***If Anyone has an Ear, Let him Hear

RV170-02***

We are studying "The Antichrist." This is segment number 16 on Revelation 13:1-10.

**War in Heaven**

The apostle John, in his vision recorded here of future events in the tribulation years, has been told of a great future battle, which is to be fought in outer space between angelic beings. Satan and his demon angels will face off with Michael the archangel and the loyal angels of God. This will happen in the middle of the tribulation, and Satan will be soundly defeated.

**The Second Coming**

Thereafter, he will be thrown out of the heavenly spheres completely, and restricted in his actions to planet earth only. He will no longer be able to enter heaven to accuse the believers. On earth, Satan will then ponder his position, and the fact that he has only three-and-a-half years left of freedom to try to defeat God. At the end of that three-and-a-half years, the tribulation period will be over, and Jesus Christ will return to this earth in His Second Coming, with the church – you people, who are part of the body of Christ, who will have been removed seven years before at the rapture of the church.

**Satan**

Satan, having evaluated his situation now at that point, will set in motion, the Bible tells us, his final effort to organize mankind into a millennial-like kingdom on earth with himself as the ruler and the Supreme Being in place of God. Satan does this by reviving the seemingly dead and gone imperial form of the old Roman Empire with his man, the antichrist, as the emperor. This revived Roman Empire, which consists of ten European nations joined together as a confederacy.

**The Antichrist**

The empire of the antichrist, will possess all the evil characteristics of the previous world empires of Satan. The unsaved humanity of all the world will worship the antichrist at this mid-tribulation point, and also his master Satan. The antichrist will be a man, John is told, of great arrogance who blasphemes God without fear. He directs his blasphemies against God's name, which represents all that God stands for, and all that He is. He directs his blasphemy against God's temple, which represents the true worship of God and true doctrine. And he will blaspheme the saints in heaven – those who have chosen to choose Christ instead of the antichrist.

**The Lamb's Book of Life**

God will allow the antichrist to carry on in this manner for three-and-a-half years before terminating him at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The government of Satan's antichrist during the great tribulation (that is, the last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation) will be a world government. The people on earth from all nations who worship the antichrist are those, of course, who have never been born again through faith in Jesus Christ. This represents the mass of lost humanity whose names were never recorded in the Lamb's book of life. This is the book of the record from all dispensations of those who are going to heaven.

**The Book of Life**

These were all once in the book of life; that is, the recording of the living – those who have come into the human race. But their names have been erased from that book. The final edition of the book of Life becomes the Lamb's Book of Life, the book of the saved. God's elect for salvation will understand the doctrines that they need to know to understand the nature of God, and therefore they will not worship this man, the antichrist. And many of them will be martyred for their refusal to do so.

**We are Approaching the End Times**

It is quite obvious that the conditions for the fulfillment of this divine preview of history given to John is well advanced today, and you are living in a unique point in human history. These conditions have never existed anywhere near this way at any point in the past. It is highly probable that the antichrist is already alive today, and rising in political power. The world's leaders of government and business now favor a world governing organization. The rejection is universal that the Bible as the Word of God must be obeyed. Biblical moral rules no longer govern human conduct to restrain the evils of the old sin nature. Reality beyond the human realm is sought in drugs, and in the pursuit of human godhood. Mankind seeks peace and safety without Jesus Christ, so it is dooming itself to a catastrophic destruction. The Jews are flocking from everywhere around the world back to Israel, and the gentile nations are fighting each other over the Jewish state. The ecumenical movement is creating a common religion under the role of the New Age movement. And the family, as a cornerstone of society, is totally shattered.

All of these elements which are commonplace, and many more, make it very clear that the kind of a picture that John has drawn for him in the book of the Revelation, under the rule of the antichrist, will very easily be realized once the Christians have been removed from this earth in the rapture.

**Revelation 13:9**

In Revelation 13:9, we pick up the story, having presented this picture of the coming world ruler, and of the objectives that he will be pursuing. Remember that he will be a charismatic leader, but he will be enormously evil. He will be much worse than Hitler. He'll be the vilest of the vilest that the world has ever seen. He will be totally brutal because his power will be absolute. As the principle has been well-stated: "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." No one, as the Scriptures say, will be able to stand up to this man. This is a very important bit of information, and it will be very important, particularly to those who live during the tribulation, to both believers and unbelievers, who may pick up this portion of the Bible and begin reading it, and realize that they are living in this very time period.

**Anyone with an Ear**

So, verse 9 pauses to do something that the Bible has done on many occasions. The Lord Jesus did this on several occasions. The book of the Revelation does this several times. It pauses to remind those who have read this, who have received this instruction, to pay attention to it. Verse 9 says, "If anyone has an ear, let him hear." The Greek word for "if" is "ei." It is a conditional particle. As you know, when we read the word "if" in the English Bible, we have to go back to the Greek Bible and say, "Which of the four kinds of "ifs" is it? This is first-class condition if, and therefore, it means "since." It is saying, "Since it is true." This is true about us – that everyone has ears. That's a self-evident fact that everyone has ears – generally two ears. Three ears is too many, and one ear is not enough. Two years is just right, and everybody comes into life with those two ears. Therefore, he has a capacity for taking information into the mentality of his soul, and for understanding what is being said. This applies to everyone, which means every single individual.

**Hearing**

Everybody has these ears, and he has these for the purpose of hearing. The Greek word for "hearing" is "akouw." "Akouw" here simply means "to pay attention" to what God has revealed. This is in the Greek aorist tense, which deals with a point in time. What point in time? Well, a point in time like right now, when you are sitting here being instructed in the Word of God, to pay attention to what you hear, and to act upon it. It is in the active voice, which means that you must decide yourself that you are going to hear. You've already made that decision by the fact that you took the trouble to get up this morning; get dressed; get in your car; and, you've arrived here. We have a lot of people who should be here, filling up the chairs beyond the center aisle, who are not here. They have made the decision not to hear. But it is a very active decision.

Unfortunately, the mood is very serious here, because it is the imperative mood. Imperative means that it is a command of God. This is not something optional. God is not saying, "Please come to church, and I'll tell you a little bit. You can kind of think it over and do what you want with it. If you like it, you can act upon it; you can ignore it; or, you can forget it." No, God says, "To hear." And sometimes, in order to hear, you have to use your hand to hear. Those of you who sit with a piece of paper and a pencil in your hands, and jot down a thought or two as you listen, will go home and read that, and you'll find that your hand has acted indeed as a third ear, because it will bring back to your memory what you have heard. Those of you with those razor-sharp, computer-like minds, like Bob Short has, don't have to write things down. You will remember it all. But most of you need to make some records. You want to remember these things, because God says, "I'm commanding you to pay attention."

So, this is a significant expression. Those of us out of the Naval Service understand this as the command that one would hear over a PA system on board a ship that says, "Now here this." This is God's way of saying, "Pay attention. An important announcement is now to follow." This admonition is repeated in this way many times in Scripture.

For example, in Matthew 11:15, Jesus is talking about John the Baptist, and telling about the importance of this man in introducing Jesus as the Messiah King: Jesus says, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." What is Jesus saying? "Now hear this."

In Matthew 13:9, Jesus is speaking about the sower and the seed, and how some people do not pay attention to the Word of God. It never takes root in them. It flies over them. They are the poorer for it. But then there's that wonderful gang that lets the Word of God be planted in them, to germinate, and to multiply itself many times over. When Jesus finishes, he says in verse 9, "He who has ears let them hear." Now hear this.

Notice the same thing in Matthew 13:43 about the wheat and the tears, and the division at the end between the saved and the unsaved, and the great tragedy that will be there: "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father. He who has ears let them hear." Now hear this.

You will find that this is also repeated in Mark 4:9; Mark 4:23; Marks 7:16; Luke 8:8; Luke 14:35; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 2:11; Revelation 2:17; Revelation 2:19; Revelation 3:6; Revelation 3:13; and, Revelation 3:22. All those verses have exactly this same admonition: "Pay attention." So, any time this shows up, you should stop and say, "Oops. Let me go back and read what God the Holy Spirit just recorded, because when He really wants you to pay attention, He puts in this kind of special caution.

So, what we're saying is that having an ear which is capable of receiving Bible doctrine truth is all that will preserve these tribulation saints from Satan's lies. Remember that John 8:44 tells us that Satan is the father of lies. Satan always lies. Even the miracles that Satan performs in charismatic circles today are lies. He performs those, not for the glory of God, but to deceive people, and to bring them to himself, and under his control. Therefore, it is only the Word of God that will give you the frame of reference by which to judge.

That's just as true for you and me today. We do not by nature know how to discern between what is false and what is true about the things of God. We can learn a lot of Bible stories; we can learn a lot of information; and, we can learn categories of doctrine, but what we cannot learn is to have that discernment – to be able to talk to a person, and see what's really going on behind the words that they're saying; behind what they're telling us; behind what they're asking us; in how they're dealing with us; in what motivates the heart; in what motivates deep inside that person; and, to strip away the front. This takes some real divine viewpoint capacity. That's an ear that can hear what is coming through from that person.

The spiritually regenerated people have the capacity to understand the significance of God's revelation in the Bible. Unbelievers are spiritually dead. They do not grasp the implications of what God says. So, they blindly and indifferently go along in their own ways.

So, God is urging believers to pay attention to doctrine. Believers living during the tribulation will need to know the doctrine of God that we have been studying, so as not to be deceived by Satan's miracles as proof of his deity. That's exactly what he's going to do. He's going to perform the miracles to prove that he is God.

**Bible Doctrine is Discredited Today**

So, today, as we are living in Satan's frantic, last-hour resistance to God, which is intensifying all over the world, it is not surprising that Bible doctrine is being discredited, and that sitting in a church congregation like this is being given the back of a hand.

I heard a man on radio yesterday say, "These Christians think that if you know doctrine, you'll be able to meet the problems of your life." And I said, "That's right, buddy. That's exactly the way you meet the problems of your life. That's exactly the way you meet the crises." I could tell that he didn't have the foggiest notion of how the dynamic system of power works, that God has provided through the Word of God.

So, do we need Bible doctrine so much in the final days of the church age? Do we really need that? Is not a real heartwarming experience more significant to people? Isn't it better just to come together, and glow, and go together, and have a little bit of weeping; a little bit of emotion; and, a little bit of thrill? Is there anything wrong with doing that? No. Every now and then somebody really comes through with a testimony at a Lord's Supper meeting that knocks the socks off of everybody. People sit there with the tears in their eyes, and the joy in their heart, as they see the working of the Spirit of God.

That happened as I talked to a man at the pool on Friday, as I told him some of the things that the Word of God has been doing with some of the people that write us through our tapes and other contacts we have. The swimming pool got more water in it, as this man was moved by realizing that the Word of God is alive, and it is active. Isn't just a feeling of love the important thing? Isn't just praising Jesus what we need? No, that will never make it for you. You're going to crack up when you get the bad news.

This attack on doctrine is being spearheaded for Satan by Christians themselves, unfortunately. Christians treat doctrine as something that's OK, but the real thing spiritually is to be found in emotional experiences. Think that people need to be able to stand in a church service where you're on such an emotional high that you can hold your hands over your head, and roll your eyeballs up into your lids. Then you have really approached God. Do you really believe that's true? Do you really think that's how you will find God – in that kind of a public display of foolishness?

Satan promotes this idea, of course, in order to use people for his plans. Matthew 7:21-23 tell us how a great number of people are going to find that they've been so deceived by Satan that they're going to hell instead of heaven, that they were sure they were going to. Their argument is that they were praising the Lord; they were performing miracles; they were casting out demons; and, they were making prophecies. And Jesus says, "Oh, sure, you were doing that. But you were doing it through the power of Satan, not through My power. You never accepted me as Savior. I never knew you as one of My own. Shut off." Then they go into the lake of fire. Satan is the liar who manipulates emotions and crushes what people could be for God. Satan provides the emotional experiences which stir the believer to do the very thing that violates the Word of God, that he should not be doing, and thereby grieves the Holy Spirit.

Remember that that's all the devil is after with you Christians. He wants to be sure to keep you out of the inner circle of temporal fellowship. He wants to keep you grieving the Holy Spirit because of sin in your life that you have not confessed. He wants to keep you quenching the Holy Spirit because you say, "No" to Him when He burdens your heart for some activity of service. All the devil needs is for you to walk by means of your human viewpoint instead of walking by means of the Holy Spirit. If he can break you on any one of those three factors, then the Holy Spirit is detached from you, and you're no problem. You are living a wasted life.

Unfortunately, the problem begins in the pulpit. Pastors are not alerting believers to the role of doctrine in their lives. Those pastors who dare to do that are viewed as alarmists and faddists, and there's something very odd and strange about them. And they get chewed up very quickly. This is a fearful thing because you generally don't get large congregations that way. A preacher is very fearful of not having a large congregation. How do you keep going and pay the bills? You trust in God. That's how.

Christians themselves are spearheading this attack of Satan against the Word of God. The liberals, of course, have been doing it through rationalism, which has destroyed the authority and the meaning of Scripture. They have rejected anything in the Bible that they don't consider logical and reasonable by their finite minds. They don't realize that their thinking has been distorted from true reality because of the sin nature within them. They have rejected thus the existence of anything supernatural, including a Bible supernaturally produced by God: without any mistakes in it; and, with propositions and exact statements of doctrinal absolute truth. They reject that completely. So, where do you go? If you don't have a voice from God and an accurate record, then you go to all the deficiencies of the human mind, with all of its misconceptions, to try to find truth, and you never can find it.

However, Bible-believing Christians themselves are doing the identical thing in discrediting the Bible when they interpret it with their emotions and experience, as is done in the charismatic circles. They say, "Yes, I'm true to the Bible. Yes, I believe the Bible. Yes, I accept the Bible." And the result is that they have completely destroyed the significance of what God has said. So, they're just as bad as the liberals themselves.

**Empiricism and Rationalism**

Satan, of course, is the source of both these errors. With the error of empiricism, you interpret by your emotions and your experience. With the error of rationalism, you interpret by what seems reasonable to you.

So, God is going to say to us, "If you have an ear, then pay attention, and listen, and hear, and learn," we have to have a little more information, not only to respect the Word of God, but we have to understand a little more about the role of the Word of God in our experience.

The reason for this is that each of us, as believers, has a very great need. When we were born into the human race, we were born totally devoid of every divine viewpoint thought. The old sin nature within us does not have any of God's frame of reference whatever. Most people in our society function on human viewpoint, and they think that they're smart. Following society's opinions, ways, and values leads one inevitably away from God into humanism, where, ultimately, man is deified as his own God. When one is born-again spiritually, however, something dramatically changes. He is now automatically capable of possessing God's viewpoint.

**Filling**

Paul, in writing to the Colossian Christians, tried to explain this to them in Colossians 1:9-10. In verse 8, the apostle Paul observed that he has been informed about the love (the mental-attitude, goodwill, "agape" love) in the Holy Spirit that exists between the members of the congregation of the churches in Colossians. And Paul says that for this reason also (since the day he heard of their mental attitude love toward one another) he has not ceased to pray for something else that they need now: "For you to ask, that you may be filled."

So, first of all, he prays to God that they may be filled. Immediately, that tells us that they have a deficiency in the soul. There's an emptiness in the soul. The word "filled" is the Greek word "pleroo." It is in the aorist tense, which means, again, that point event that sometime the Christian is to take some action to resolve the spiritual deficiency in his soul? What is his deficiency? Well, it is a deficiency of divine viewpoint. And he has some point where he is to take some action to correct that deficiency. It is in the passive voice, which means that you can't do it. You can't just meditate; you can't just emote; and, you can't just sit up on a mountain, and watch the clouds go by, and fill this deficiency. The Christian receives the filling of divine viewpoint from the Lord when the condition is met of the intake of doctrine into the soul. And it is a subjunctive mood, which means that a lot of people are not going to do this. It's a potential. Here is something that a Christian can do. He can learn and pay attention to doctrine, or he can ignore it. You can show up for the church services, or you can stay at home, for whatever trivial reason he may come up with. And there are no end of the trivial reasons to justify that.

This is an experiential deficiency. This is something that is deficient in your experience, so it can be corrected. This is not something that is positional. It can be solved. What Paul is really telling us here, when he says, "I pray for you, that you may be filled in correcting some deficiency," is that he is indicating that it is the duty of every Christian to fill this deficiency. This deficiency keeps you from living the supernatural Christian life to which you have been called. It is your duty to correct the emptiness in your soul.

**Knowledge**

He says that it is a deficiency "Of knowledge." And the word "knowledge" is a very important word. It's the word "epignosis." This is not the ordinary word for knowledge. The ordinary word for knowledge in the Bible is "gnosis." It's the last part of the word "epignosis." This has this preposition added which intensifies this as full knowledge, and it is referring to a very specific kind of knowledge. Paul says, "I pray to God that you may be filled with the full knowledge." What is this referring to? This refers to doctrine that is built up in your soul by: learning through the grace system of perception that God has provided for learning; learning the mind of God apart from how smart you are; learning the mind of God dependent only on your determination to learn it; and, storing it in your human spirit when you believe it (positive volition to doctrine).

**The Grace System of Perception**

It goes like this: You sit in a group, or you study on your own. You take doctrine into your soul (into your mind). The communicator in the local church service gives you a Bible doctrine information, if he's doing his job. You, sitting there, understand what you hear. You have a "gnosis" knowledge. You comprehend the information. Then you respond to it and say, "God, I believe that." The Holy Spirit takes that and immediately transforms "gnosis" into "epignosis." Now it becomes usable knowledge. Gnosis is not worth anything, basically, in daily living. It's just information that you have. But when you transform it by your acceptance into your soul as God's truth, then it becomes stored in your human spirit. The result is that you now have a frame of reference. You now have the deficiency of your soul filled with divine viewpoint, because "epignosis" is divine viewpoint. Now you have the capacity to have information directed to your mind to guide your life. You have information directed to your emotions so that you don't run amuck. Now you have information from the Word of God to guide your will so that you make the right decisions with your life.

The only thing that keeps you from functioning is a winner then is your own indifference; your own refusal; and, your own negative attitude toward what God says. And I must remind you that negative volition is a no-good operation. Negative volition is a germ. And once you plant in your soul, it will grow into a deadly disease. Negative volition toward a truth of God will bring you down in time. I tell you, it is inevitable. Do not kid yourself. You all have enough sin in your lives in past experience that you know that, at some point, you turned your back upon a law of God; upon a rule of God; or, upon a point of doctrine. You shoved it aside even when you knew it, and you brought yourself down. You don't look back on that with pride; it gave you no pleasure; you found no satisfaction; and you wish you had never done it. The Word of God, when rejected, will bear bitter fruits in your life.

This is why Jesus said to the Pharisees on one occasion, "You people are very bad. But now I have instructed you. I have given you some divine viewpoint truth, and you're turning your back upon that, and you're even going to be worse. The things that will happen to you now will be greater at the hands of God because your judgment will be so much the greater." You cannot turn your back upon the Word of God.

**A Spiritual Maturity Structure**

In any case, here you are with opportunity, when that deficiency of divine viewpoint has been satisfied, and now you can build spiritual maturity in your soul. Now you can build a spiritual maturity structure. You can develop grace orientation. You can get a relaxed mental attitude in your dealings with people. You can have a mastery of the details of life, so that you're not a slave to things. You have a capacity to love God; man; and, husband or wife. And you have an inner happiness that overrides all the circumstances of life.

God has provided every believer with a living human spirit and the indwelling Holy Spirit so that you can function under the grace system of perception, to learn and to store doctrine. It doesn't matter how smart you are, or how dumb you are. It matters how dedicated and determined you are to immerse yourself in the Word of God.

**The Will of God**

Paul says that what "epignosis" knowledge does is it enables you to know the will of God. This is essential for living a life that God will bless and reward. It is not the life of your will, but the life of His will. You will have the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. You will have the capacity to know how to live your life. You will have wisdom, which is divine viewpoint. You will have spiritual understanding, which means that you'll know how to use that divine viewpoint.

This is a variation of what the apostle Paul said in Romans 12:2-3, where he described this same condition. You have the deficiency filled up with doctrines, and you have God's divine viewpoint. What happens? Romans 12:2 says, "And do not be conformed to this world. (Do not pattern yourself after Satan's world system), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. With what? With inspiration? With excitement? With experiences? No, but with doctrine. Renew your human viewpoint mind into a divine viewpoint mind. For what purpose? The same thing: "So that you may prove what is the will of God, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." It is the Word of God that enables you to enter the will of God.

Therefore, Colossians 1:10 says, "So, that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord;" that is, that you'll be able to live in a way it is befitting a child of God; that you will be able to please the Father in all things – to please him in all respects; and, furthermore, "To bear fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Now, read those verses carefully. If you will fill up the deficiency in your soul (in your mind); wipe out the human viewpoint; take the doctrine in; accept it; store it in the human spirit; and, fill your mind with divine viewpoint understanding, the result will be that you will walk in a manner that is worthy of you as a child of God, and that you will please Him in all respects. What a promise! And that you will bear fruit? You will not be wasting your life in human good works, but your life will be fruitful with divine good works. Furthermore, you will be increasing your rewards in heaven because you're operating in divine good works, and you will be increasing in your knowledge of God, which means that you will be developing your own personal spiritual maturity.

This system has been very carefully worked out by God. It has been provided for every local church organization in the form of the pastor-teacher-elder. Ephesians 4:11 tells us that God has given four classifications of communicators to the local church. One is the apostle, which we no longer have. Another is the prophet, which we no longer have. These men were very important to give God's mind before the Bible was written. Then evangelists proclaim particularly the message of the gospel. We still have that gift. Then the pastor-teacher. This is a combined gift. In the Greek, the pastor-teacher gift is combined. They are the communicators of the Word of God to the believers.

**The Pastor-Teacher Gift**

The chain of reaction is very important for you to understand as it is laid out here in Ephesians 4:12. Here are the results of what happens when the pulpit does its job for the believer. I cannot help but wonder how many Christians are going to get to heaven, and then look back upon their lives with tears. They will have great grief when they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and realize that their great losses were due to the clown that stood in the pulpit. Perhaps he had a famous name, and was a great orator, but who starved them from the Word of God, and who never alerted them how the system works, so that they could be transformed from their deficiency of soul, so that they would have the prosperity of the Word of God in their souls so they could listen to God. It doesn't do any good for you to tell somebody, "Pay attention to God" if they don't know what to pay attention to, or do not have the capacity spiritually to respond.

This pastor-teacher is the key element in the local church structure. Ephesians 4:12 tells you how it works. Why did he give pastor-teachers? He have them: for the equipping; for the work of service; and, for the building up of the body of Christ. Actually, in the Greek language, you have the word "for" three times. But I want to show you something: "For the equipping." This "for" is the preposition "pros," and it is: "For the equipping of the saints." The first thing that happens is that the Word of God being taught to the people of God makes them equipped to do the service of God. It is like joining a military organization, and they give you your equipment. Most Christians cannot serve God. Most of the Christians that you know cannot serve God. They don't have the equipment to do it: "For the equipping of the saints."

In the next two occurrences of the word "for," God the Holy Spirit switches the Greek word. This is the word "eis." The reason for it is because this is a chain reaction. This first "for" is linked to the second "for." If the first "for" is done (equipping the saints), then the second "for" will take place: "for the work of service." That means "for the work of Christian service," and "for the production of divine good works." No Christian who has not been equipped with doctrine in his soul can serve God. Period.

What are we saying? I'm telling you that most churches are sitting there with masses of people who think they're doing something for God, and they haven't made the first step toward it, because they're incapable. Most of them know one doctrine. They hear the gospel of salvation every Sunday, because the objective is to build up the congregational numbers, not the people in the congregation.

"For the equipping of the saints" means giving you the equipment for your spiritual combat. Do you understand that? It is for going into spiritual combat. Later, in Ephesians 6, he goes into greater detail. We won't do that here. You can get that on our tapes. But the details of the equipment for the combat are very explicit and very important.

However, once you get that, then you're capable of serving God, and the result will be that you will serve God. And out of that will come the second link, which will be the building up of the body of Christ. That means both the building up of the church (the body of Christ), as well as the building up of you as an individual believer.

There is an interesting thing about this first "for" (this first preposition – "pros"). In the Greek language, it means face-to-face. Let me show you. In John 1:1, where John is fighting the Gnostics that said that Jesus Christ was not deity, but he was just a super angel, he immediately hits the fact that Jesus Christ is God. In John 1:1, he says, "In the beginning was the Word." The word "Word" is the Greek word "logos," which refers here to Christ: "And the Word was with God." The word "with" is this Greek word "pros." He was face-to-face with God. He came from face-to-face with God because He is God. He was part of the Godhead. Then he explicitly says, "The Word was God." So, here you have this statement: "The word was God. The Word was face-to-face with God."

So, the first step is that the congregation sits there; they are silent; they are attentive; and, they are taking a few notes. As the early church gathered for the apostles’ doctrine, Acts 2 tells us that they were learning the Word of God in the privacy of their own souls. And only those who are more careless will tell the preacher that he has struck something that they don't like. They'll jerk, or they can't keep from looking at the person next to them. ... Otherwise, you don't know what their reaction is. They're just listening. That's privacy. You're your own priest. When a priest went to minister before God, there was nobody there. He stood alone. You had to stand out there in the Old Testament system, you had to wait. You had to offer your animal; make the approach to God; come back; and, give you the report of blessing. It was all a private deal.

Now you are your own priest, and you stand there before Him in your total privacy. The first step in this chain is face-to-face teaching, and that's where most churches break down. There is not face-to-face teaching of doctrine. That's why, when Christians get hold of our tapes, which are that kind of instruction, they will never go back to the other kind. This is amazing.

I had a call last night. I had to stop to take a call from Chicago. The caller said, "I've used up all my tapes. I'm ready for the next series." This was a man who was a Roman Catholic who suddenly has come alive to the Word of God; who is fed up with religion; but, who knows where the reality is now, because he's been instructed.

When this is done, believers will be ready to produce divine good works of service. They will then be ready and capable of erecting a spiritual maturity structure in their soul. It's a chain reaction. This is the study of the Word of God.

**The HICEE Technique**

However, preachers are not all the same. Preachers think they do the job. That has to be a method of preparation that has preceded his instruction. We call it the HICEE technique, because it tells you the basic things that should be included if somebody is really instructing you in the Word of God.

1. **H – Hermeneutics**

The "H" stands for hermeneutics, which means that there are certain principles of interpretation. The most fundamental one is that you interpret the Bible literally for what the words say. You don't spiritualized it.

1. **I – Isagogics**

The "I" stands for isagogics, which means the background of the times. How did people live? What is a mustard seed? What did it look like? All these things in the Scriptures gives us the frame of reference to help us to understand what the Word of God is teaching us.

1. **C – Categories**

The "C" stands for categories like the category I gave you in the previous session on grace giving, where all the Scriptures that relate to a certain doctrine are brought together and put in an orderly fashion. So, if you learn this, you have that category of doctrine well-grasped within your soul.

1. **E – Etymology**

Then the first "E" stands for etymology, which is simply the meaning of words. Words have meaning. I showed you, for example, the "if" in the previous session. There are for different kinds of gifts in the Bible, and they have different meanings. In the next session, we'll show you some very tremendous meanings on the rest of the Colossians passage such that the very words have very specific meanings that just make the hair stand on the end of your neck because of the thrill of realizing what God is doing. So, you have to know the meaning of words.

1. **E – Exegesis**

The second "E" stand for exegesis, which is a word that means grammar. We've told you that some things are a command from God. Some things are a thing that has happened at some point in time, or something happens all the time. The grammar and how it all fits together is important.

Anybody who can preach like this, I can tell you, has spent hours of preparation in doing it. Otherwise, he's up there telling you stories; making you laugh; and, that's it. At Berean Church, we have very little humor. We don't have many laughs, but we do get the Word of God, and we get it because the HICEE method is behind the preparation before we stand up to face the congregation. To have failed to do so would be to have robbed the people of God of their right and of their heritage to know the mind of Christ.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1991

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