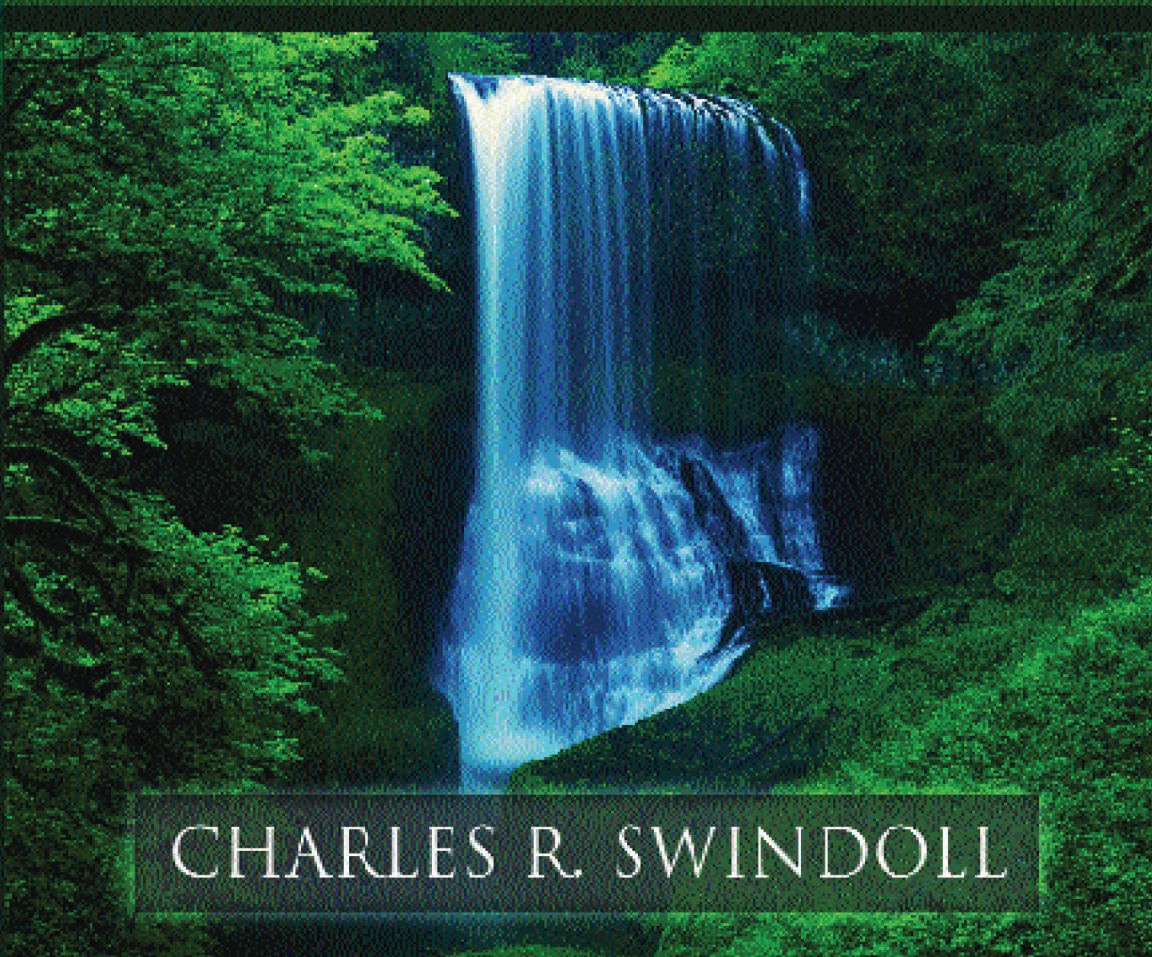


GROWING DEEP IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

• *Essential Truths for Becoming Strong in the Faith* •



CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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THE VALUE OF KNOWING THE SCOOP

ROOT ISSUES

1. Picture in your mind a friend or relative who is younger in the faith than you—perhaps still wrestling with some of the basics of belief in Christ. Picture this individual experiencing a sudden tragedy or crushing disappointment—or perhaps an encounter with a deceptive false teacher. Your friend, really struggling, looks to you for help. Is your grip on Bible knowledge strong enough to help your friend cope? Could you point him or her in the right direction? As you begin this book pray, “Lord, for the sake of _____, I commit myself to this study.” Write that person’s name on a piece of paper and use it for a bookmark. It will be a reminder that a return to your roots may help others who look to you, as much as it helps yourself.
2. Look again at Deuteronomy 6:4–9. If you are a parent of young children, visualize each of the “teaching opportunities” mentioned in verse 7. How might some of these opportunities be captured for God in your home and in your schedule? Note that this verse speaks specifically of teaching your children “on the way.” In those early biblical days there was a great deal of time to talk as people walked from place to place. How might this same principle translate into our fast-paced, freeway-driving culture? Write these ideas in your personal notebook.

3. First Timothy 4:6 speaks of being “*constantly nourished on the words of the faith and . . . sound doctrine.*” What can you change in your daily schedule that would make it easier to draw this kind of nourishment from God’s Word? It may be a matter of eliminating time-wasters, or it may be simply a matter of substituting “the best” in place of “the good.” Nail down your thoughts by writing them out in your notebook.

DON'T FORGET TO ADD A CUP OF DISCERNMENT

ROOT ISSUES

1. Gaining biblical knowledge seems to have at least two built-in dangers . . . the danger of pride and the danger of becoming rigid and narrow-minded. In what ways can you guard yourself against these twin spiritual hazards as you seek to grow in your knowledge of the truth?
2. Take another look at Paul's wholehearted prayer for the Philippian believers in Philippians 1:9–11. What does it mean to "love with discernment"? How does this "way of seeing" affect your relationship with the world? With your family? With fellow believers? Take time to think and pray through a situation in your own life where you might apply this truth.
3. From how many different sources are you drawing your spiritual nourishment? If you find that number is low, list in your notebook three to five additional sources that might help to balance your intake of truth. Your list could include books, booklets, radio broadcasts, tapes, church-sponsored Bible studies, or other sources that come to your mind. Choose at least one from which you might begin receiving benefit this week. There is safety in a multitude of counselors!

GOD'S BOOK— GOD'S VOICE

ROOT ISSUES

1. Does the Bible serve as a shelter for you when the storms rage in your life? It's no good to try and construct a shelter *after* the storm descends . . . you need one ready *before* the winds begin to howl. Take some time to identify at least five “shelter” verses from Scripture—promises of God's unfailing love and sustaining power. (Your pastor or a mature Christian friend might enjoy helping you locate these verses if you're not sure where to start.) Ask your spouse or a friend to hold you accountable to memorize those verses in a reasonable length of time.
2. Only people and God's Word are eternal. That's all! Carefully evaluate your activities over the past week. What portion of your time and energies were devoted to either personally interacting with biblical truth or building that truth into the lives of others? What small (but significant) steps could you take over this coming week to move that percentage toward eternal priorities? Remember to capture these insights in your notebook.
3. How long has it been since you've joined with another person—or perhaps a small group—to work through a Bible study together? If you're uninvolved, consider scheduling a weekly time with one or more believers to search through a portion of God's Word together. Ask the folks at your local Christian bookstore for help in selecting some material suited to your needs.

HANDLING THE SCRIPTURES ACCURATELY

ROOT ISSUES

1. How can you guard against “biblical abuse” as you teach others—or even as you represent God and Scripture in casual conversation? If you realize that you have been using Scripture in a “proof text” manner, determine right now to *always* study the context so that you will *maintain the meaning*.
2. If the Bible you use is full of notes and comments from an unreliable source, perhaps you need to purchase another Bible. By starting over with clean, unmarked pages, you will be able to reconstruct a fresh path to the truth.
3. Commit to memory the “what, who, why, where, and when” statements you read in this chapter. Review them until they are fixed in your mind. Remind yourself of them each time you study the Scriptures.

KNOWING GOD: LIFE'S MAJOR PURSUIT

ROOT ISSUES

1. Schedule a lunch or dinner with a close Christian friend or your spouse (no kids along, please). The agenda? Thinking out loud about the major goals and *direction* of your life. Are you *really* growing in your knowledge of God as the days and weeks slip by? Are you *honestly* walking more closely with Jesus Christ? If not, why not? What might be keeping you from making this goal number one? What would have to change in your life and schedule to shift your focus and perspective in the coming months? Record these thoughts in your notebook. Be honest, practical . . . and don't forget to reserve some time in your evening for prayer.
2. Scripture often condemns people because there is "no room for God in their thoughts." Now, let's get down to the nitty-gritty. How often do WE think about our God during the course of a regular, garden-variety work day? How often do you pause (if only for a moment) to consider the reality and nearness and loving concern of your Lord? Talk to several Christians whom you respect about how *they* do it. Be sure to have your notebook handy so that you can save these valuable insights.

3. Spend some extended time in the Word (you'll probably have to schedule it in advance), reading and reflecting on the power and sovereignty of our great God. Select from passages such as: Isaiah 6, 40; Job 38–41; Psalms 8, 19, 24, 31, 46, 47, 91, 95, 100, 103, 104, 121, 148; Hebrews 1; Revelation 1, 4, 15, 19, 21, 22. You might try reading a number of these passages in a paraphrased version such as *The Living Bible*. As you read, ask the Lord to help you catch a new vision of who He is . . . what He demands . . . and what He can accomplish in and through your life as you trust Him.

LOVING GOD: OUR ULTIMATE RESPONSE

ROOT ISSUES

1. Who are you *encouraging* in the Christian life? Are there one or more individuals who feel the courage to dig deeper, hang on tighter, or look heavenward because of your regular counsel and concern? How about someone *outside* your family circle? Who, for instance, could you encourage with a note or letter? Make it a goal to write such a note this week. It doesn't need to be elaborate . . . just an appropriate Scripture, or a thought about the love and faithfulness of the Lord—and your genuine expression of support. “I care” goes a long, long way.
2. If you have children, project yourself ahead to that day when they will be on their own—even when you may be off the scene. What will they have learned about the priority of loving God by *observing* the lives of their mom or dad? If you find yourself troubled by your “glimpse into the future,” discuss your concerns with your spouse or a close Christian friend. How can you better *model* the priority of loving God?

3. Review Psalm 40, especially the first three verses. Can you remember the last “pit” you found yourself in . . . knee-deep in the muck . . . your heart almost breaking (v. 12)? Do you recall how the Lord heard your cry and reached down to deliver you? Why not follow David’s example and *write* about it? There is something uniquely powerful about *writing* one’s praise and gratitude to God—even if you and God are the only ones who ever see it! Open your notebook to a fresh page and take time to actually write a special letter to God, just pouring out all your joy and appreciation for what He has done. And even if you *still* find yourself in a pit, write to your Father about it. Open your heart to Him. Tell Him how you’re trusting Him to deliver you. This is one letter that will be received and read!

MARY'S LITTLE LAMB

ROOT ISSUES

1. Luke 2 and Matthew 1:18–2:23 may comprise “the greatest story ever told.” Don’t limit this magnificent account to Christmas Eve! It’s too important, too encouraging to be put on the shelf as a “yearly tradition.” Read one or both of these passages out loud—either to yourself or to your family. Reflect on what it meant for God to become a baby . . . and a man. Come, let us adore Him—today!
2. If it is near the Christmas season as you read these words, carefully think about how you might make better use of these days when so many non-Christian men and women, boys and girls think about the Babe, a manger, and Bethlehem. How might you grasp this special opportunity to introduce neighbors and relatives to Mary’s Lamb—the One who was born to die for *all* the sins of *all* mankind? Could you compose a Christmas letter that includes a clear testimony of your faith—or perhaps the simple plan of salvation? How about an “open house” when you could invite in the neighbors for casual conversation and Christmas goodies? (It might open a door for you to speak about your Lord at some future time.) Groups such as SEARCH Ministries offer many creative and practical suggestions for planning such informal gatherings.

3. The headlines of today's newspaper and the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* trumpet what the world considers the "major news" of the day. Actually, what transpires between you and your neighbor or you and your associate at work could have much deeper *eternal* significance. How long has it been since you actually prayed that the Lord would give you the privilege of speaking to someone about your Savior? "You shall be My witnesses," He tells us in Acts 1:8. A witness simply reports what he or she has seen and experienced—doesn't have to be a "sermon" or a dumptruck-load of information. Just a word at the right time about the greatest Hope in all the world. The *big* news is the Good News. Write down your prayer request in your notebook and date it.

WHEN THE GOD-MAN WALKED AMONG US

ROOT ISSUES

1. Review Matthew 13:53–57 and Mark 3:20–21. Jesus knew what it meant to be misunderstood by friends and family. Have you experienced the pain of being misunderstood recently? What clues can you find in 1 Peter 2:18–23 about our Lord’s response to unfair treatment? Look a little further on in 1 Peter 3:8–18a for even more encouragement!
2. Memorize Hebrews 1:3 and John 1:1–3 and/or John 14:9 so that you will have an answer for those you meet who say, “Jesus may have been a great teacher—but He wasn’t God.” When someone says, “Well, who do *you* say He is?” be ready with a reply!
3. Remember my plea for color and imagination in chapter 2? Reread Matthew 14:22–33. Only this time, *put yourself there*. This is no fairy tale—it really happened. Do your best to visualize the whole scene in vivid detail . . . the surging waves, that eerie night, the sight of a figure in the distance walking on the water. As soon as you have the opportunity tell that story to a child to help that little one understand “who He really is” (TOTALLY AWESOME). Or, visualize a similar scene in Luke 8:22–25. This time describe to an adult how Jesus—as God!—specializes in calming the waves and winds that come into your life.

CHANGING LIVES IS JESUS' BUSINESS

ROOT ISSUES

1. Project yourself *back* ten years. Do your best to recall where you were living, what you were involved in, what you were concerned about, what you struggled with, where you were in your walk with Christ. Can you do it? Now . . . ask yourself the tough question: How much have I *grown* during these past ten years? How is my life different? If you can see real strides in your knowledge, discernment, relationship with Christ, and in demonstrating the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23), take time to praise your Lord for His gracious leading and work in your heart. If you're discouraged by what you see, claim the truth of Philippians 3:12–14 and press on! He promises to be at work in our lives as we yield to Him (Philippians 2:13).
2. The Samaritan woman went to the village well at noon on one “ordinary” day, expecting to draw her usual day’s ration of water. Instead, she came face to face with the living God. And her life was changed forever. Do you imagine that your tomorrow will be just like your yesterday . . . that nothing could lift you out of your well-worn rut? Sounds like you’ve stopped believing in a God with the power to bring *change*. He can make it happen! He can shatter old habits . . . blast apart old

attitudes . . . wash away old resentments and hurts . . . push aside old fears and limitations and stereotypes. Yes, He can! Begin your tomorrow by meditating on Philippians 2:13 and Colossians 1:29. It's HIS energy that's at work in our lives, making the difference. Ask your Father to cleanse you, fill you with His Spirit, and use you in *any* way He sees fit. Then watch Him go to work!

3. Know a "doubting Thomas" who is struggling in his or her sorrow and perplexity with the reality of a loving God? Perhaps others have already written this individual off. Don't you do it! Take time this week to make contact with your wounded friend . . . a call or a note or a visit. Don't judge or preach. Just assure him or her of your friendship and concern, *no matter what*. Then . . . keep praying. The Lord has a way with tender-hearted Thomases.

THE SPIRIT WHO IS NOT A GHOST

ROOT ISSUES

1. Is the Holy Spirit “a real and relevant force” in your life? This will take a little thought. Open your notebook and take a few minutes to jot down the five biggest challenges facing you in your life these days. Name them and number them. Now . . . can you feel the weight of those daily struggles bite into your shoulders . . . that old tightness in the pit of your stomach? Let the heaviness of your list pull you down to your knees. Ask your Father to show you what it means to have the Spirit of God resident *within* you. Ask Him to shoulder the weight of these constant struggles (1 Peter 5:7). Consciously yield your challenges to the Helper’s control . . . to His invisible yet limitless power (Ephesians 3:16). Don’t get up from your knees until your shoulders—and your heart—feel lighter.
2. When the words of Jesus at the Last Supper finally began to sink in, the disciples were seized with panic. They could scarcely hear the vital information the Lord wanted to communicate to them. “I have so much to tell you,” He said to them, “but I know you can’t handle it right now” (see John 16:6, 12). It would be later, when their hearts were quieter, that the Spirit would guide them into the truth (16:13). Isn’t that just like us? The Spirit’s still, small voice is so easily

drowned out by those feelings of fear, worry, dread, or panic that we experience when life's circumstances press in on us. Yet it is precisely in those moments that He has much to share with us! The next time you find pressure mounting in your life, try this: Find a restful setting where you can be alone for thirty minutes to an hour. Find a quiet booth in a coffee shop . . . go for an evening walk . . . find a room in a church . . . just get away from the noise and hassle for a while. Ask the Spirit of God to quiet your heart and speak to you while you focus on your Lord and His Word. Don't miss the opportunity to hear His voice and benefit from His counsel in the midst of your struggle and pain. He is ready to help!

3. Did you carefully consider the fourfold prayer suggested at the end of this chapter . . . MELT me, MOLD me, FILL me, USE me? On a fresh page in your notebook jot down some *specific* ideas about what each one of these aspects of the Spirit's work could imply in your life.

FROM CREATION TO CORRUPTION

ROOT ISSUES

1. Have you thought of work—your daily tasks—as a curse? A dread? Applying what you’ve learned about the power of God’s Holy Spirit within you, ask the Lord to give you a new vision—a new attitude toward the “garden” He has given you to tend. If difficult on-the-job relationships with other people have contributed to your work anxieties, ask a friend to join you in praying specifically for the individuals and situations that produce the most tension. Don’t depend on your own strength!
2. Children have no difficulty at all accepting the truths of biblical creation. It’s *adults* who are bothered by all the phony intellectual baggage that accompanies this vital subject. Take the first opportunity you find to talk to a young child about the wonder of God’s creation as revealed in Genesis. If possible, highlight the discussion by a walk outside to observe things such as flowers, leaves, trees, and so on. Take time to carefully note the child’s observations and questions. The questions can be tough—like, why did God make flies? But you’ll never have a better opportunity to gain a fresh, unspoiled perspective on God’s marvelous handiwork. Pray with the child to thank God for all that He has made.

3. In the days of their innocence, Adam and Eve seemed to have a special time of day set aside to walk and talk with their God. When they didn't show up one day both they and God knew something was terribly wrong. Do you have a daily appointment with God—a special time reserved for just the two of you . . . a time when you give yourself to reading His Word and listening for His footsteps . . . for His voice? You've probably heard preachers and teachers suggest a *regular, daily* time with the Lord again and again. What will it take for you to begin? Ask someone to "hold you accountable" to spend time alone with the Lord each day—even if for only five or ten minutes. Ask your friend to check on you once a week for three or four weeks. If you have no idea how to start a consistent time with God, check at a Christian bookstore for the little booklet *Seven Minutes With God*, published by Inter-Varsity Press.

EXPOSING THE DARK SIDE

ROOT ISSUES

1. A problem we all have at one time or another is allowing unconfessed sin to build up in our lives—cutting us off from fellowship with our Lord and generally making us miserable. What specific things happened in David’s life when he refused to confess his sin (Psalm 32:3–4)? What happens in your life when you have held onto certain sins, resisting the Holy Spirit’s voice? What did David find to rejoice about after he “came clean” before the Lord? Think of at least one practical way you might remind yourself to “keep short accounts with God”—that is, coming to Him in confession *immediately* after you become aware of sin in your life.
2. If you have not done so already, memorize what has become one of the most frequently quoted and beloved promises in all of the Bible, 1 John 1:9.

3. Identify the “danger areas” in your life—those tendencies or weaknesses that carry the greatest hazard of plunging you into sin. Carefully evaluate what activities, situations, or associations during the course of an average week bring you closest to those areas of “thin ice.” (In David’s case, a particular *place* on his rooftop at a particular *time* in the evening gave him a particular *view* that led him into disaster. The *situation* of idle time also seemed to be a dangerous one for the king.) Identifying these dangers is a very important step. Many need to avoid proximity to alcoholic beverages and the availability of habit-forming drugs. For others of us it’s airport newsstands. Or certain situations with co-workers of the opposite sex. Or the strong urge to overeat. It is also very important to get prayer support from your spouse or a close friend. Having someone “check up on you” from time to time in these highly sensitive, highly dangerous areas can literally mean the difference between victory and defeat. We need each other! Let’s call for help.

“MR. SMITH, MEET YOUR SUBSTITUTE”

ROOT ISSUES

1. I can vividly recall conversations with individuals who resisted the idea that they needed a Savior. Instead, they pointed out to me all the good things they had been “doing,” feeling that it would “balance out on the scales” when they stood before God. How might you respond to that line of reasoning? To what Scriptures might you direct such an individual? What illustrations could you use to help him or her get a grasp on the central truth of this chapter?
2. Become familiar with a simple gospel presentation that clearly illustrates how we cannot reach God through our own efforts. Booklets such as *Steps to Peace with God* (Billy Graham) and *The Four Spiritual Laws* (Campus Crusade for Christ) and *The Bridge to Life* (NavPress) are good examples. Choose one and buy several copies of it—keeping one handy in your wallet, pocket, or purse. You might meet a Mr. Smith or Miss Smith this week who needs to meet the Substitute.
3. I’ve quoted a bit from Romans 3 and 4 in this chapter. Carve out some time this week to get a feel for this liberating portion of Scripture. Read Romans 3–5, preferably in two different translations of Scripture, if you have them. (Reading these verses in either *The Living Bible* or the J. B. Phillips paraphrase is an added treat.) Ask the Lord to give you fresh insight as you trace this all-important faith-root.

THE REMEDY FOR OUR DISEASE

ROOT ISSUES

1. Read, contemplate, and *personalize* Isaiah 53 in a good paraphrase, such as The Living Bible. Can you visualize the Lord Jesus being crushed and weighed down by *your* sins? Find an “alone place” . . . an unhurried moment . . . and thank Him for dying for you so that you can experience daily “newness of life” (Romans 6:4).
2. Imagine the kind of letter you might write to someone who had risked his or her own life to plunge into a swollen river and rescue you from drowning. Have you ever taken time to thank the Lord Jesus for literally laying down His life so that you could experience salvation and eternal life? Knock the rust off your pen once again, open up your notebook, and write a letter of heartfelt gratitude and praise to your Savior for what He did for *you*.
3. Are there any “symbols” in your home—perhaps a cross, a figurine, a family Bible, or an artist’s conception of Jesus that might draw away the adoration, attention, and honor that belongs to the Lord alone? Make a careful evaluation and deal decisively with that which could potentially become a stumbling block to you.

HIS COMING IS SURE . . . ARE YOU?

ROOT ISSUES

1. The moviemakers and booksellers of the world throw around lines like “nonstop excitement” or, “incredible action” or, “gripping narrative.” Well, maybe. But compared to 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, their stuff is about as exciting as reading the telephone book or watching reruns of “Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood.” Talk about high drama! Take a walk outside, weather permitting, with your New Testament in hand. Read again this startling glimpse into the future—*your* future. Let your eyes sweep the skies. Feel the thunder and joy and awe. Remind yourself that this experience could happen at any moment—even before you return from your walk . . . or draw your next breath. Let your Lord know that you are watching for His return.
2. It’s good to contemplate our Lord’s sudden descent from heaven . . . and yet Scripture urges us to do more than stand around staring at the sky. The last words of the Thessalonians passage in this chapter urge us to “*comfort* one another with these words.” The Greek term Paul uses here for “comfort” is translated as “encourage” in 1 Thessalonians 3:2. It’s from the Greek terms *para*, meaning “beside, alongside,” and *kaleo* “to call.” *Called alongside*. In one of my earlier

books I noted that this implies more than a shallow sympathy card with rhyming words and gold-glitter greeting. It is eternally more than a “slap on the back” or a quick “cheer up” bit of advice. Paul was writing to a group of people who were enduring intense pressure and persecution for their faith. And he’s saying, “Listen, come alongside one another and *encourage* each other with this thought—Jesus is coming back! We’ll meet Him—together—in the clouds!” Watch for an opportunity in the coming days to come alongside a struggling fellow believer with the encouragement contained in this passage. When it arrives, comfort!

3. Memorize 1 John 3:2–3. Verse 3 says: “Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” What does it mean, in a very practical way, for you to live with your hope *fixed* on Him? What impact should the knowledge of His imminent return have on the way you live? Why is this so? Write about these thoughts in your notebook.

UNTIL HE RETURNS ... WHAT?

ROOT ISSUES

1. Write the four “watchwords” I suggested in the front of your Bible or—better still—at the beginning page of each new month if you use a date book or calendar. OCCUPY, PURIFY, WATCH, WORSHIP. To cement these concepts in your mind, explain to someone else the life-impact of each of these words.
2. Why do we usually wait until New Year’s Eve—or perhaps after a near brush with death—to soberly weigh the investments of our time, money, and abilities? The truth is, we could find ourselves face to face with our Master *at any moment*. And we should be ready to give an accounting of our activities on His behalf. Consider again the searching truths of the Lord’s parable in Luke 19:11–27. Does the story suggest anything to you about the manner in which you are living your life? Ask the Spirit of God to underline areas where you need to seek change.
3. Do you find the thought of Christ’s return a *dread* rather than a *joy* to contemplate? If you do, talk about your feelings with your pastor or a close Christian friend.

VISITING THE *REAL* TWILIGHT ZONE

ROOT ISSUES

1. Contemplate once again the searching words of Moses' prayer in Psalm 90. Pause at verse 10. If you knew for sure that you would pass from this earth at the age of seventy, how many years of life would you have left? Sobering? Time is a very limited resource, isn't it? Pull out your calculator and take it a step further. How many *days* would that leave you in your life's hourglass . . . how many *hours*? Keying off Moses' words in verse 12, what does it mean to *you* —to your priorities—to present to God "a heart of wisdom"?
2. What incident within the last year reminded you of Paul's assertion in 2 Corinthians 4:16 that "our outward man is decaying," or temporary? Are you living in the reality of the *second* half of that verse? What does the specific phrase "day by day" suggest to you?
3. If you'd like to pass along some of these thoughts about heaven, hell, and our eternal destiny in a concise, "transferable" form, you might want to consider buying several copies of my booklet *DESTINY: Choosing to Change the Course of Your Life* (Multnomah Press, 1982) at a Christian bookstore. Give them to those who are considering the issues of knowing Christ. Explain why you want them to read it. After several days get back in touch with them.

AN INTERVIEW WITH ONE FROM BEYOND

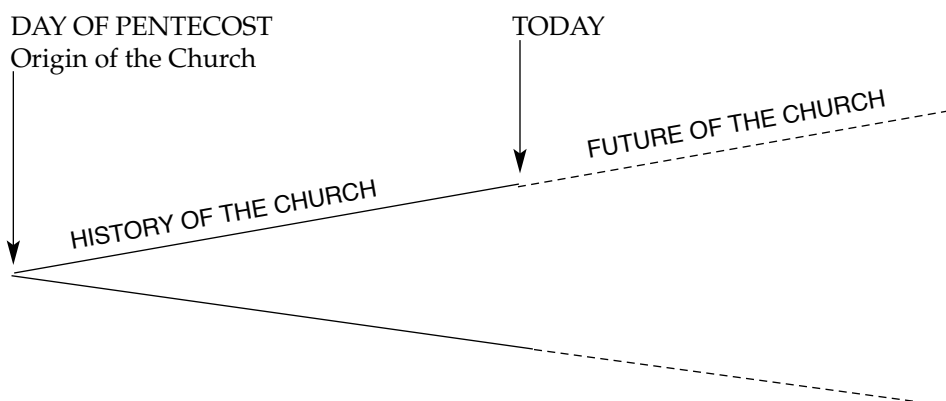
ROOT ISSUES

1. While the content of this crucial chapter is still fresh in your memory, write down your personal response to what you have encountered. What are your feelings? What did you learn—or relearn? How do you think the Lord might lead you to respond to what you’ve read?
2. Besides the sobering glimpse into the afterlife provided by Luke 16:19–31, there are some serious matters to consider about *this* life. Do you, for instance, have any “Lazaruses” living near your “front gate”? Near your community? Have you seen the faces of the poor looking at you from the “gate” of your television . . . or magazines in your home? What is the danger of habitually closing your eyes and ears to the desperate needs of the poor? Consider some of the following scriptures and ask the Lord how He might lead you to respond: Matthew 25:31–46; Psalm 82:3–4; Proverbs 14:31; Proverbs 21:13.
3. Luke 16:29–31 offers startling evidence of the Scripture’s power to impact lives. Take a close look at these verses and compare them to the ringing words found in Hebrews 4:12. In what ways could you incorporate this powerful force for God into your daily contacts, correspondence, and conversations?

GOD'S BODY- BUILDING PROGRAM

DAY OF PENTECOST
Origin of the Church

TODAY



ROOT ISSUES

1. Every local church body—if it is alive and animated by the Spirit of God—has a “cutting edge” . . . areas of the local community or world community where its impact for the Lord Jesus Christ is being felt and is making a difference. Where is your church’s cutting edge? Are you part of the “action” . . . in the front lines of ministry? Through faithful, informed prayer? In a strategic support ministry? As you pray about your role in the King’s Army, consider investing some focused conversation time on these issues with someone in your church’s leadership.

2. Let the words of 1 Corinthians 15:58 sift down into the deepest part of your being as you draw encouragement and motivation for service from this marvelous promise.
3. Generations of popular “Wild West” novelists have created the image of the self-sufficient frontiersman . . . the squint-eyed, close-lipped, saddle-hardened, raw-boned fella who needs no one, trusts no one, and leans on no one (except maybe his horse). This mythology has penetrated every facet of American life . . . including the Church. How does this go-it-alone mentality stack up against the truths expressed in 1 Corinthians 12? Read through that crucial chapter once again asking the Holy Spirit to help you examine your own attitudes. Record your response in your notebook. This would be a good time to express in writing your commitment to the Church.

THREE CHEERS FOR THE CHURCH

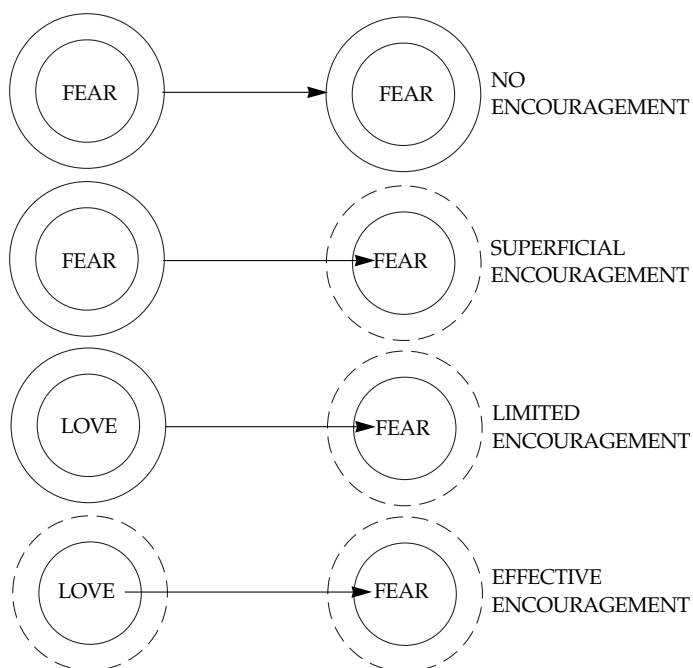
ROOT ISSUES

1. When you hear that someone within your local church body is hurting because of a disappointment or loss, is your first thought—"What can I do to show my love and the love of Christ to that person?" or is it, "Well, someone else will surely do something—I don't even know him or her that well." Let Romans 12:9–15, 1 John 4:7–12, and Philippians 2:4 guide you as you seek to become a wider, deeper channel for the love of our Lord within His Body.
2. Are you helping your children learn faithfulness to the Lord and to His people through *giving* . . . perhaps by encouraging them to set aside a portion of their allowance for the Lord's work? How about considering a special "family project," perhaps selecting a missionary, "adopting" a Third World child, or assisting a struggling family in your community? Let the children feel the excitement and see the results as they learn to express the love of Christ through giving of their own means.

3. Have you ever felt “unprepared” for a time at the Lord’s Supper? You felt, perhaps, like you had to do a quick “heart search” for unconfessed sin in your life. Or a “hurry-up” meditation on what the body and blood of our Lord really means to you in a personal way. While there is nothing wrong with either of these actions, you may find the time at the Table to be a much more meaningful worship experience if you begin your heart preparation on *Saturday*. Before you slip between the covers that night, take a few minutes to ponder the familiar words of 1 Corinthians 11:23–31 . . . or perhaps one of the “confession” psalms such as Psalm 32 or 51 . . . or one of the Gospel accounts of that meal in the Upper Room or those dark hours on the cross. Ask your Lord to meet with you in a new way as you come to that simple meal.

ENCOURAGEMENT SERVED FAMILY STYLE

LEVELS OF ENCOURAGEMENT



ROOT ISSUES

1. Hebrews 10:22 *urges* us to draw near to the Father! *Urges* us to find cleansing and renewal through the blood of Christ! Then, when we have been cleansed and sense the nearness of our God, verses 24–25 *urge* us to pass that supernatural encouragement along—family style! But it begins with that vertical relationship between you and the Lord, doesn't it? Have you “drawn near” to your Father today, confidently claiming the blood of Jesus as your passport into His presence? Hear His invitation in these verses and respond with all your heart.
2. Hebrews 10:24 suggests “let us consider” how to stimulate and encourage one another. In other words, it takes some careful, creative thought—it doesn't happen automatically. I like the way the Amplified Bible renders it:

And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities.

Think of three individuals whom you would like to encourage over the next few weeks. Now, do what the text says . . . *consider*. Think and pray it through. Seek discernment from the Holy Spirit to discover practical, appropriate methods. And then perform a courage transfusion!


3. In this chapter we've looked at the awesome power of the “encouraging word.” Scriptures like Matthew 12:36–37 and Ephesians 4:29 underline what Solomon wrote again and again in the Proverbs. If you have the courage, ask a close friend or associate or spouse to comment on the content of your casual conversation since they have known you. Are your words generally positive, “edifying,” encouraging? What steps could you take to both “monitor” your speech and turn it in a direction that builds others and praises God?

WORSHIP: LET IT SHINE! LET IT SHINE!

ROOT ISSUES

1. Looking for something to read when you finish this book . . . something that might help you cultivate your own private worship of the Lord? For an unforgettable experience, dip into the writings of A. W. Tozer. Classics such as *The Pursuit of God*, or *Worship: The Missing Jewel of the Evangelical Church* are available through your local Christian bookstore—or perhaps your church library.
2. Is the music of worship a part of your daily life? Choose a few choruses, Scripture songs, or perhaps a grand old hymn or two to commit to memory. Then, rediscover the joy of singing your praise and adoration back to the Lord. Why let “the professionals” on your stereo or car radio have all the privilege of making music for the King. Don’t worry if you can’t carry a tune. If your spirit is in harmony with His, the music will be beautiful . . . and God will be well pleased. Let it shine!
3. You may or may not be pleased with all the aspects of the “worship service” at your church. Nevertheless, you can worship—with all your heart! Make up your mind on Sunday morning that you *will* worship the Lord through every aspect of the service—through the singing, the offering, the praying and the preaching. Refuse to let distractions or wandering thoughts pull your attention and concentration away from the living God and His Word. Give yourself totally to the worship of your God and Savior during those brief minutes. Let that hour of worship set the pace for the rest of your week.

A GLOSSARY OF MAJOR TERMS

ne of the most helpful ways to understand the Bible is through a serious study of the doctrinal terms contained in it. While a knowledge of such is no guarantee of spiritual success, this knowledge does give the Christian a proper orientation to life and a needed discernment in this day of confusion and error.

This glossary can be especially helpful when you come across terms that you've never really understood. The cutting edge of your Christian faith is kept sharp by an understanding of the key terms—not only a definition of each but also their relationship to other key terms. Although there are less than 150 major terms defined in this glossary, you may discover that the ones you encounter most often are included.

The definitions are purposely nontechnical, designed to clarify that which can be confusing or misleading. Scripture references have been added to help you identify particular terms with a biblical setting. It is advisable that you take the time to look up each reference when you want to expand your understanding of the term.

Advocate: One who undertakes in the cause of another. Both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are recognized as advocates on behalf of the believer (1 John 2:1; John 14:16; Romans 8:26–27).

Agnostic: One who believes that the existence of any ultimate reality (such as God) is unknown and probably unknowable. The Greek term *Agnostos* appears only in Acts 17:23, where it is rendered “unknown.”

Alpha and Omega: The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This expression appears three times in the New Testament (Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13) and in each case has in mind totality, infinity, and/or eternity. The expression is essentially the same as God's words recorded in Isaiah, “. . . I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me” (44:6).

Amen: Originally a Hebrew word meaning “reliable, sure, true,” it now signifies one's firm belief, “I believe it,” “surely,” “yes, indeed!”

Amillennialism: The belief that there is no sufficient ground for the expectation of a literal thousand-year reign of Christ upon the earth in the future. This belief holds that there will be a general resurrection and judgment of the believers and unbelievers synchronized with the second advent of Christ. Amillennialists believe Christ is now reigning in His kingdom.

Angelology: *Angel* is derived from the Greek word *angelos*, meaning “messenger” or “sent one.” The angels are messengers sent from their Master. This is the study of the origin, activity, and personality of all the angels.

Anthropology: *Anthropos* means “man, mankind” in Greek. This title refers to the doctrinal study of humanity.

Anthropomorphism: Derived from two Greek words, *anthropos* (man) and *morphe* (form), it is the term used to attribute certain human forms to God; for example, “feet” of God in Exodus 24:10, “hand” of the Lord in Joshua 4:24, “arm” of the Lord in Isaiah 53:1, and “heart” of God in Hosea 11:8.

Anthropopathism: Ascribing human feeling or emotion to God; for example, “repentance” of God in Genesis 6:6, “anger” of the Lord in Numbers 11:1, and “laughter” of God in Psalm 2:4.

Anti-semitism: Hostility in thought, word, or action against the Jews.

Apocrypha: From a Greek word meaning “hidden.” It is the title given to the thirteen books written during the between-the-Testaments era which contain, among other things, historical events of the Jews of that time. Conservative, evangelical Christians deny that they are inspired writings. They are not a part of the completed canon of Scripture. They are never quoted by any New Testament author. Also, the teachings of purgatory, prayers for the dead, and salvation by works are sourced in these books. The Roman Church declared them to be canonical in 1548 at the Council of Trent.

Apostasy: The act of departing from one’s faith; abandonment of belief in the basic doctrines of Christianity and the renunciation of the standards of the faith (2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1–5).

Ascension: The doctrinal belief that the God-man, Jesus Christ, bodily left the earth forty days after His resurrection, thus ending His earthly ministry until His second advent (Acts 1:1–11). His acceptance into heaven by God the Father at this time verified the Father’s satisfaction in the life and death of His Son while he was upon the earth.

Assurance: Confidence that right relations exist between oneself and God. Do not confuse this with eternal security. See 1 John 5:10–12 for a direct statement of spiritual assurance.

Atheism: The denial of the existence of God. This is a biblical term used, for example, in Ephesians 2:12, translated “without God.” It is a transliterated Greek word: *A* (negative prefix) and *Theos* (God).

Atonement: An all-inclusive word that describes, in general, all that Jesus Christ accomplished by His death on the cross. The term is found only in the Old Testament, where it means “to cover” and carries with it the thought of putting sin out of sight, covering it over by blood. The New Testament counterpart for this term is *redemption*, as found in Romans 3:24 and Ephesians 1:7.

Believer: A person who has received the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior (John 1:12; 3:16; Acts 16:31). Synonymous with being a Christian.

Bibliology: The study of the doctrines related to the Bible.

Blasphemy: Taking the name of God upon the lips in an empty, vulgar, idle, and trifling manner; an irreverent use of God’s name in oaths and curses addressed to people or things. In Matthew 12:22–37 Jesus addresses Himself to this very issue, since the Pharisees attributed the work of God to the devil—a blasphemous accusation.

Canon: The collection or list of Bible books that are recognized as genuine, inspired Holy Scripture. The collection is complete with thirty-nine Old Testament books and twenty-seven New Testament books in the canon.

Carnal: The term used to describe the fleshly state of a believer who is controlled by his sinful nature rather than by the Holy Spirit. While in this state, no eternal rewards are accrued, Scriptural intake is nil, and divine discipline frequently occurs (1 Corinthians 3:1–4).

Christian: The title of one who has personally received the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. A biblical term, appearing three times in Scripture (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). One

who embraces the teachings of Christ as the basis of his faith and practice. Synonymous with *believer*.

Christology: “Christ” is at the heart of this major term. This is the study of the doctrines related to the second Person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christophany: an appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in bodily form prior to His incarnation. He is most often referred to as “the angel of the Lord” at those times.

Church: Two possible meanings: (1) the *local* assembly that is established for the purpose of fellowship, prayer, worship, instruction, and the administration of the ordinances (Acts 2:42), and (2) the *universal* Body of Christ into which all believers are placed as members at the moment of salvation. This universal Church was begun at Pentecost (Acts 2) and will culminate its growth when Jesus Christ returns in the clouds for His own (1 Thessalonians 4:13–17). A synonym of the universal Church is “bride of Christ.” See Ephesians 5:22–27 for this analogy.

Confession: With reference to sin in the believer’s life, this term has in mind the admission of sins for the purpose of restoring temporal fellowship with the Lord. It is to be noted that the believer, technically, does not need to “plead for forgiveness” from God; rather, he or she simply and openly agrees with God that it is sin and humbly acknowledges it, then claimate the forgiveness that is promised in 1 John 1:9. The term comes from a Greek word *Homologeō* meaning “to say the same thing.” Hence, the believer says the same thing about sin that God says, namely, that it *is* sin and displeasing to God. When wrong has affected another person, the believer is to go and seek reconciliation through an admission of his offense and guilt—according to Matthew 5:23–26 and James 5:16. The transaction is not complete nor is the conscience completely clear until that part of the transaction is accomplished.

Covenant: A compact, promise, or agreement between two parties binding them mutually to undertakings on each other’s behalf. God made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12:1–3 and with others during biblical days. He also promised a “new covenant” through Jeremiah (31:31–33).

Creation: The doctrine of the miraculous origin of the universe by the power of the Trinity apart from previously-existing matter. This act is described in Genesis 1 and 2 along with John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16–17 (note “Let us” in Genesis 1:26).

Cross: The framework of wood upon which Christ was crucified (Matthew 27:32–50). It is also a synonym of the terms *sacrifice*, *suffering*, and *death* (Galatians 6:14 and Matthew 16:24). It is used symbolically for “death to self” in Luke 9:23.

Crown: With reference to eternal rewards, the believer will receive yet future, tangible evidences of God’s satisfaction in his earthly life. These rewards are described in the New Testament as “crowns.” There are at least five specific “crowns” promised the believer for faithfulness in various aspects of living for God’s glory while on earth. These crowns will be distributed at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10) after the translation of the Church. Ultimately, the crowns will be cast before the Lord Jesus in heavenly worship (Revelation 4:9–11).

Deacon: Literally, “servant.” One of the categories of leadership within the local assembly. Most likely, the deacons were instituted in Acts 6 when the need for more time in prayer and the ministry of the Word for the apostles arose (Acts 6:1–7). The qualifications for deacons are revealed in 1 Timothy 3:8–13.

Death: Though there are several different deaths mentioned in the Bible, the idea of “separation” is seen in each one. Most commonly, this refers to the separation of the soul/spirit from the body when *physical* death on earth occurs (Genesis 5:5, 8, 11; John 11:14).

Decalogue: Another word for the Ten Commandments. Not a biblical term.

Deity: The character or essential nature of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Demons: The innumerable company of fallen angels who chose to follow Satan when he

was cast out of his heavenly abode in eternity past. They are his personal emissaries who carry out his evil plan upon earth until their ultimate judgment and doom. They have the ability to obsess and possess animals and mankind, working havoc in and through the lives of their victims. They energize idolatry, immorality, and every form of human wickedness (1 Corinthians 10:20; Revelation 9:20–21), inspire false teachers (1 John 4:1–2), and exercise influential power over governmental leaders in the satanic world system (Daniel 10:13; Ephesians 6:12). Demons exist today, comprising the invisible forces of darkness and wickedness that wage constant warfare against the forces of right.

Depravity: Every human being is as bad off as he can possibly be in the sight of God. The person without Christ is totally and completely dead in his spiritual life. Apart from new life through Christ, he or she remains in this condition of spiritual death, totally unable to understand in experience the value and meaning of the work of Christ or the Word of God (Romans 3:10–18; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1–9; 1 Corinthians 2:14).

Disciple: A pupil, learner, or follower. A *general* term sometimes referring to Christ's chosen twelve, sometimes to many others who listened to His teachings (but not necessarily believers). All believers, however, could be called disciples in that they are being taught of God through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Jesus describes the cost of genuine discipleship in Luke 14:25–33.

Dispensation: A period of time on earth in which believers are given the opportunity to fellowship with God through a specified way of life in accordance with certain rules of life . . . and unbelievers are made aware of their inability to have fellowship with God in themselves. Each dispensation begins with a unique blessing and opportunity, contains a test upon man's obedience, and ends in judgment. Grace, however, flows through each dispensation from beginning to end. In *every dispensation*, however, salvation is based on blood and entered into by faith.

Doctrine: Derived from the Greek term *didache*, meaning "to teach" in its basic sense. Simply speaking, it means "teaching" (John 7:17; Acts 2:42; 2 Timothy 3:16). See the list that outlines the major doctrines of the Bible in the introduction of this book.

Ecclesiology: Pronounced "ee-klee-zee-ology." This comes from *ekklesia*, meaning "an assembly, church." Basically, it comes from *ek* ("out") and *kaleo* ("to call"). The church is comprised of "called-out ones." This, then, is the study of the doctrines pertaining to the *universal* and the *local* church.

Ecumenical: Worldwide in extent and influence. The ecumenical movement has tended to handle differing theological beliefs by calling together the maximum number of denominations and pleading for "understanding and openmindedness" among all in attendance. The heart and center of this movement is biblical compromise and the elevation of human cooperation beyond its safe and proper bounds. The World Council of Churches is the most significant example of this rapidly-growing movement. The term is actually a transliterated Greek word from *Oikoumena*, meaning "the inhabited earth" (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:31; Revelation 3:10).

Elder: The title given to those called of God as overseers in the local, visible church. *Bishop* is synonymous with this term. Qualities expected of an elder are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7.

Election: Literally means "to call out." The sovereign act of God in choosing the individuals who comprise the select company of saints. This selection was made personally and individually by God before all ages of time (Ephesians 1:4; Romans 9:11–13).

Eschatology: Pronounced "es-kah-tology." *Exchatos* means "last" in Greek. This, then, is the doctrinal study of last things, future events, the prophecies of Scripture.

Eternal: Existence without beginning or ending—infinite time.

Evangelist: The popular usage today refers to the one who has the divinely given ability to

communicate the gospel with effectiveness, ease, pleasure, and clarity (Acts 21:8 and Ephesians 4:11).

Expiation: The removal of the penalty of sin.

Faith: Belief, confidence in the Person and/or Word of God. Can refer to saving faith (at the moment of salvation), Christian doctrines (*the* faith) or to daily reliance, trust, and rest in the Lord (Hebrews 11:1, 6).

Fatalism: The belief that events happen apart from any divine purpose or plan by a sovereign force—God or some other. Commonly referred to as “blind chance.” This is not to be confused with the doctrine of providence.

Fellowship: The active, exciting, intimate, Christ-controlled relationship between the believer and his Lord and also believer with believer (1 John 1:3–7).

Flesh: Mere human nature. The earthly nature of man apart from divine influence and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God. Same as “old man” and “old sin nature” (Romans 7:18, 8:9, Galatians 5:17).

Foreknowledge: That which God knows with certainty will come to pass because He has decreed that event. It has to do not only with *what* will occur but *who* will be involved.

Forgiveness: The removal of charges against a sinner in view of proper satisfaction before God. There is also contained in this a change of attitude toward the one forgiven. Matthew 18:21–35 also applies this to earthly relationships between one person and another. It is the solution to resentment and bitterness.

Fundamentalism: System of conservative beliefs in the principles which lie at the heart of Christian truth. Fundamentalists adhere essentially to nine points of doctrine: (1) the inspiration and inerrancy of Holy Scripture, (2) the Trinity, (3) the deity and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, (4) the literal creation and fall of man, (5) the substitutionary atonement of Christ, (6) the bodily resurrection and ascension of Christ, (7) the regeneration of believing sinners, (8) the personal and imminent return of Christ, and (9) the bodily resurrection and assignment of all men to eternal blessedness or eternal punishment.

Gospel: The “good news” of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of sinners (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).

Grace: That which God does for mankind through His Son, which mankind cannot earn, does not deserve, and will never merit. It is God’s unmerited favor in spite of the response of humanity. It is summed up in the name, person, and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 16; Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 2:11).

Hades: A transliterated Greek word that refers to the temporary abode of the departed souls/spirits of all dead unbelievers, who are awaiting final judgment and eternal punishment in the “lake of fire.” Synonymous with *hell* (Luke 16:23).

Hamartiology: Pronounced “*hah-mar-tiology*.” *Hamartia* means “sin, error, wrong.” It comes from *hamartano*, meaning “to miss the mark,” which aptly describes sin. This is the doctrinal study of sin—its causes, categories, and consequences.

Heart: Biblical word for mankind’s entire inner being—the seat and source of motives, thoughts, passions, and volition (Jeremiah 17:9, 1 Peter 3:4).

Heaven: Most commonly used to refer to the future place of abode for all believers in Christ. Called “third heaven” and “paradise” in 2 Corinthians 12:1–2.

Hermeneutics: The science of biblical interpretation.

Holy: Separate from sin, pure, sacred, clean; set apart to God for His glory.

Holy Spirit: Third member of the Trinity. Possesses personality and all the attributes of deity. Has functions distinct from the Father and the Son. He came to earth at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4; 1 Corinthians 12:13) to permanently indwell every believer.

Hypostatic Union: The unique combination of undiminished deity and true humanity that has existed in the person of Jesus Christ since His incarnation. These two natures existed

without confusion or loss of separate identity, and they were inseparably united without transfer of attributes. Christ was (and still is) both God and man, no less God because of His humanity and no less human because of His deity. Synonymous with this truth is the term “theanthropic” person when it is used to refer to Christ Jesus, the God-man (John 1:14).

Illumination: The act of being enlightened with the truths of God’s Word. This act is related to the work of the Holy Spirit, who takes the truths of the Bible and causes believers to have an understanding of their meaning and application (John 16:13 and 1 Corinthians 2:9–16).

Immutable: Unchangeable.

Impeccability: The sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since He had no sin nature or imputed sin, He never committed acts of personal sin. The New Testament reveals that He “knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21), “had no sin” (Hebrews 4:15), and “committed no sin” (1 Peter 2:22).

Imputation: Principal meaning is “reckoning to the account of another.” A legal term, it refers to the act of God, whereby He credits perfect righteousness to the account of the believing sinner at the moment of salvation. The Bible also speaks of the imputation of Adam’s sin to mankind (Romans 5:12–21) and the imputation of mankind’s sin to Christ (Isaiah 53:4–6; 2 Corinthians 5:21, and 1 Peter 2:24).

Incarnation: The act of God the Son when He took upon Himself the form of man and became flesh (John 1:14 and Philippians 2:5–8).

Infallible: Apart from error or contradiction. Not subject to mistake. Inerrant.

Inspiration: The term is translated from a compound Greek word *Theopneustos* meaning, literally, “God-breathed.” The key verse on this is 2 Timothy 3:16. God so supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture that without affecting their literary style, vocabulary, intelligence, or personal feelings, His complete message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy . . . the very words of the original manuscripts bearing the authority of divine authorship (see also 2 Peter 1:21).

Interpretation: The act of drawing from Scripture its meaning. The interpretation of Scripture is determined by a careful investigation of (1) the context, (2) the normal understanding of each word, taking into consideration (a) the historical background, (b) literary style, (c) grammatical usages, and (d) geographical location of the writers. Technically, this is known as biblical exegesis.

Justice: The rightness of God’s dealings with His creatures, either in approving and rewarding or condemning and judging. God’s attitude and acts based on His righteousness (Psalm 89:14).

Justification: The judicial act of God whereby He declares righteous the believing sinner at the moment of salvation (Romans 3:24–28; 5:1).

Kenosis: This term is a transliterated Greek word found in Philippians 2:7. It has reference to the act of the Lord Jesus Christ at the moment He became human flesh. He surrendered the *voluntary use of His divine attributes* throughout His earthly life . . . but at the same time, He did not empty himself of His deity. His actions were always under the direct will of the Father, empowered by the Holy Spirit (John 8:29; Hebrews 10:7–9).

Law: Refers to one of two specific matters: (1) the recorded Word of God given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, or (2) the period of time (or dispensation) between the reception of the Law at Sinai and the death of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

Legalism: Conforming to a code or system of deeds and observances in the energy of the flesh, hoping to gain the blessing and favor of God by such acts. Legalism invariably denies the principle of GRACE and exalts the PRIDE of man. The entire book of Galatians was written as a magna carta against such attitudes and practices.

Lord’s Supper: An ordinance of memorial that signifies the death of Christ. The two ele-

ments (bread and juice) represent the body and blood of our Lord. The local church is to observe this memorial regularly and in accordance with scriptural instruction (1 Corinthians 11:23–34). It is to be offered to all believers with emphasis upon partaking with all personal sins having been previously confessed (1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13; 1 Corinthians 11:28).

Mariolatry: The worship and veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus. This practice obscures the preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ and elevates Mary into a place of unscriptural prominence. Such worship ultimately results in her becoming the mediator between man and God, which is heresy.

Mediation: The work of one who reconciles persons at variance with one another. Christ is the only Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

Meditate: The act of pondering over Scripture for a period of time, for the purpose of allowing this continued reflection to result in a deeper and more meaningful understanding of that portion (and related portions) of God's blessed Word (Psalm 1:1–3; 63:6).

Messiah: Title used throughout Scripture when referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the "Anointed One," and especially His relationship to the nation Israel.

Millennium: The biblical teaching about the millennium is found in Revelation 20:1–10. This particular term is never used in Scripture. It has reference to a literal period of 1,000 years when the Lord Jesus will personally reign as King of kings and Lord of lords over this earth. Often called the "kingdom," this will be the time when God's promises to the nation Israel will be completely and absolutely fulfilled, such as those appearing in 2 Samuel 7:8–29 and many of the minor prophets.

Missions: The primary task of the Christian church since its inception has been the proclamation of the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. This call to world wide evangelism springs from Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 1:8. The church's mission therefore, is the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people across the street, across the States, and across the seas.

Monotheism: The belief in only one God.

Mystery: Specific information hidden or withheld in the past but now revealed to believers today. Most often has reference to the information concerning the universal Church and God's plan for her (Ephesians 3:8–10).

Natural man: Terms used when referring to the unregenerate (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Necromancy: An attempt to communicate with the spirits of the dead for the purpose of comfort, receiving information, or ascertaining a knowledge of events of the future. This practice is condemned in many Scriptures, since it is connected with demonic influence and/or human deception. (Compare 1 Samuel 28:8–25 with 1 Chronicles 10:13–14).

Numerology: The study of the significance and meaning of numbers in Scripture.

Omnipotence: The unlimited power and ability of God. He can do all that He wills to perform—nothing is impossible with Him (Luke 1:37).

Omnipresence: God's presence is universal. He is everywhere at once (Psalm 139:7–12).

Omniscience: God's knowledge is eternal and infinite. He knows everything. He never learns nor is He ever informed by mankind (Psalm 139:1–4).

Ordain: Commonly used when referring to setting individuals apart to a particular calling and service.

Ordinance: A ceremony instituted by the Lord for public observation and regular participation in the local assembly. Two ordinances remain for the local church to observe: (1) the Lord's Supper, and (2) baptism.

Parable: A short, simple story in narrative form from which a moral or spiritual truth is drawn by comparison. The contents of the parable are drawn from nature; the social, domestic, or political life of the people; and even from current events of biblical days.

Parables often separated the believers from the unbelievers, i.e., unbelievers would be unable to grasp their meaning and significance. This method of instruction was used by Christ after the rulers of the Jews attributed His supernatural ability to Satan. It was used most often in His private ministry (Matthew 13:10–13).

Paraclete: A transliterated Greek term used only by John in the New Testament. Literal meaning is “one called alongside.” It is a reference to the Holy Spirit, our Comforter and Helper (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), and also Christ, our Advocate (1 John 2:1).

Paradise: Location of the soul/spirit of the redeemed after death (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4). It is now located in the “third heaven” in the very presence and abode of God.

Pentecost: A term derived from the Greek *pentecosta*, meaning “fiftieth.” It applied to the fiftieth day after the Passover ceremony. To the New Testament world, it is significant because it was on the day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit came in a unique manner and brought to pass the inception of the universal Church (Acts 2). This occurred fifty days after Christ’s resurrection.

Pneumatology: *Pneuma* (pronounced “nooma”) means “wind, breath, spirit” in Greek, the most common title used in the Greek New Testament for the Holy Spirit. This is the study of the third Person of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit.

Postmillennialism: The belief that the world will become increasingly better as the Holy Spirit empowers believers with spiritual strength and authority above and beyond the evil powers of the world system . . . until the “golden age” of the kingdom is ushered in by this great revival of spirituality. Christ’s second advent will occur *after* this millennium, hence *post*millennialism. Only rarely do conservative, evangelical Christians accept this belief.

Predestination: The belief that God has foreordained *all things* which come to pass, including the final salvation or reprobation of man (Romans 8:29–30; Ephesians 1:3–6; Acts 4:27–28; 13:48).

Premillennialism: The belief that Jesus Christ will return before the establishment of His kingdom upon the earth.

Propitiation: The doctrine of the satisfaction of all of God’s righteous demands for judgment on the sinner by the death of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2).

Providence: The belief that the events of our lives are not ruled by chance or fate but by our sovereign God and loving Lord who works out His plan and purpose in the lives of all His children (Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11).

Purgatory: The alleged place of *temporal* punishment in an intermediate realm after death where souls and spirits undergo penal and purifying suffering. Those who go to this place are the ones who die “partially sanctified,” encumbered with some degree of sin. While here, they suffer until all their sin is purged away and afterwards are translated to heaven. Money, prayers, masses provided by relatives, etc., aid in alleviating the suffering soul in purgatory. This belief is both unscriptural and untenable, for it never appears in inspired Scripture . . . only in 2 Maccabees 12:39–45, an apocryphal and uninspired book, but accepted by the Roman Church as late as the sixteenth century.

Ransom: The price paid by Christ on the cross by which redemption was made possible (1 Timothy 2:6).

Rapture: The translation or meeting of the universal Church in the air (living and dead believers) with Christ at the end of this present era known as the Church Age (1 Corinthians 15:51–55 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17).

Reconciliation: The removal of the barrier of sin between God and man by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross . . . with the result that no barrier to fellowship with God remains. Mankind is now reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:14–21).

Redemption: The payment of the price of sin by the sacrifice of Christ whereby He pur-

chased the believer out of the slave market of sin and set him free, never to be under the yoke of sin's penalty again (Ephesians 1:7–8).

Regeneration: The work of the Holy Spirit in salvation whereby He gives a new life and nature to the believing sinner at the moment of salvation. The new birth (John 3:1–16) is the beginning of this new nature that becomes a part of the believing sinner the instant he or she receives Christ (see also 2 Peter 1:4).

Remission: A sending away or passing over of sin . . . synonymous with forgiveness (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:22).

Repentance: The act of changing one's inner attitude toward something or someone. From the Greek *metanoeo*, literally, "to change the mind." Expanded, it means all that is involved in turning *from* sin and turning *to* God.

Resurrection: The belief in a bodily rising from the dead and the joining of that body with the soul and spirit. At the time of resurrection, the body will be fashioned anew so as to endure throughout eternity. Christ was bodily raised in this manner. First Corinthians 15 is the key chapter in the Bible on resurrection.

Revelation: The supernatural act of God whereby He gave His Word to writers of Holy Scripture. This is no longer performed, since the canon of Scripture is now complete. God's inspired, written revelation is now completely contained in His Word. More generally, this can refer to God's making Himself known through nature (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:18–20).

Sanctification: The state of being set apart unto God. "Saint," "sanctify," and "holy" are all from the same Greek root word, *hagiazō*, "to dedicate, separate."

Satan: The originator of evil who at first dwelt in the very presence of God the Father as the "angel of light," "Lucifer, Son of the morning," but who chose to rebel against God. He was cast out of heaven, made his dwelling over this earth, becoming the "god of this age," and actively participates in leading mankind into sin against God. He will ultimately be judged and doomed to eternal punishment along with his myriad of demons (Isaiah 14:12–14; Ezekiel 28:12–15; 2 Corinthians 4:3–4; Revelation 20:7–10).

Second Advent of Christ: The personal return of Jesus Christ to this earth in power, judgment, glory, and authority (Revelation 19:11–21). This will occur at the end of the tribulation period, prior to the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom, according to the premillennial point of view.

Security: The doctrine of the eternal security of the believer is the teaching that once a person has received Christ as his Savior he is forever secure in God's family—never subject to being lost or rejected. This is based on the character, promises, grace, and power of God (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:37; 10:27–30; 1 Corinthians 3:15; Romans 8:1, 38–39; Ephesians 1:19–21; 4:30; 1 John 2:1–2).

Session: The doctrine of Christ's present position at the right hand of God the Father, sitting in authority as our Representative and Advocate (Ephesians 1:20–23; Hebrews 10:12–13).

Soteriology: Pronounced "so-*ter*-ee-ology." This comes from *soter* ("sotare"), meaning "savior, deliverer." This logically follows the doctrine of sin. After sin occurred there came the need for salvation. This is the study of all the doctrines having to do with salvation and the Christian way of life.

Spiritual Gifts: Divinely-bestowed abilities or skills given to every believer at the moment of salvation which enable the believer to perform his or her service in the Body of Christ (universal Church) so that the Body functions with the maximum amount of effectiveness (Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11–12; 1 Peter 4:11).

Spirituality: The state of the believer who is controlled by and walking in dependence upon the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:15; Ephesians 5:18).

Temptation: Solicitation and enticement into evil prompted by the world system, the flesh, or the devil . . . never by God (James 1:13–15; 1 John 2:15–17).

Theology proper: *Theology* is from two Greek words, *Theos* and *Logos*, which when combined, refer generally to the study of all Christian truth—all the doctrines. However, by adding *proper* to the title, the subject is narrowed down to the study of the first Person of the Trinity, God the Father.

Tongues: Reference to one of the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament. It was used mainly as a means of spreading the gospel during the first century before the Scriptures were in the language of the people (Acts 2:4–11). Specific guidelines for tongue-speaking and interpretation of such were given to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians, chapter 14.

Tribulation: A period of seven literal years upon the earth (Daniel 9:24–27) following the rapture of the Church and ending with the second advent of Christ. The events of this era are contained in Revelation, Chapters 6 through 19. It will be a time of unprecedented evil, anguish, affliction, and trouble upon the earth due to the unrestrained activity of Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:7–8).

Trinity: The Godhead, consisting of the Father, Son, and Spirit, who are one in essence and attributes, yet three in distinct work and purpose. They are coequal, coeternal, and coexistent (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Word of God: The Bible or Holy Scripture (Luke 24:27; Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).

Worship: A human response to divine revelation. More specifically, the act of personal adoration, meditation, and respect directed toward God and His Word. Worship includes such things as praying, giving, singing, reading, and meditating when these are directed toward the Lord. The Book of Psalms helps us know how to worship as it directs our attention to the Lord our God.