***The Grace System of Perception

RV65-02***

We are studying the letter to Laodicea, section number 15, in Revelation 3:14-22. The Laodicean Christians failed to understand that real wealth lay in the possession of Bible doctrine truth which they had stored in their human spirits. So, they were not really rich as they believed they were, and they were not the quality kind of Christians that they imagined themselves to be. Bible doctrine in Laodicea, we get the feeling, was something nice, but it was not of supreme importance. The result was a degenerated condition of reversionism which is very often found among Christians today.

We hear a great many attacks on the position which is known as fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is a view of the Bible as being the inspired, authoritative, inerrant Word of God. Consequently, when we want to talk about what God thinks; when we want to talk about man's condition in sin; when we want to talk about what people face after death; and, when we want to talk about the moral attitudes of society, fundamentalists go to the Bible, and whatever the Bible says is viewed as being literally true. And that's the rub – being viewed as literally true.

So, the attacks against fundamentalism are, in reality, attacks against the Bible as being literally true. You can listen to these attacks and hear snide marks about these fundamentalists, and sometimes they equate that with a term which we have heard in recent years, and that is "born again." They'll talk about these people who think they're born again. Well, "born again" and "fundamentalism" are almost synonymous terms, because both of those connote the fact that the Bible speaks with a definitive authority.

Once you've taken this position, you realize that you must condemn, in effect, vast numbers of human beings. All the Muslims come under direct condemnation with one blow if you take the fundamentalist position that the Bible is pure gold. If you take the position that the Bible is the true Word of God containing true truth, with one blow, all of Roman Catholicism is condemned. All of Mormonism is condemned. All of Jehovah's Witnesses is condemned. All the religions of the world are condemned, because all of them uniformly reject the Bible as the final word from God, as His final revelation. So, this is a very serious decision that every human being has to make. There will be millions in hell in eternity because they rejected what the Bible claimed about itself and its authority as speaking for God.

**The Grace System of Perception**

The securing of real wealth for these Laodicean Christians stood in the form of Bible doctrine which was to be secured via a grace method of learning truth, which God has provided – the grace system of perception. It is a grace system so that the story of the pure gold of the doctrine in one's spirit is not dependent upon human IQ. Everybody can equally develop a spiritual IQ to whatever extent you're ready to put in the time to do it. Doctrine which is learned and believed is, in effect, bought by the believer. It is purchased by the believer from God with the coin of faith. That's what positive volition is. When you've heard some instruction from the Bible, positive volition is saying, "I buy that." We have that colloquial term: "I buy that." It's the very term that Isaiah uses: "Buy the truth from God." You buy it by believing it.

This is the thing that we have here in Revelation. The Lord Jesus invites these people to buy real wealth from Him. That real wealth is the Word of God. A believer exercises positive volition toward this doctrine, so purchased by faith. It is stored in the believer's human spirit, which acts as a reservoir from which it is cycled to the facets of the soul as needed – God's viewpoint. So, it affects our mind, our emotions, and our will. These are the facets of our souls. The doctrine which is learned, but which is rejected, or which is treated with neutral indifference, is never stored in the human spirit. That doctrine is totally useless in the life of the believer, and totally useless in the angelic conflict. The pure gold of doctrine in the human spirit is also called "the belt of truth" for the Christian soldier in his combat equipment in Ephesians 6:14.

**The Completed Canon of Scripture**

We have seen that the first provision of the grace system of perception is in the form of a completed canon of Scripture. God has given us a total Old and New Testament revelation. We looked at 2 Timothy 3:16-17, and found that that tells us that the content of the Bible was exhaled by God to the human authors of Scripture. It was God-breathed. So, whatever is in the Bible came directly from God the Holy Spirit. The human authors themselves did not produce the revelation of Scripture. Inspiration, in the nature of the case, extends to all Scripture: both Old and New Testaments. The content of the Bible enables a believer to mature into the image of Christ. The content of doctrine in the life produces stability and prosperity, and it equips the believer for service in the angelic conflict.

The second main verse that we looked at was 2 Peter 1:21. That one tells us how the content of Scripture, which was revealed by the Holy Spirit, was reduced to writing so as to produce an inerrant Bible. This is how we secured an inerrant Bible. 2 Peter 1:21 tells us that it was God the Holy Spirit who carried these authors along in such a way that he maneuvered them away from error, and He maneuvered them to express the truth in exactly the correct words. Men of positive volition were selected by the Holy Spirit to be these human authors. Then he carried along these chosen men. These writers, while they were under this divine direction of inspiration, were themselves not aware that they were under the control of the Spirit of God. They simply wrote a letter. They used their own way of thinking and their own vocabulary.

**God-Breathed**

In the writing of the Bible, there is the principle of inhaling and exhaling. This is one way of thinking about where the Bible comes from. When you talk to people in terms of the Bible being the supreme authority, the true goal that the Lord offered to the Laodicean church, you are going to be challenged as to: who says that the Bible is right? On what basis do you declare that whatever the Bible says is what human beings must subscribe to? One of the ways to understand this is by thinking about the way we breathe. We inhale and exhale. Inhaling refers to the Holy Spirit communicating to the authors of the Bible a complete and coherent message. These men listened to God, and they breathed in the message of God the Holy Spirit. What God the Holy Spirit revealed to them went to the perceptive function of their minds. Then, because they believed it, it was stored in their human spirits. Then it moved to their directive mind and formed the frame of reference, which they were then ready to exhale.

There are many passages in the Bible that tell us exactly that – that God told these men the information that they believed, and that they then recorded. For example, you can check these at your leisure: 2 Samuel 23:2-3; Isaiah 59:21; Jeremiah 1:9; Matthew 22:42-43; Mark 12:36; Acts 4:24-28; and Acts 28:25. All of these verses declare to us that the information was received from God. They breathed it in.

Then, after you breathe in, you always have to do something else: You have to exhale. That's why when your little disobedient child says to you, when you won't subject yourself to his will, "I'm going to hold my breath," and he takes a deep breath. You need not worry. Just fold your arms and watch him, because something is going to happen. He is going to exhale. He may decide that it's too painful to hold his breath anymore, and he'll exhale and take another breath, or he'll pass out, and then the autonomic system of his brain will take over, and it will make him breathe. You have nothing to fear except his rebellion. So, you will exhale after you inhale. That's what the writers of Scripture did. They inhaled from the Spirit of God. Then they took their pens in hand and, on the parchment, they exhaled what God gave them. These human authors reported, in writing, God's revelation to them.

The writer did not bypass his natural intelligence; his natural vocabulary; or, his personality at all while writing. However, the sword of the spirit which was formed as the result of this kind of exhaling was in a permanent language. The Old Testament was crystallized in Hebrew; the New Testament, in Greek. These languages preserved for us, in exact expression, what they were exhaling. 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21 have described that for us.

Any emotions that these men had at the time of the writing did not interfere with their recording of the Word of God. Sometimes they had the emotion of confusion. Peter says that some of the prophets wrote down prophecies about Jesus Christ, and they had the emotion of confusion, because the information they were getting from the Spirit of God was that the Messiah Savior would appear as the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah, and He would also appear as the Lamb of God unto sacrifice. When they wrote that, they said, "Gee, that looks like a contradiction. How could He come as a meek and lonely lamb for sacrifice, and also come as a ruling conquering lion?" They had the emotions of confusion because they didn't understand the relationship between the First and Second Comings of Jesus Christ. With that information not being given to them, they simply believed what had been exhaled to them from the Spirit of God, which they had inhaled, and they recorded the information. In time, later revelation revealed the truth.

Therefore, we say that the Bible is the mind of Christ. So, it's an absolute authority in spiritual things. This Bible is our ultimate weapon against Satan. It is indeed the sword of the Spirit with which we can make Satan flee from us, just as Satan was forced to flee from the Lord Jesus Christ when He was attacked in the wilderness temptations, and the Lord turned the Bible against him.

1 Corinthians 2:16 says, "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him, but we have the mind of Christ." Do you know what that means? It means you have the mind of Christ because you have studied the Word of God, and you have learned Scripture, and you have received it with a positive attitude.

In Psalm 138:2, the psalmist says this: "I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for loving kindness, and for Your truth. For You have magnified Your Word above all Your name." God has exalted the recorded Scripture above His very name and all that that name stands for.

So, the words that you have in the Bible here were selected by the Holy Spirit, but not by a dictation method. The writer didn't know that he was being led to these words. He was just expressing it the way he thought he wanted to express it. He was preserved from the wrong words. He was preserved from conveying false thoughts of any (any heresy). Consequently, the Bible is the mind of Christ. Sometimes people buy a red-letter Bible. A red-letter Bible is a Bible in which everything that Jesus Christ said is placed in red letters. Why would anybody buy a red-letter Bible? Why would anybody publish a Bible like this? Because they want to suggest that what Jesus Christ said was in some way superior to everything else that's in black letters in the Bible. So, you subconsciously get the attitude that when you read red letters in your Bible, you are walking on hallowed and holy ground. But when you read black letters in your Bible, you're walking on something less than absolute truth. Of course, that's a total deception. Everything in the Bible (the red letters that represent the actual sayings of Jesus Christ, and that which is the revelation which did not come from His lips) all had been revealed through God the Holy Spirit. The mind of Christ is represented by everything that is in the Bible.

So, there is no virtue in buying a red-letter Bible. It is a kind of a nonsense thing to do. If you have one, just be sure that you don't think that those red letters represent a more important part of the Bible than do the rest of the letters which are all in black.

The mind of Christ actually existed in eternity past before there was any recorded Scripture. Therefore, what we have in the Bible was everything that He had prepared to be recorded in the Bible from eternity past. The Holy Spirit then gave this revelation of the mind of Christ, and put it into written form. He actually gave this revelation even before the Bible was written. Again, you can consult certain passages that reveal how the Spirit of God was talking about what Jesus Christ had to say – what He thought before the actual sayings of Christ were ever recorded. 2 Samuel 23:2; Ezekiel 2:2; Ezekiel 8:3; Ezekiel 11:1-24; Micah 3:8; and, Hebrews 3:7 all indicate the revelation of the mind of Christ even before the Bible was written.

While the mind of the unregenerate person will reject the propositions that the Bible states as being truth, Satan, I guarantee you, does not. Many of the followers of Satan pretend that what the Bible says is not true. The devil will try to convince you that it is not true, as he did with Eve, but I'll guarantee you that this is one thing that the devil knows very clearly – that anything in the Word of God (anything in the Bible) is absolute truth. He knows that it has been refined by the very holiness of God.

So, spiritual darkness in the life of the believer is sometimes indicated by the fact that he is willing to change the truth of God into a lie. The unbeliever has done exactly that. He takes what the Bible says, and he changes it into a lie. He takes some moral issues that the Bible declares, and he changes it into a lie. He rejects it. There is no amount of logic and argument which will convince that person that the Bible is the authority and the Word of God.

You can, of course, point to certain things in the Bible that give the evidence of its supernatural origin. Psalm 22, which was written 800 to 1,000 years before those events were ever fulfilled, describe the death of Christ on the cross. Who could have written Psalm 22 with all the exact details that took place hundreds of years later on Mount Calvary? Who could have written that unless God gave him that information, including the details that are given? It is ridiculous to say that it was a happy guess on somebody's part, and they hit it right on the head. But the unbeliever tries to say that. The prophetic portions of Scripture, which are such an evidence of God's hand, don't impress him. It takes the enlightenment of God the Holy Spirit for you to come to the personal conviction that when you deal with the Bible, you're dealing with the most valuable thing you will ever possess – the thing that will bring the greatest blessing both now and for all eternity into your life. It is the thing that should be the top priority in your daily experience.

**Verbal Plenary Inspiration**

As we have indicated, the extent of the inspiration is to the very words. These are words in the original manuscripts, and we describe it as verbal inspiration. It also applies to every thought that is in the Bible, and we call that plenary. So, we put those together, and we call this "verbal plenary inspiration." That's the whole thing. The sword of the Spirit is the very words of God, and the very words of God are in those original manuscripts. We get the very words of God when those original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts are accurately translated into our particular language – in our case: English. That is why paraphrases such as the Dead Bible, which goes under the code name of the Living Bible, tries to pretend that it is the revelation of God. You want to avoid that book like the plague, except as a secondary commentary. Realize that it is a commentary. It has nothing to do with the translation of Scripture as such. In an accurate translation into English, you and I virtually have the very words of God. We have that which the Bible claims is living and powerful. That's because of verbal inspiration.

The Bible stresses that the words which are written in the Bible are the very words of God. Romans 9:17 quotes Exodus 9:16, and it quotes it as being Scripture. Exodus 9:16 claims that it is the Word of God. Let me show you: Exodus 9:16: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised you up to show in you My power, and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth." This is God talking about His plan for the Egyptian pharaoh. Let your eye go back up to verse 13 so that you identify who it is that is speaking. Verse 13 says, "The Lord said unto Moses," and then the Lord starts speaking. He gets down to verse 16, and it is still God who is speaking: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised you up to show in you My power, and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth."

Now, turn to Romans 9:17. Notice what it says, quoting that: "For the Scripture says unto Pharaoh." Then it proceeds to quote Exodus 9:16. Exodus 9:16 says that it is the very words which God uttered. In Romans 9:17, we're told that what is recorded in Exodus 9:16 is the precise Word of God. These are the very words of God. So, some people have said, "Oh, yes, God spoke, and these men heard God speak. Those were the words of God." But that isn't what we have in the Bible. They could not write down that which is the very Word of God, and that, therefore, is living and powerful. But Romans 9:17 says, "For the Scripture has said unto pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised you up," and so on, quoting that Exodus passage and calling it Scripture, even though Exodus says that those words are the very Words of God. So, this is tremendous. The Bible is an absolutely fantastic look. It is for us not only the mind of Christ, but in the very words of Christ.

**History**

There are very different types of materials, as you know, that are covered by inspiration. Some of the things that inspiration takes care of, to give us an accurate report of this, for example, is unknown past history. All of Genesis 1 through 11 is something that we couldn't know (there is no way we could know that), except that God told that to Moses, the writer of Genesis, and therefore, Moses simply recorded the information that God gave him. There is ancient history which deals with the background of Scripture – the nations that dealt with Israel, and so on. The Bible accurately records the background of Scripture – the context in which Scripture was fulfilled.

Many times, the Bible has come under attack as being proven to be false because the Bible gave some information about ancient history that secular history could not confirm until some archeological discoveries, sure enough, revealed that the Bible was accurate in what it was saying.

Some of the Bible is pure dictation. The Mosaic Law is dictation. Many of the warnings are just copying down God's very dictation. The seven letters in Revelation are pure dictation. John simply listened, and what the Lord said, he recorded. So some of the Bible consists of pure dictation.

Some of it is what we call devotional literature, or wisdom literature, like Job and Ecclesiastes. These areas of wisdom literature reveal God's grace to us in times of pressure; in times of emotion; and, in times of triumph.

Then there are divine revelations. Those also are recorded in the Bible. These include direct words which God spoke; dreams which He gave; visions that He gave; and, communication through angels. All of these are recorded, and every one of these things is under divine inspiration. They are under that protection.

There is even falsehood expressed in the Bible. Human viewpoint is expressed in the Bible. Probably nine-tenths of the book of Ecclesiastes is pure human viewpoint. The Bible records what people say that is a lie. When Satan, the liar, speaks, the Bible accurately records his lie.

**Prophecy**

Prophecy, of course, is recorded in Scripture. This is the revelation of the future.

Then there are some interesting divine inscriptions, like that writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast that turned the party sour immediately when they saw that handwriting on that wall, and the Bible records exactly what was written up there. All of these things are under the control of inspiration.

So, God has preserved this revelation that He has given us. It is an accurate, absolutely inerrant sword of the Spirit, and it is ready to be used today. And I want to remind you that we have a vast number of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. Of all the ancient literature that mankind has ever produced, no piece of literature has as many recordings left to us as the Bible does. This is one of the things that confuses scholars. They want to know: why do we have so few of the ancient writings of the ancient Greeks and the ancient Romans? Why are there so few manuscripts? Here and there are scraps of sometimes great literary productions. And suddenly you get to the Bible, and you have vast quantities of Greek manuscripts, and vast quantities of Hebrew manuscripts. That is because God was making it very clear that He was preserving the Bible. Not only was He inspiring it, but getting it down to us in sufficient copies so that the accuracy could be preserved.

**The Grace System of Perception**

1. **The Completed Canon of Scripture**

So, point number one in the Greek system of perception is the canon of Scripture. I hope you have a greater appreciation for the fact that you have a completed canon – a complete rule. The word "canon" means a "rule," It is a complete standard of Scripture – a completed Old and New Testament. In that Scripture is the refined goal that Jesus Christ says to buy from Him.

1. **The Local Church**

Then, having said that, we come to the second factor that God has provided for you to be able to secure this gold. Point number 2 is the local church organization. The local church organization was provided for one basic primary reason, and that is for the authoritative public teaching of doctrine. Many churches fail to fulfill this mission. This particular mission is under enormous attack by Satan and by churches themselves. Churches do not like to think that their primary responsibility is to gather people together and to have a monologue – not a dialog.

People have come to love the word "dialog:" "Let's get together. How about us meeting in your home? I'd love to meet with you in your home. Gather some of your friends together, and then we'll discuss what the Bible says. And you can tell us what you think this verse means, and we'll tell you what we think it means. Then we'll pray about it. Then we'll all get a little emotional about it, until suddenly we feel it coming. We feel it hitting. First, it will hit the ends of our hair, and then it will go up to the cells of our hair. Finally, it'll enter our head. It'll come right through our brain structure. And suddenly we will have the Word of God. We have a message from God. Isn't it lovely to have a message from God when you've gathered in somebody's comfortable home? Then after we have the message from God, we'll have some refreshments, a little coffee and cake, and we'll just have a wonderful time in the Word – a wonderful time sharing our mutual ignorance."

The local church was provided so that there was a monologue of somebody who knew what he was talking about, and who knew something about the Scripture, as the result of the intense study of Scripture, who could get up and say, "Here is what the Bible is saying. Here is what was taking place."

A lady recently was talking to me about the incident of Hagar, and her sad condition after she bore Ishmael and was now held in contempt in Sarah's eyes, and came under Sarah's wrath, and how the angel of the Lord came to Hager to comfort her and to tell her what the future was going to be of nations who would be descended from Ishmael, and to comfort Hagar with the fact that, while this was not God's arrangement, and this was not God's plan, nevertheless, this boy was the son of Abraham, and Abraham was under God's blessing, and anybody who touched Abraham would be blessed. That's what happens with super-grace believers. When you are a super-grace believer, anybody who touches you is going to find themselves in a position of blessing. That's the way it works. If you are the father in the family and you are a super-grace man, then everybody in your family is prospered and blessed because of you. This is just as the no-good Lot was blessed because Abraham was his uncle. And the angel of the Lord said to Hagar, "Because he is Abraham's son, I will make a great nation of him." The whole Arab world, of course, came, in part, from Ishmael.

I asked this lady, "Do you know who the Angel of the Lord was that was telling Hagar this?" She said, "Well, it was just an angel." I said, "No, that's a technical term in the Bible. That was the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ." You should have seen her eyes bug open, and how pleased she was, because suddenly a passage of Scripture (a story in the Bible) that she had known all of her long life, suddenly exploded in a whole dimension that she had never grasped before, because somebody had never explained to her what the term "angel of the Lord" means in the Old Testament Scriptures. Here was Jesus Christ on the scene, the second person of the Trinity, comforting Hagar in that situation.

**Doctrine**

So, the local church organization was brought together to concentrate on the Word of God. This was indicated in the very early church in Acts 2:42, where we read, "And they (the believers) continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." This is point number one. They came to church for doctrine; they came together for doctrine; and, they spent their time in doctrine. Out of that flowed fellowship and breaking of bread and prayers. Out of that flowed their mutual fellowship of concern and caring for one another. That expressed itself, in part, after they got hold of doctrine, in the need to care for one's fellow believers such that they pooled their resources together to do that. They had the breaking of bread, and they enjoyed social fellowship of food, as well as the breaking of bread as it expressed itself in the Lord's Supper, and what all that signified as the common core around which they gathered.

They used the tactic of prayer to make things move. They knew how to move God in their behalf, and how to move the Lord's work ahead. They learned about prayer from doctrine. Because they had doctrine first, they had everything else as a result. If they had tried to pursue prayer first, and ignore doctrine, it would never have worked. They would have soon become discouraged, and prayer would become a nonsense experience. Their fellowship would have degenerated. Their social relationships would have degenerated. It was doctrine, first of all, that was the purpose of the local church, and it was that that made everything else fall into place.

So, don't be suckered in by that – that local churches have some other mission above teaching the Word of God. They do not. They have other things that they do that are important; that are valuable; and, that have a place, but they're all secondary. The first priority is teaching the Word. If you ever to find yourself in a situation where you have to be at a distance from Berean church, and you have to find another place of fellowship, I hope you will remember this point – that, in the grace system of perception, first of all, God has provided the full canon Scripture, and if you're going to make progress in mining the gold of the Word of God, you're going to have to have a local church that teaches you that doctrine, or you're not going to get very far at all.

1. **The Pastor-Teacher**

The third thing that has been provided in the grace system of perception is the spiritual gift of the pastor-teacher communicator. This is a key factor. You can see that you could have a complete Scripture and inerrant Bible, and you can see that you could have a local church organization formed and ready to function as a classroom situation. Then you could get somebody in the pulpit who does not have the gift of teaching. Maybe, he's got the gift of evangelist. Well, you know what's going to happen to you as a congregation. You're going to hear the gospel preached every meeting; you're going to listen to the gospel, and listen to the gospel; and, you are never going to grow spiritually, because you will never be fed the rest of the Word of Life.

Pity the Christians who are going to go out into eternity after they have gone to church every Sunday: Sunday morning; and, sometimes Sunday night, and they sit there and they listen to a variation of John 3:16 and Acts 16:31. Then they wait for the high point – the climax. In the Roman Catholic Church, the climax is when the priest has blessed the wine and the bread, and he holds it up on high, and when he does that, he (supposedly) converts it immediately into the blood and the body of Christ. That's the high point.

Well, in these churches that we have that have lost their way and their orientation to the Word of God, the high point is when people are invited to walk the aisle – to come forward to receive Christ as Savior. Everybody goes to church, and they sit there, and they wait for that high point so they can see what the results are going to be. Then they go home, starved in their souls. Pity those people when they go across to the other side, and they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and they realize how robbed they have been – what thievery and what deception has been practiced upon them, and what loss they have endured. "Loss" is the word the Bible uses. They will realize the loss that they experience because the local church pastor-teacher did not do his job of helping people to mine the gold of doctrine, and to secure it for themselves.

Needless to say, point number 3 is the primary attack in this whole chain. It is the point of primary attack. The canon of Scripture is attacked; the inerrancy of the Bible is attacked; and, the local church is attacked. The local church is converted into a social country club organization, but the prime attack is on the pastor-teacher, because if that point breaks down, everything else comes apart.

1. **Priesthood**

Then there is the fourth point, and that is the priesthood of the individual believer. Every believer is his own priest for personal responsibility for securing the refined gold of doctrine; for personal responsibility of building his belt of truth; and, for personal responsibility as to what he does with what he hears. This is why you have the local church – so that we can establish personal priesthood. Personal priesthood means privacy. If you are your own priest before God, then it's just you and God, and it is you dealing directly with God. What you do with what you have been taught is going to be on your record.

Remember that the apostle Paul was very conscious of this. He was very much concerned that no one was ever going to stand out in eternity and be able to point a finger at him and say, "I am in this condition of loss because you did not do your job." In Acts 20:25, when Paul had informed these pastor-teachers at Ephesus that he was leaving, and that they would see him no more, Paul was able to say to them that they were going to come under attack when he was gone: "But now, behold, I know that you all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God shall see my face no more. Wherefore I justify unto you this day (as he is about to leave), I am pure from the blood of all men. What does he mean by that? How is he pure from anybody's blood?

Verse 27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." And then he says to these who are going to replace him as teachers (these pastor-teacher elders): "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit of God made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood." Many a pastor-teacher will stand in heaven before the Lord, and he will not be able to say that he is free from the blood of all men; that he has given them the full counsel of the Word of God; and, that none can point a finger at him and say that, "I am here because you failed." If he has done his job, then the priesthood responsibility is upon you.

In human relationships, we consider this responsibility of enabling people to win to be very important. In many military installations around the country (I know this is true in the Marine Corps), there are signs up where the drill instructors meet, and the signs say, in effect (putting it in somewhat human viewpoint expression), that they are to be responsible in the training of these men so that no man's ghost will ever be able to rise from a battlefield and say, "I died because you did not train me properly." Those drill instructors look at that every time they come into their assembly room, and every time they leave. I guarantee you that they are very conscious of that – that upon their responsibility, there should not rest the death of a man in combat because they failed to do their job as instructors when he was under their training. That's what you have here. But having done the instructing, they are free. Then it is that man's responsibility to act according to the instruction which has been given him.

So, we have this local priesthood. You sit here now. Who knows what you think about what you're hearing. It's nobody's business. It's only God's business and your business. It is between you and the Lord as to what you do with the information that you hear, and you will be held responsible for it.

1. **The Indwelling of God the Holy Spirit**

The next link in this chain of the grace system of perception is the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. This is to give us understanding of spiritual phenomena. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16 tell us that. 1 John 2:27 explains that to us. One of the things that is true about you as a member of the body of Christ in the church age is that God the Holy Spirit indwells you permanently. He comes into your body as His temple at the point of your salvation, and He never leaves again. He is there to be your teacher. He is there to give you understanding of spiritual things. Isn't that fantastic? No Jew of the Old Testament commonwealth had that. No Jew had God the Holy Spirit always there to teach him.

Have you ever tried to learn a foreign language? If you did, sooner or later you come to the point where you just say, "I just wish I had somebody that talks this language that I could be around all the time. I just wish there was someone that talked this language and I could just speak it with them all the time and practice it. When I do something wrong, they could say, 'No, that's not right. Say it this way.'" Well, just imagine: that's what you have in spiritual things! The grace system of perception gives you the number one teacher in all the universe. And He's there all the time to orient your thinking to what the world is saying. He gives you understanding. I give you information. He gives you understanding. He gives you the grasp of spiritual phenomena. I can't give you that. He alone can make those things clear to you. He is there to do it.

1. **The Filling of the Holy Spirit**

This can be frustrated. So, God said this indwelling effect could be canceled out, unless something else is also provided. That something else is the filling of the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit means that the Holy Spirit controls your life; that you are in temporal fellowship with him; that you are in the inner circle; and, that you are walking in obedience to the Word of God. That means that all known sins have been confessed. 1 John 1:9 tells about that.

Ephesians 3:19 is an interesting verse. It says, "And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge." This is "gnosis" – the kind of knowledge that's just what you've learned in your head, but you haven't reacted toward it: yes; or, no. This is to know the love of Christ, which passes just the information stage: "That you might be filled with all the fullness of God" – that you might be filled with the "epignosis" knowledge (the full knowledge): "Of the love of God," where it becomes a personal experience and a personal understanding.

So, here you have God the Holy Spirit who is ready to teach you as long as you stay in the inner circle of temporal fellowship, and as long as you keep all known sins confessed. If you're going to be in rebellion, and if you're going to be a mule in some respect, rejecting the will of God for you, then this chain of the grace system of perception breaks down, and you are not going to be able to secure the gold of doctrine.

1. **A Living Human Spirit**

Then there is one other very important point. Number 7 in this chain of learning doctrinal truth (in securing the gold of doctrine) is that you have a living human spirit. The reason that that's important is because this is where the Spirit of God stores the information that He has given you; that He has made clear to you; and, that He has enabled you to understand. In 1 Corinthians 2:12, we read, "Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit." And while your Scripture there puts the capital "S" on the word "spirit," for God the Holy Spirit, you may also understand that that in the Greek is simply the word "spirit." What the Greek says is, "The spirit who is from God;" that is, the spirit who is out from God. We have not received the spirit of the world; that spirit of rebellion; or, that spirit of human viewpoint, but we have received a human spirit from God: "That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

If you'll match this in the Old Testament against Job 32:8, it says, "But there is a spirit in man (a human spirit in man), and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding." There is a spirit in man to which God Almighty gives understanding. 1 Corinthians 2:12 tells us that we receive a spirit from God. It is true that we receive God the Holy Spirit, but I think the verse also covers that we receive a human spirit. When you are born into this life, you are born physically alive, but you're born with a dead human spirit, and you carry around that corpse of that dead human spirit until the moment that you receive Christ as Savior. Then you explode into spiritual life. You are born again – not physically, but spiritually: you receive a living human spirit. Now you have someplace that acts as a reservoir within your being, into which all the classifications and categories of doctrine are stored so that you have a basis for learning the Word of God and for using this Word from God.

This truth, as a result of the grace system, then forms a frame of reference, and that frame of reference gives you directions for your conscience. It establishes your values and your standards. It gives you the divine viewpoint in the decision-making factors of your mind to guide your actions and your feelings.

The working of the grace system of perception is also very important. So far, what we've given you here are just the pieces that make it up. This is the grace system of perception. God has given you certain elements: a completed canon of Scripture; and, a local church organization with a single elder pastor-teacher, and a variety of deacons assisting. He has given you the pastor-teacher gift, and that is a gifted man with an ability to teach spiritual things. He has given you a personal priesthood for you to deal privately with the information you have. He has given you the indwelling Holy Spirit in order to teach you spiritual phenomena. He has giving you the filling of the Holy Spirit so you can be in a relationship to the Spirit of God. You will be in fellowship so that He can teach you. He doesn't have to be convicting of some evil. You have a living human spirit in which to store the truth that He has revealed to you. Those are the pieces.

Next time, we shall look at the amazing functioning of these pieces, and how, when you tie one to the other, and you to set them in motion, fantastic things begin to happen within your life. Don't miss the next session, or you will regret it for all eternity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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