "Of the Father's love begotten, Ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He, Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore!"³ In other verses, Clemens names Christ as "God and King," and says that our praise is to be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This affirmation of Christ's eternal deity is found in many hymnals today.

Controversy in Early Church History Concerning the Person of the Holy Spirit

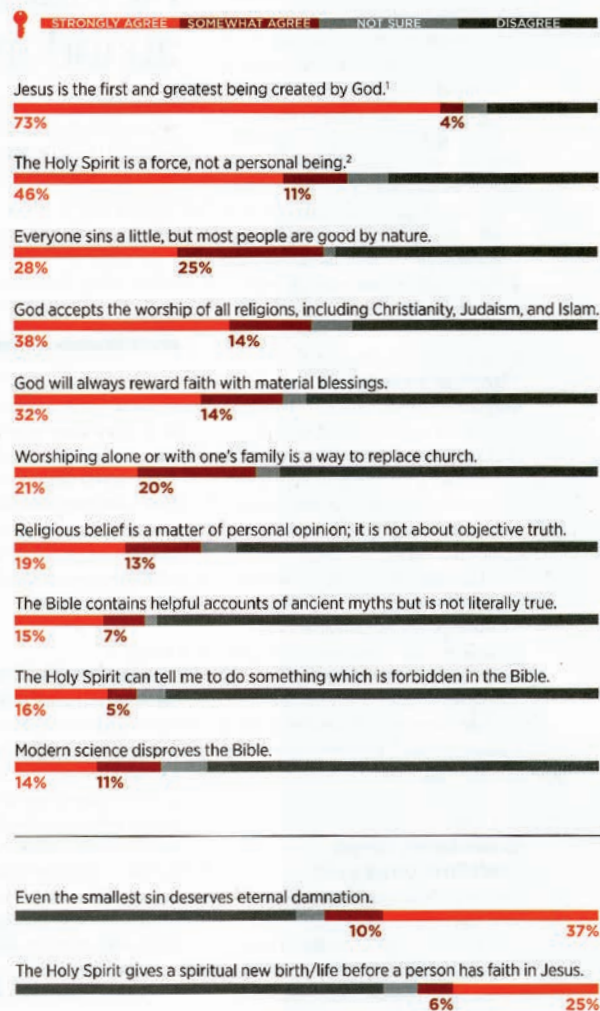
The First Council of Constantinople, in 381 AD, confirmed attributes of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Concerning the Spirit, they declared: "And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets."⁴

The Hymnody of the Church

Throughout history, the doctrine of the Trinity, as presented in the Scriptures, has been the subject of many hymns, often being described in great detail. Many churches in Prot-

Our Favorite Heresies

For the third time, LifeWay Research and Ligonier Ministries examined the theological awareness, or lack thereof, of Americans with evangelical beliefs (using the four-part definition endorsed by the National Association of Evangelicals). Below are 12 areas where today's believers have most gone astray:



¹ Ruled out by First Council of Nicea (325) ² Ruled out by First Council of Constantinople (381)

NOTE: Evangelicals are defined by the NAE as those who strongly agree that the Bible is the highest authority, evangelism is very important, sin can only be removed by Jesus' death, and salvation comes only through trusting in Jesus as Savior.

(reproduced as evidence from Christianity Today, December 2018)

estantism have had "The Doxology" and the "Gloria Patri" as standard parts of their worship each week. Both of these give praise to each person of the Trinity by name.

Following are just a few of many examples which could be given:

Reginald Heber's "Holy, Holy, Holy," contains the words: "God in three persons, blessed Trinity."

Continued on page 14

"THAT I MAY KNOW HIM ..."

Continued from page 13

The Christmas hymn "Angels From the Realms of Glory," by James Montgomery, concludes with these words: "All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son, Evermore your voices raising, to th' eternal Three in One."

Horatius Bonar begins his hymn "Glory Be to God the Father": "Glory be to God the Father, Glory be to God the Son, Glory Be to God the Spirit, Great Jehovah, Three in One."

Charles Wesley's hymn "Soldiers of Christ Arise" declares: "To God, the Father, Son, and Spirit ever blest, The One in Three, the Three in One, Be endless praise addressed."

Even the official U.S. Navy hymn, "Eternal Father Strong to Save," by William Whiting, devotes each of the first three verses to one of the persons of the Godhead in progression. The final verse begins: "O Trinity of love and power."

"What saith the Scripture?"

Despite the events of church history, declarations of church councils, confessions and creeds, or even our wealth of hymnody, as important as they may be, we must always ask the question Paul asked the Roman Christians in Romans 4:3: "For what saith the Scripture?" Although the grand Confessions and Creeds of Christendom have been an extremely helpful aid to the church, the Westminster Confession of Faith XXXI:4 tells us: "All synods or councils, since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err; and many have erred. Therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith, or practice; but to be used as a help in both."

One thing even the casual reader of the Scriptures will find is that it is replete with teaching concerning the attributes of God, who He is, His

great and mighty acts, and the important relationship of the three persons of the Godhead.

Christ is God, the Second Person of the Trinity

When Isaiah prophesied of the coming of Christ, he wrote: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Here one of the titles given to Christ is "the Mighty God." He is not just someone created and sent by God. Christ was very God of very God from all eternity, to all eternity. He was God manifest in the flesh!

**Just knowing facts about
God is not enough. No
mere intellectual acuity
or attainment can ever
save a man's soul. James
deals with this issue head
on: "Thou believest that
there is one God; thou
doest well: the devils also
believe, and tremble"
(James 2:19).**

This testimony is found throughout the Scriptures. John 1:1-3 tells us of Christ ("the Word"): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Christ is identified here as "God." Christ, the Son, is identified as creating "all things." This could not be said if He were a created being.

Jesus Christ identifies Himself as God in a number of places in the New Testament. In John 17, He declares, with no equivocation: "I and my Father are one."

While Christ was here on earth, he asked His disciples: "Whom do men say that I am?" Of course, Christ already knew that most people had no comprehension of who He was. The religious leaders hated Him. The government officials did not understand Him and eventually crucified Him. Even some of His closest followers thought that He had come to overthrow the secular authority and bring in a new political kingdom.

The disciples answered Him, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ." Peter had the correct answer, but He still did not have any real comprehension of what that meant.

Christ sought to teach them what they lacked: "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:27-31).

Elsewhere we are told: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). In Acts 28:23, we find Paul busy "persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." Both the Old and the New Testaments are filled with teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ!

Even while the Apostles were alive, error existed concerning who God is. In Acts 24, Ananias, the high priest, and his elders came before the governor, Felix. Their spokesman, the orator Tertullus, accused Paul of being a "pestilence," of being guilty of "sedition," and of "violating the temple" with his teaching. They had planned to take the law into their own hands and punish Paul, but the representative of the governor forcibly took Paul from them.

As increasingly happens today, these were "trumped up" charges,

which Paul ably showed the Governor to be absurd. After refuting this supposed “circumstantial evidence,” Paul went to the very heart of the matter, showing that he believed in the God of the Bible — the same God that the high priest and elders claimed to worship!

In Acts 24:14, Paul tells Felix: “But this I 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.” Paul’s God was not a creation of his own imagination, but was indeed the God of the Bible!

The Holy Spirit is God, the Third Person of the Trinity

The Holy Spirit is likewise seen throughout all of the Scriptures. “In the beginning,” Genesis 1:2, we are told: “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

The Holy Spirit is shown throughout the Scriptures to be God and a real person — not just some nebulous Force. Romans 8:2 tells us that He is “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus [who] hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” 1 Corinthians 12:11 shows that He has a “will.” He is called “the eternal Spirit” in Hebrews 9:14. In Psalm 139, David uses personal pronouns, and shows that the Spirit is everywhere. He is omnipresent. And David says, “I will praise Thee” — a real personal Being.

The blessed promise from Christ to the believer in John 14:26 further shows the Holy Spirit to be a real person: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Here Christ uses the personal pronouns “I” for Himself and “He” for the Holy Ghost.

To the woman at the well, Christ said: John 4:24: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” To truly

worship God, we must know who He is in all truth. Where do we find the truth? In Christ’s great high priestly prayer, He called upon the Father to “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

Knowing God

To properly know God, we must constantly meditate upon His Word. Although our understanding of God will always be miniscule, the Scriptures give us all that God wants and expects us to know about Him. We must glory in His many wonderful attributes, and we must know the majestic nature of the Godhead — Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The attributes of each person of the Trinity, and the way they function together as One God in the grand plan of redemption is vital to our Christian faith and eternal rest. Even Christ’s Great Commission to us in Matthew 28:19-20 shows the vital importance of all three members of the Trinity in discipling the nations and in Christian baptism: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

But, Just knowing facts *about* God is not enough. No mere intellectual acuity or attainment can ever save a man’s soul. James deals with this issue head on: “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19).

The writer of Hebrews tells us: “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). Only repentance and faith, given to us by the God of the Bible, can make a man righteous in God’s sight, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to him.

May each of us be diligent in our study of God’s Word, so we can know “what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man,” and so we can live in eternal fellowship with Him. John 17:3 tells us: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death ...” (Philippians 3:7-10). •

¹*Christianity Today*, December 2018, reports that for the purposes of the survey, the definition of “evangelicals” by the National Association of Evangelicals was used: “those who strongly agree that the Bible is the highest authority, evangelism is very important, sin can only be removed by Jesus’ death, and salvation comes only through trusting in Jesus as Savior.”

²There is some question as to the author and exact date of this Creed, although its origin is certainly no later than the sixth century AD. It has been in use in the church since that time.

³This is probably the most common translation into English, adjusted so meter, flow and rhyme would make it poetic and singable.

⁴The Eastern Orthodox churches have rejected the word *Filioque* (“*qui ex Patre Filioque procedit*”) in the text, saying that the Spirit only proceeds from the Father. The Western churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have held that the Spirit proceeds equally from the Father and the Son.”



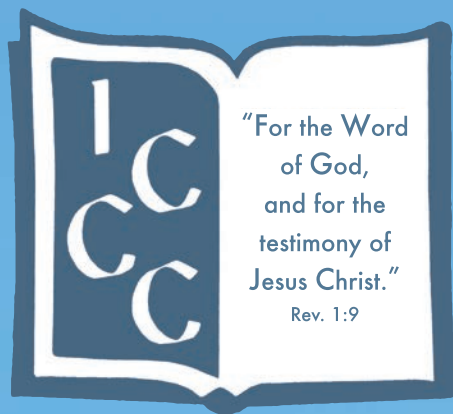
Mr. Brad Gsell is an elder of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and President of the International Council of Christian Churches and of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

GOD IS LOVE

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

20TH WORLD CONGRESS INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

January 22-29, 2020 ♦ Puerto Montt, Chile



STANDING FOR THE HISTORIC CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE 21ST CENTURY