***The Grace System of Perception, No. 3

Colossians 1:3-8

COL-054***

We are studying Colossians 1:3-8. Our subject is "Thanksgiving for the Colossians," segment number 32.

The world is filled with lies about God from Satan. Also, it is at the same time filled with a great deal of truth about God from the Bible. The old sin nature in man welcomes the lies of Satan, and these drive a person to live in rebellion against God and His laws. The Holy Spirit in the believer, however, exposes the lies of Satan through Scripture, and it moves the Christian to live in subjection to the laws of Scripture.

So, there is this great issue of knowing what is right and doing what is right. There is a great issue of Christian, personal separation. And on our recent campout, that was the point we were trying to hammer home – that Christians have to be separated from the society in which they move. They are to be beacons of light, and not finding themselves subject to its corrosive influences.

**The Grace System of Perception**

In order for us to be able to do that, we have to have some capacity. Therefore we have been pursuing our study of what God has provided, in what we have called the grace system of perception – a system by which a believer may grow to spiritual maturity, and may fulfill his Christian service mission for which he was born. This requires certain elements to be provided by God which have not existed before the arrival of the age of the church.

**A Completed Bible**

We have seen that these elements in the grace system of perception to carry us through to our highest maturity and performance in serving God included, first of all a completed Scripture – a completed Bible. We call that the canon – the completed canon. The word "canon" means "standard." We now have an Old Testament and a New Testament. These have been inspired by God the Holy Spirit, and therefore, they are inerrant. Only until the age of the church have we possessed the final complete revelation from God. That, of course, is the foundation of everything else.

**The Local Church**

Secondly, God has provided the establishment of the local church institution to teach Bible doctrine via the pastor-teacher gift. That is an essential element which did not exist in the Old Testament time. Now we have this local teaching institution which can indeed be, and is, perverted into a lot of other things that it shouldn't be. And the foundation of it – of the functioning of that local church has to be what the Bible says. If there was ever a time when "Thus says the Lord" is a principle upon which we must function, it is today, because men are very arrogant. They have their great insights into what the Bible teaches, and they grab on to some error, and hang on like the proverbial bulldog, only to their ultimate, and everyone else's, destruction.

So, the establishment of the local church, and when it performs its job – that when people come to a church service, they know very well that they're going to learn the Bible: that is an essential element of the grace system of perception.

**The Priesthood of all Believers**

Next was the priesthood of all believers – the permanent priesthood of all believers, enabling them to deal directly with God in their own behalf in total privacy. We deal now not through an Aaronic priesthood, but we deal directly with God through ourselves. We each are priests. We are our own priests. And we are going to be held responsible for what we do with our priesthood. That is a very wonderful thing to be, but it is a very grave responsibility. It's a great burden to realize that, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, I'm going to give an accounting for how I used my priesthood. And it will determine whether I'm a rich or a poor Christian in rewards in heaven.

**The Permanent Indwelling of the Holy Spirit**

Number four is the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in order to teach doctrinal truths, and to give illumination of Scripture to the positive believer. This was never true in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit did not permanently indwell people. He did it temporarily, and then He would leave them. Now the Spirit of God in the age of the church permanently indwells us born-again Christians – is an essential feature. He who is our only Teacher, and the only person who can teach a spiritual phenomenon. He's with you all the time.

**The Filling of the Holy Spirit**

Next is the filling of the Holy Spirit to maintain temporal fellowship with God the Father upon confession of sins, enabling us to walk in harmony with our Father. The filling of the Holy Spirit comes and goes. You're only baptized by the Holy Spirit once at the point of salvation, when you are placed into Christ. The filling happens when you correct the course, when you have stepped out of line, and you get back on course to the Word of God. You admit that you are wrong. You admit that your mental attitude sins have been there churning away, while everybody looked up to you as a very wonderful person, not knowing what you really were on the inside, until suddenly you broke out, and we all saw it. It is important that you understand that without the filling of the Holy Spirit, we are exactly zero – nothing. That is a great provision of the grace system of perception.

**A Living Human Spirit**

Then the last one is the provision of a living human spirit which acts as a storage area for doctrine to be used by the Holy Spirit guiding the believer. People who think that they're really hot Christians, very often, are totally ignorant of doctrine. Their human spirits are empty of the Word of God. Consequently, the Spirit of God has nothing with which to guide them. And when there's no guidance, then they make up for it on their own. If you don't understand this system, you'll be hurt badly. But these wonderful things have been given to us.

Now, how does a Christian learn doctrine to form what Ephesians 6:14 calls the belt of truth in order to defeat the three areas from which we are bombarded by temptation: the old sin nature; the world system; and, the devil himself. Here's a functioning of the grace system of perception.

First of all, step one is the instruction in the truth of the Bible. Every church is given a pastor-teacher who has a gift of communicating doctrine to the congregation. He uses what we have called the HICEE technique of instruction. Every believer comes into the Christian life with his mind stuffed full of human viewpoint misconceptions. He comes into the Christian life with barely a smidgen of divine viewpoint – the gospel. He knows how to be saved, and that's about all he has. Now he is faced with the fact that the old sin nature cannot teach him what God wants. It can only teach him what God doesn't want. So, he has to have some means of flushing out the old system of human viewpoint, and bringing in God's point of view.

Most people in our society, even Christians, simply go along operating on human viewpoint kicked up by the old sin nature. They just do what people do. And they go along, and think that everybody agrees with them, then that must be the truth. Following society's opinions, ways, and values leads you away from God. If you listen to the people around you in our society, you will go astray.

So, when you're born spiritually, it doesn't automatically mean that you possess divine viewpoint. A little later on here, in Colossians 1:9-10, which will be coming to in a very near future, Paul says, "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it (that is, of their love in the Spirit) we have not ceased to pray for you, to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

Now, it is important to know this word "knowledge," and we're not going to get into this verse now. But here again, if you're just a reader of the English Bible without a pastor-teacher to instruct you, you'll miss this completely, because this happens to be a word for "knowledge" that means "full knowledge." It means knowledge of truth that you have gone positive to. It's not just knowledge ("gnosis") – things up in your head that you know about. It's knowledge which is now stored in your human spirit. And the Greek is so clear. This is the word "epignosis." This what you need. Why? So that you'll get wisdom and understanding. Why? Verse 10: "So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God."

Now, this is where it's all at. And this is what Paul is moving toward. He's moving toward verses 9-10, to say that there is a system that God has provided so that you may be transformed into a mentality that is renewed by the Word of God – the grace system of perception. You are to be filled with this full knowledge.

Now, step number one, so that you may enjoy these benefits, is what God has provided in the form of instruction in the Word of God with the pastor-teacher in the local church. This is provided by God's grace. Ephesians 4:11 says that one of the communicator gifts that God gives is the pastor-teacher gift. And it's a combination gift, because the two things have to go together. To be a pastor-teacher, he must have the ability to convey spiritual phenomenon.

If you'll turn in your Bible for just a moment to Ephesians 4:12, I do want to remind you again of a chain reaction that is here in this verse that says that the reason for the pastor-teachers, up in verse 11, is: 1) for the equipping of the saints; 2) for the work of the service; and, 3) for the building up of the body of Christ.

In the Greek language, there are two different Greek words in this verse translated here in English as "for."

First: "for the equipping of the saints. Here, the Greek word for the word "for" is "pros."

Second: "for the work of the service). Here, the Greek word for the word "for" is "eis."

Third: "for the building up of the body" (for the edifying of the body of Christ). Here, the Greek word for the word "for" is "eis" again.

The first "for" is: "for the equipping of the saints." This "for" happens to be this Greek word "pros," P R O S. It's a preposition and it's a word for in the sense of face-to-face. So bingo! Here we are. The local church people are listening to a monologue from somebody who is competent spiritually, and by training, and by study to explain the Bible. That's the way the system works.

So, the first "for:" "for the equipping of the saints" is the foundation. First, this is the face-to-face preparing the believers for instruction in the Word of God. The result is going to be the equipping of that saint. And "equipping" is a military word. This is his gear that he needs for his spiritual combat. And you are all in spiritual combat every moment of your life.

Then it says the second "for:" "for the work of the service." But here it changes to another Greek word "eis," (ice), E I S. This also means "for," but it is a word that tells us that it's connected to this first "for" above. If you don't do the first "for," you won't have this second "for." It's a chain reaction. The first "for" link leads to the second "for." Without the first link, you can't have this link to the second "for:" "for the work of service;" that is, you are equipped with the knowledge of the Word of God. You're trained in Scriptures for the purpose of being able to serve God. And without that training, you're not equipped to serve God. And most Christians are running around trying to do things for God, and they're not equipped to serve God in any way whatsoever.

Then we have the third "for." The American Standard translates this "for" as the English word "to," but it's again the same word "for:" "for the building up of the body," and it is this word "eis" (ice) one more time, and it's connected to the first "eis" in this verse.

**The Pastor Teacher Instructs**

So, what happens is the pastor-teacher, face-to-face, does the instructional job, which is his main duty. That's all he's called to do. He counsels from the pulpit, and he gives you the information. Then, with that equipment, you are equipped thereby for the work of the service. And the result is that the body of Christ is built up. You are built up and made strong, and the body of Christ, the church, is built up. That's the system that God has appointed.

**The HICEE Technique**

Now, when we say that the first step in the grace system of perception is instruction in the Word of God by the pastor-teacher using the HICEE technique, we're talking about things that should be in the background of his teaching. And if the person who is instructing you does not have this in the background of his teaching, then you are being robbed.

**Hermeneutics**

The letter "H" stands for hermeneutics. Hermeneutics are principles of interpretation, like the fact that the Bible must be interpreted on a literal basis. And there are many other guidelines and principles that give you clues as to exactly what the Scripture means. You have a little knowledge of hermeneutics, principles of interpretation, it goes a long way.

**Isagogics**

The second letter, "I," stands for Isagogics. This word has to do with knowing the background of the times so that you understand what is happening in times past. On our camp out, I told our young people that, in the Old Testament, for example, you can't understand the relationship between Mary and Joseph, who had no legal marriage relationship, yet they were called "husband and wife." And there was talk about putting away or divorcing one another. Well, I told them that in those days there was the betrothal. The betrothal was the same as a marriage, except for the physical part of it. And then came a certain time when, very often parents had put these people together, and then the betrothal finally came to a point where they were considered ready to marry. And then they had the official coming together in marriage. But the betrothal itself was considered a very close permanent relationship, and it was not something that you could break.

So, I was telling them: "Now, to understand why Mary could be called a wife when she's not a wife, and Joseph a husband when he really wasn't a husband (as we look at it), is because that was the background custom at the time. When you have the background, then you can interpret and understand what Scripture is saying.

**Categories**

Then the "C" stands for Categories – groups of doctrine. You can take a doctrine like the deity of Christ; pull certain Scripture verses from all over the Bible that declare the truth about; put them together; and, you have a summary so that you grasp the totality of what is important in that particular doctrine. Every now and then, your pastor-teacher should stop and say, "The doctrine of the deity of Christ – 20 points: point number one . . ." So, he has brought together for you everything that you need to know about that subject. That'll be your frame of reference for reading Scripture.

**Etymology**

Then there is the first letter "E," which is Etymology. That has to do with the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words, not the words of the English Bible. I've told you about the man that spoke up in my Sunday school class one-time years ago, when I was a Sunday school teacher here at Berean Church. And we were reading the passage about the fact that Paul went into divers places. And he used that as a verse of evangelism – that Paul went into the honky-tonks and the low-life places in order to reach people for the Lord. And he was very eloquent about our reaching out to people in these low life places. And he just would not hear when I said, "Well, that was just an old English word for "various." And he was one of those people whose mind was made up, and he was not going to be changed by the facts. Or as Lincoln said, "He who is convinced against his will remains unconvinced still." So, if you want to be determined to believe something is not true, no one will be able to dissuade you from it. But the etymology is of the Greek and Hebrew words. That tells us what God thinks, because words have meaning.

**Exegesis**

Finally, the second letter "E" stands for Exegesis. That's a word that simply says the grammatical relationships. Grammar tells us what the meaning is. If we know the meaning of the relationship of words and phrases, then we know what it's saying.

So this is nothing radical (a big a dramatic thing), but it is a great achievement. I put this together as the HICEE technique because those of us who are bandsmen know that one of the notes, especially on a brass instrument like a trumpet, that is not easy to play is high C. And if you have a good lip such that you can hit a high C, you're an accomplished musician. So, you have reached something very terrific. So, when you have someone who teaches you under the HICEE method, you can see that he is not going to sit up the night before, like one pastor told me. He was lying in bed, and he lived in the town, and he was disturbed because the town had a hammer factory. And all night long, they were making hammers. And you had to bang on hammers so that hammers know what to do after they're finished. So, the factory was banging away all night. And he said, "I was lying in bed thinking: what would be good for the people tomorrow morning as I spoke?"

Now, that must have been some congregation. The preacher the night before is lying in bed, bringing his sermon together. He obviously was not using the HICEE technique, because that takes hours of research and preparation of digging. And yet the people of God have the right to expect that, and they are being robbed if that is not what they receive from their spiritual leadership.

I can tell you that no Christian can secure a strong belt of truth on which to hang his life, whose pastor is not performing this step in every service – the step of instructing in the Word of doctrine by the HICEE technique. Ephesians 4:12 makes it very clear that that's the purpose for that local church, and for the pastor-teacher.

Now, of course, Satan will do everything he can to stop the grace system of learning spiritual things at this point. He will stop the functioning by anything that he can possibly do. And one of the main things he does is get pastor-teachers so caught up in pursuing all kinds of things other than the study of the Word of God that God's sheep are starved. They are starved for the Word of God. And some congregations have been so trained. Somebody told me the other day that there was a real jumping and jiving in church here in Irving. They come in, and they have their songs on a screen that comes down. It's very impressive. And they look up there, and they sing the words. And they're swaying, and maybe the hands are moving. And they go for 30 minutes. Then pastor steps up and he gives a little devotional of 15 minutes. And then they sing another 15 minutes while the screen comes down, and they're all moving a lot, and there's a lot of activity. And then they quiet down. And then they teach one another – the people getting up and they share for the rest of the service. What are they sharing? HICEE knowledge that they've gathered? Not on your life. They're sharing their mutual ignorance. And people go to that, and they say, "Isn't that wonderful?" They have 15 minutes of sermon, and the rest of it is us sharing our great insights.

Well, that is not God's order. And the congregation that can't sit through a substantial instruction in the Word of God is one which is to be pitied. But the failures on the part of the spiritual leadership could not take place if it wasn't for the people in the pews who don't know any better, who are there willing to support this.

I have this article written by Steve Blow of the Dallas Morning News that I think illustrates how the people of God can be conned. And they're willing to be conned. Please remember that these con artists in the religious world would not do what they do if it wasn't profitable. It takes a lot of money for the advertising, and a lot of money for the air time. And it tells you that Christians are so pathetically without understanding of who they are, and of this first principle of grace instruction in the Word of God in doctrine, that they can be carried around with every wind of doctrine. One day they're believing this. And the next day they're running after this teacher. And the next day they want to see what this teacher has. Every wind of doctrine, Paul says, blows them over, because they have no civility, and because they are ignorant of the Word of God; or, if they were ever taught it, they were negative to it. And God help you if you ever go negative to a truth of the Word of God. And the first little step you take of being negative, just remember that that's the first distortion of your compass. You will miss your target.

One of the things you have to do to get a private pilot's license used to be that you had to make a three-legged cross-country trip, and preferably end up where you started. And the legs are different lengths. The first time it came for me now to take that test. Mr. Howard had made a brilliant aviator out of me. I just had to see now if I knew where to go and how to get back. So I started off, and headed out, and somehow there was a slight deviation in the course. I had no radio. I just had dead-reckoning navigation: things on the ground; watching that compass; and, so on. And after a while, I realized that nothing on the ground looked familiar. I later found that I had flown off my chart (off my map), and there was a deviation, and I still don't know quite why – whether it was a compass. I can't believe it was myself. But nevertheless, all of a sudden, I'm not anyplace. I'm looking at the gas, and I'm out in the boondocks.

So, I'm looking around, and all of a sudden I look below, and there's a military airfield. I don't have any radio. So, I'm watching the planes coming in, and I see how they're landing, so I know where the wind is. So, I come around, when there's a break, and I line myself up in this little Cub Aeronca. I'm coming in for this landing in this little Cub aircraft. And I get down on the ground, and a Jeep comes barreling out. There was a military guy in it, and he's got a big sign on the back of the Jeep that says, "Follow Me." And he whips in front of me, and I follow it. And he leads me off the runway to near the operational building. And I told him, "I'm a student pilot, and I've gotten off course. I was going to Corsicana, and I missed it. So, I saw the field, so I came in here for an emergency landing," which you could do then.

So, he calls up to the tower and says, "We have a student pilot here. He got off course and used our field." There was a pause. He said, "You didn't even see him come in? You didn't even see him come in?" They said, "Do you need any gas? We have some octane. We can take care of that." And by then I knew where I was – just outside of Waco. They told me where I was. So I said, "No, I know where I am now. I'll make it back to Dallas, and I've got enough gas to do that." So they said, "Okay, use the mid runway." And at the end of the runway was a big four-engine bomber, rearing up, ready to go. Now, I had to get out before he did, or they'd have blown me back into the ground in his tailwind there. So, they held up the whole American Air Force, and I ran out there in my little puddle-jumper, and got down the middle of the runway, and hit the thing, and got out of there. But they made me sign a statement that I wouldn't hold the government accountable if I crashed on the way out.

So, somewhere along the line, I deviated just a little bit. But between Dallas and Corsicana, it got worse and worse and worse, until I didn't even have a map to follow and match to the ground anymore. So, I learned how precise you have to be. You'll be happy to know that I promptly did it again the next week, and this time I did land at the right place, and managed to get to Mineral Wells, and back to Dallas without any trouble. But I learned how precise you have to be, especially with dead-reckoning where you don't have any other instruments to guide you.

So, the Christian who is not positive to the Word of God, at some point, has made the dangerous step of getting one degree off, and you'll keep going farther and farther and farther out, until you wonder how in the world you ever got out into the spiritual desert. So, it's very dangerous not to be trained in the Word of God. That is the first step in the condition of the grace system of learning spiritual things.

Now I want to give you an example of how gross people can be when they are not well-instructed in the Word of God. You've all heard of Bob Tilton, the TV preacher. He is been lying low recently, but Steve Blow looked him up, and his article is "Tilton's Latest Pitch: Pennies from Heaven." And here's the article. He says, "We haven't talked about the right Reverend Robert Tilton in a long time. It didn't seem like there was much left to say, but old brother Bob isn't dead yet. And the former TV evangelist is showing just a glimmer of that prosperity preaching character that we used to know and love.

"I saw one of his recent mailings to a follower, and it was truly inspired. It was a direct mailed masterpiece – a pistol of an epistle. It was sort of like: 'Christianity meets the publisher's clearinghouse.' Imagine a regular letter-sized envelope. But in this case, the envelope is made of a transparent plastic that allows you to read the writing inside. And through the front of the envelope, you read, 'Joe, I'm sending you this special message inside this clear see-through envelope for a reason. But do not open it yet. Read the other side.' Okay. See – he's got you already. Like it or not, you're flipping that envelope over. By the way, I'm substituting Joe for the real name.

"Through the backside, you see 'Joe, this is a sealed message of the heavenly world with a direct line to glory.' It may have been a message from the heavenly world, but the return address was Dallas. The back-of-the-envelope message goes on: 'If for any reason you will not be able to answer this message within 48 hours, it will need to be destroyed unopened, because it is of a highly spiritual nature.' Isn't that great? Reverse psychology; or, maybe *perverse* psychology? Don't open this envelope. Destroy this envelope. Don't throw me in that briar patch, Brer rabbit.

"'If you are going to open it,' the message goes on, 'please go where you can be alone and be prepared for the Holy Spirit to speak with you. Well, of course, you're going to open it. Who could resist? 'And when you do, Joe, I'm happy for you that you got into faith and opened this Holy Ghost message. Are you alone where the Lord can speak to your spirit? It is important for you to be alone before you finish reading this.' Well, I don't know about your house, but if there was any place for privacy in our house, we would already have a soul-shaking miracle in our hands.

"So anyway, Brother Bob goes on: 'I must minister to you, Joe, in a very special way. I feel you are standing on the brink of an incredible blessing. And what sort of blessing? A special money-miracle blessing,' the letter says: 'An incredible, financial blessing, big enough to walk you out of financial stress,' it says: 'A financial blessing that will bring an adequate amount of money into your hands to manage the obligations you are facing,' it says. 'God wants to put you on the path to financial proliferation needed in your life to free you from these worries,' it says. And how? Easy.'

"'Inside the envelope are two shiny pennies representing a double-portion blessing for you. Joe, place these two double-portion coins in your pocketbook, or where you keep your money tonight. As you follow God in faith, your financial miracle can begin. Tomorrow, Joe, without fail, place your seed faith offering of $53, $43, or $33 on this prayer page, and mail it back before sunset tomorrow, or no later than 11:00 AM the next day. Timing is important. Be prepared for some unusual things to happen as your divine replenishing comes.'

"Well, my goodness, I sure didn't realize God's blessings were based on such rituals: reading mail alone; putting two pennies in a pocketbook for nine days: $53, $43, or $33 offerings; sunset deadlines; or, 11:00 AM tomorrow at the latest. It all reminds me of a little ritual someone taught me as a kid: To learn the secrets of the universe, you stand on one foot, and slowly you chant the magic words: 'Oh ah tou go siam, Oh ah tou go siam.' Then you start hopping up and down while saying the magic words over and over faster and faster: ' Oh ah tou go siam; Oh ah tou go siam.' Go ahead, give it a try. But don't let those pennies fly out of your pocketbook."

Now, I'll guarantee you that a lot of $53, $43, and $33 offerings came flooding into Brother Bob, because there were people who took those two shinny pennies, and they carefully did everything he told them to do, the way he told them to do it. Now that's extreme. But those who aren't so bold to be so gross about what they do, who yet fail to be students of the Word of God of pastor-teachers so we can teach people the Word of God, are just as bad as what Tilton is doing. He is robbing people of their true knowledge of the Word of God, and he is robbing them of the capacity to resist the world; the sin nature; and, the devil.

**Understanding the Truth of the Bible**

The second step in the functioning of the grace system of perception is the understanding of the truth of the Bible. Using our diagram, here's the human soul. It is made up of a mind; of the emotions; and, of volition. The first step was a pastor-teacher instructing. The instruction goes into the perceptive side (the perceptive capacity) of the brain. You are able to learn things. That perceptive capacity is described in the Word of God by the Greek word "gnosis". That's the other word for knowledge: the word "gnosis."

Now, under the filling of the Holy Spirit, this instruction from the pastor-teacher is understood. You grasp it. And you have "gnosis" knowledge. Now, there are three things that must be done for you to grasp a knowledge of a principle of doctrine – three steps to secure "gnosis" in your perceptive mind.

**Positive toward Learning**

First, you have to be positive toward what you are being taught in the Word of God. You have to learn. You have to want to learn. You have to be positive to want to learn. That means you'll show that by being present here in the services. If you have gaps, if you ignore Hebrews 10:25, which tells you to be in those services, then you will tell us you're not all that concerned about getting "gnosis" information. You may make one service per Sunday, and then you'll blow off the other part, because, after all, it's the Lord's Day. So, why should He object to you using it for your day? But positive volition is reflected, first of all, by being here to be taught.

You must secondly be open to the instruction, apart from your attitude toward the teacher or the people around you. You must separate the communicator from the message. The message may be true, and it is true even if the devil himself preaches it. And you listen to the truth, and compare it like a good Berean to Scripture, and then you'll know what to do.

That's the principle of Acts 17:10-12, "And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. And when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the Word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. Many of them, therefore, believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men."

If you are going to get this "gnosis" information in the perceptive capacity of your mind, you're going to have to be willing to be taught, and to check it out with Scripture.

**Concentration**

Secondly, you have to have concentration on the instruction being given by the pastor-teacher. You have to sit in a service and avoid being distracted, and avoid distracting others. It'll cause them to lose their line of concentration, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit will be denied them. It is not improper for you adults, if we have some kid in the service who's rustling around and making noise, to say, "Don't do that." We have some kids that I know that in the middle of the service they're going to get up to go to the washroom. But their parents don't say, "Well if you're going to go and do that, you have to sit at the back. Don't come back and disturb the people by coming back into the group." And you should not fail to concentrate on what is being said. At the same time, you should not disturb the concentration of other people. And don't just pay attention to what fascinates you that is being taught – in those fad areas. 2 Timothy 3:16 says that: "All Scripture is inspired by God." Therefore, it is all important.

Acts 20:27 calls it the "full counsel of the Word of God." And Paul says that all of it is important.

Now, your right pastor-teacher (which has to be your right pastor-teacher) will be perfect for you as the one who can instruct you in God's viewpoint. He'll get God's viewpoint across to you. You may not be pleased with him in some way, but then you must remember that he's probably not too crazy about you either. But the thing that we focus on is the Word of God. It's the Word and the Word and the Word. And the human frailties on both sides are quite evident. We don't have to pretend that they're not there.

**Comprehension**

The third factor for you to get this "gnosis" in the perceptive mind is the comprehension of what is taught. That requires that you have the filling of the Holy Spirit when you are being taught. Don't sit here with mental attitude sins or overt sins, and then expect the Spirit of God to give you teaching, because you're not going to get it. 1 John 1:9 requires you to make confession.

Now, some areas of teaching are more slowly grasp than others, because people lack a frame of reference. You'll find that the more you get of the knowledge of the Word of God, the easier it will be for you to grasp the deep things of God. And your memory has no past information. If you have not been taught in the Word of God, you have no memory on which to interpret what you're reading in the scriptures. So, it's important that you understand what you are being taught.

Now, you may not agree with the information that the Holy Spirit has taught you through the pastor-teacher. Therefore, you're going to have a problem with your knowledge ("gnosis"). Just because you don't understand it doesn't mean that he's wrong. Just because you don't agree with it, of course, doesn't mean that he's wrong either. You'll find that out at the Judgment Seat of Christ with the consequences one way or the other.

So, if you don't have a frame of reference to see the truth, you may be suspicious of it. You never heard this before. One of your favorite writers has never said this, so you're not sure that could be true. One of the famed preachers that you're enamored with has never taken this position. So, you're not sure it's true. Well, it's not a matter of your church or preacher any more than it was for the Medieval church or the Pope. It's what the Word of God says. It's the Scriptures.

One of the things we showed the young people on our camp out was the video on John Huss. It was very sobering, and very quiet in that room, as we watched the determination and the devotion of Huss, the Bohemian believer – the priest who, 100 years before Luther, discovered what Luther discovered about how wrong the Catholic Church was, and how salvation was a gift by faith alone from God. And it cost him his life (being burned at the stake), simply because he said that the authorities do not give us the Word of God. Only the Word of God in the Bible gives us that truth. And he was not impressed by the fact that, for hundreds of years, the famous fathers of the church had taught this error, and had not taught the truth of salvation. And Huss went down in flames, and his soul sprung into heaven to be with God.

So, you may be in a group that has a different viewpoint, but that doesn't mean it's right. If it conflicts with your background, that's not the issue. The issue is what the Word of God says. Always remember that 2 Corinthians 5:10 says that you will account for your priesthood at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and what you have learned, and what you've accepted, and what you have rejected.

Now, this "gnosis" type of information here in the mind is just information. You have learned a spiritual truth. It's not worth a thing. It doesn't serve you in any way whatsoever. It cannot affect the guidance of your soul. This is the way natural learning goes. You learn it in the perceptive side of your mind, and you pop it over to the directive side, and you use it that way: reading; writing; and, arithmetic. But spiritual things have to follow a different course. And that is that your action toward learning the Word of God, when you are positive to it, you do have the information. But it doesn't do you any good.

**You go Positive to Doctrine**

So, we come to step number three. And that is that when you say "amen" to the instruction that you've received from the pastor-teacher, because it has been confirmed by Scripture, that truth, by an act of your positive volition faith, pops down to your human spirit which the Scripture describes as the storage place of God's knowledge. And then you have the verses that I told you about (the verses coming in Colossians): the "epignosis" word for knowledge – full knowledge. This is knowledge that you have received. This is the only information that'll help you in your life as a Christian. What is up in the perceptive side may be wrong. And if it's wrong, by the way (if it's heresy – if it's false doctrine), it'll stick there. You may be very enthusiastic for it, but God the Holy Spirit will never let it come down to your human spirit, where it'll be able to guide you in your life. But once you have that, now that "gnosis" turns to "epignosis". This is no credit to us when we believe the Word of God. Faith is not a merit system. It's just admitting that God is right. And "epignosis" is accumulated in these various compartments – these summaries of doctrine that we are instructed in.

James 1:22 says, "A 'gnosis' Christians is a hearer," but James says that: "a doer is the 'epignosis' Christian. And that many who are "gnosis" Christians (they know a lot about the Bible), but they have no capacity of functioning on it. They are shot through with mental attitude sins. They have no control over those areas, any more than other people have over their overt sins. And the Word of God is of no value to them. Until you say "amen" (truly) to what God has said, then it becomes useful to you. And that is how we secure the belt of truth. Spiritual phenomena can only be applied to life situations effectively from the human spirit and what is stored in them.

**Doctrine from your Human Spirit Drives your Actions**

Step number four now brings about the effects of the truth of the Bible. At this point, doctrine which is stored in our human spirits as full knowledge becomes guidance that the Holy Spirit uses in our lives. We have a situation. The Spirit of God shines the light of truth. We are filled with the Holy Spirit so that He can teach us, up to our directive capacity. He gives the information: "Do it this way." Along comes temptation from the old sin nature; the world; and, the devil. In comes information that says, "No, this is God's way. That world's way is wrong." And you say, "Aha, that's what I need to do."

Now you will respond to that one way or another. You'll listen to what God says, or you will not. And from what is brought up here, you will have a conscience; that is, a conscience based upon the Word of God. You'll have a divine viewpoint. You'll have a frame of reference for judging the issue that you're faced with. You secure divine viewpoint toward the issues of life. And you see things the way they really are. And the result is that doctrine from your human spirit will enable you to know what to do at any particular point in time. This will give you correct content for your prayers. You'll be amazed at how many things your heart will be burdened, and you'll say, "I'm not going to pray for that. I prayed for that for a while. Now the time has passed. I will not pray for that again." It will give you accurate information and proper motivation for your Christian service. You'll not be running around trying to do something that is not your spiritual gift to do. And it governs the expression of your emotions and your will. That's what is so important.

Here you come up with the filling of the Holy Spirit, and you have been positive to that. Now your temporal things are governed (how you feel about things in temporal matters and material things) by the Word of God – how you feel about spiritual things. We're talking about emotions here. That is governed by the Word of God. Anytime your mind is not controlled by the doctrines of the Word of God, your emotions will run amok. You'll be completely out of control. Anytime your mind does not control your emotions, you'll be caught up toward material things. Those will be the things that you get excited about. And if you are positive, it will hit your volition. And your volition will go positive toward the call (the purposes) of God. And there will be divine good works and godliness, which will be the result.

However, if you go negative toward the information of the Word of God, then . . . the result is that you'll be producing human good works and sins. Both of those are evil. You go negative toward the Word of God, and your sin nature will kick in, and feed up false conscience; false frame of reference; and, human viewpoint. And then that will hit you in temporal things. Your emotions will have sinful attitudes toward money. Your emotions will have totally disoriented spiritual attitudes. And your negative volition will cause your life to be wasted.

This is what Jesus meant when He said, "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his life." He's not talking about Christians. He's talking about losing his life in the potential of Christian service – kicking out negative volition consequences.

So, if you know the Word of God, and you've said "amen" to it, it is down in your human spirit, and all known sin are confessed, The filling of the Holy Spirit will give you the information you need at any particular point to handle your emotions, and to handle your will. And if you don't have this system, you can't do it. How many Christians know this simple little arrangement that God has provided? This is how Jesus operated in His humanity. This is why He could live a sinless life. He wasn't falling back on His deity to live a sinless life. In His humanity, He acted within the limitations that you and I have to act in.

Now, when we get to this point, we are now at step number five, and we come to the application of the truth. That now is the critical point. With all of this operating properly, now come the results from this kind of a system. And we shall look at that next time.

Dear God, our Father, We thank You.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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