

Chapter 3

THE CHOSEN FEW

*How come many people believe that salvation is easy?
Every Christian sect claims this.
When Jesus says otherwise, "Many are called, but few are chosen?"*

DIVERSE VIEWS ON THE NUMBER TO BE SAVED

1. There is a notion that, by virtue of the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, almost all people of the world will be saved. After all, they ask, "Did not Jesus die to save mankind? Did not our Lord die because of love? Is not God a God of love?" Therefore, they further add, "All people, regardless of creed and religion, are covered by the blood of the Lamb." Further saying, "that God is known under different names: Jehovah, Allah, Yahweh, Buddha, Jesus Christ, etc." They support this belief with the following:

1 Timothy 2:6 "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 Timothy 2:3 "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ⁴Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Romans 11:32 "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."

Genesis 22:18 "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

1 John 4:14 "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2. Another belief is, "Only those who believe in the Holy Bible are covered by the death of Jesus Christ. The rest will be doomed. Therefore, all people belonging to the different Christian sects will be saved. Only those who violate the teachings of the denomination will be damned."
3. Still another view of salvation is, "Only those who belong to a particular religious sect will be saved. The rest are condemned." Who will really be saved? All? Many? Or only a few? Who will really be saved? All? Many? Or only a few?

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

Perhaps, of the many books written, only the Holy Bible is considered the authentic word of God. Nowhere in the entire sixty six (66) books, thirty nine (39) in the Old Testament and twenty seven (27) in the New Testament, can we find any contradiction of the message on the basis of the spiritual truths contained therein.¹ Questions on salvation therefore will be answered on what is written in the Bible, avoiding the slightest of contradictions, for God will never contradict Himself.²

ANSWERS BY ELIMINATION

On the question of salvation for all mankind regardless of the *Name* of God, the Bible has this to say on the matter:

Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

What is that particular name?

¹ 2 Peter 1:21 "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

² 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Matthew 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

"Save his people from their sins" refers more to the *Spiritual Israelites*!

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye be of Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Let no human reasoning should dilute the pure word of God in answer to the questions. Let alone what is written, clarified by the word of God itself, is accepted as divine truths. Regarding the liberal notion of salvation, here is what is written:

2 Corinthians 4:3 "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

Isaiah 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Galatians 1:8 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

God through His words will explain whether righteousness is the basis of salvation. To be pointed out are the two standards of righteousness: God and man's standard. The Bible is talking of God's standard of righteousness.

As to the claim, "that in order to be saved, one must be a member of a particular religious sect." Nowhere in the Bible can we find membership to a particular religious denomination as a prerequisite to salvation. It is philosophy applied on the word of God that justifies that doctrine. To accept that concept, then Jesus Christ will just be relegated to the background, and the religious sect will become the *way* to salvation. This belief promotes idolatry of the highest order. The organization becomes the idol, the leaders are revered; and Jesus Christ is replaced as the only way.

Under the different concepts stated, there will be many who will be saved. The Bible, from the Old Testament to the New Testament books, however points to a very limited number of people bound for eternal life:

Jeremiah 3:14 "Turn, O backsliding children said the Lord; for I am married unto you;³ and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."

Luke 13:23-24 "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that will be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

Recently even Bible translators seem to hate to hear this bitter truth, "that only a few and not many will be saved." This is proven by the translation of several Bible versions. King James Version of 1611 generally accepted to be the most reliable shows the difference. Almost all of the popular versions no longer contain, "For many are called, but few chosen." Let us compare just one verse on the subject:

King James version of 1611:

Matthew 20:16 "So the last shall be the first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen."

The New International Version:

Matthew 20:16 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The Way Bible, Catholic Edition, with imprimatur by: Leo A. Pursley, Bishop of Fort Wayne, South Bend; Nihil Obstat: Rev. Lawrence A. Gollner, Censor Librorum:

Matthew 20:16 "And so it is that the last shall be first, and the first, last."

Many more popular Bible versions have omitted the line, "for many are called, but few are chosen." However, God will never permit His word to be tampered without being discovered. Jesus Christ repeated the line in:

Matthew 22:14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

³ God emphasizes here His relationship with His chosen people – that of a spiritual husband. His people are a foreshadow of the *Church*, which is the spiritual wife or the bride.

Isaiah 54:5 "For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the LORD of hosts *is* his name..."

This line can no longer be omitted in many Bible versions without totally deleting verse 14, or substituting another. Thus, the message of our Lord, "Only a few" and "For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" remain preserved in all Bible versions!

A MESSAGE REVERBERATING IN THE EARS OF GOD'S SERVANTS

Ever since, the message had been proven true. Abel and Seth were chosen from among the many sons and daughters of Adam and Eve.⁴

This voice of our Lord reverberated in the ears of Noah, a preacher of righteousness.⁵ He found the truth in our Lord's word but he was completely ignored by the people.⁶ God waited one hundred twenty (120) years for them to repent as Noah was building the ark, but to no avail.

Abraham also found this out. His heart bled for the people when he learned that God would obliterate the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for insufficiency of righteous people. He, therefore, pleaded with God:

Genesis 18:20-33 "Then the Lord said, 'The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will now.

The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Then Abraham approached him and said, 'Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty (50) righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty (50) righteous people in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing – to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous as the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?'

⁴ Genesis 5:4 "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters."

⁵ 2 Peter 2:5 "...saved Noah...a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."

⁶ 1 Peter 3:20 "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

The Lord said, 'If I find fifty (50) righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.'

Then Abraham spoke up again, 'Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five (5) less than fifty (50)? Will you destroy the whole city because of the five (5) people? If I find forty five (45),' he said, 'I will not destroy it.'

Once again he spoke to him, 'What if only forty (40) are found there? He said, 'For the sake of the forty (40), I will not do it.' Then he said, 'May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty (30) can be found there? He answered, 'I will not do it if I find thirty (30) there.'

Abraham said, 'Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, What if only twenty (20) can be found there?' He said, 'For the sake of the twenty (20), I will not destroy it.' Then he said, 'May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten (10) can be found there?' He answered 'For the sake of the ten (10), I will not destroy it.'

When the Lord had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home."

That is what human nature exactly is. Men tend to overestimate themselves in righteousness. Man's compassion for fellowmen is innate in the heart. But God remains the righteous Judge. Abraham could not even find five (5) righteous people in the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. God chose four (4), but one (1) still could not overcome – the wife of Lot.

"Many are called, but few are chosen" is like a massive rock monument that can never be shaken from its sturdy foundation, for that is the truth! God called His people from Egypt who were under the yoke of slavery. He delivered them from the iron hand that unrelentingly tried to hold them to the land of desperation. He dried the Red Sea for them to pass. He fed them with Manna and provided water from the rock, in order to sustain them in their forty (40) years journey in the wilderness. God's people who were called numbered six hundred three thousand five hundred fifty (603,550), excluding women and

children below twenty (20) years old.⁷ But God foresaw that many of these would fall on the way, because of stubbornness:

Deuteronomy 1:34-39 "And the Lord heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and swore, saying, ³⁵Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, ³⁶Save Caleb...he shall see it and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord...³⁸But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither...for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. ³⁹Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had not knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, unto them will I give it and they shall possess it."

"THE LITTLE ONES"

They were the "little ones" and only a few of the men from Egypt above twenty (20) years of age who were able to reach the Promised Land. God emphasized here the worthiness of "the little children which had *no knowledge between good and evil.*" Do people realize that Jesus Christ preached about this? Notice how our Lord referred to the Old Testament part of the Holy Bible:

Matthew 18:1-3 "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?² And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, ³And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Take note of the line "*except ye be converted and become as little children.*" Could this be literal or spiritual? Simon Peter, John, James, Andrew when called by our Lord to follow Him no longer were little children physically. Our Lord, again accentuating the same message, said:

⁷ Numbers 1:44-46 "These are those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve men, each one was for the house of his fathers. So were all those that were numbered...from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel; even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty."

Matthew 11:25 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Jesus Christ addressed His disciples as "little children" in:

John 13:33 "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me...."

The apostles, after having received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and had been endowed with divine wisdom, also realized this thing about being "little children." Paul wrote to Timothy how he will learn the Holy Scripture from a child:

2 Timothy 3:15 "And that from a child thou has known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation..."

John the apostle addressed the Christians on several occasions as "little children":

1 John 2:1 "My little children, these things write me unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate..."

1 John 2:18 "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists..."

The Word of God, through the Bible, is making it clearer that "little children" could not possibly refer to physical children. From the foregoing verses, the following are gathered:

1. The "little ones" of Deuteronomy 1:39 should have grown up into adulthood, and even grew as older people, considering the length of time they stayed in the wilderness: a long period of forty (40) years!
2. Our Lord in telling His *disciples* in Matthew 18:1-3 that "*except ye be converted and become as little children*" could not have been literally-physically possible.

3. In the same manner, revealing great spiritual things to "babes" in preference over "the wise and the prudent" in Matthew 11:25 also could not have been literally-physically possible.
4. Paul told Timothy that, "from a child" he learned the Holy Scriptures. The natural man will simply reject this. Learning from a child rather than from the learned adults? "That is sheer foolishness," the natural man will retort⁸. In either case, Timothy learning the Holy Scripture "from infancy" or learning it "from a child" boggles the mind of the intellectual and the intelligent. But the Bible is slowly introducing the spiritual nature of the word of God. This confirms that God is using the "spiritual language" as our Lord put it in:

John 6:63 "...the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit..."

Romans 7:14 "For we know that the law is spiritual..."

5. This will even bring into our attention, the translation of the Bible in this regard. Let us compare the following translations of Isaiah 28:9 under two versions of the Holy Bible:

King James version of 1611:

Isaiah 28:9 "Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast."

New International Version:

Isaiah 28:9 "Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast?"

The Word of God itself is revealing great things! In the King James Version of 1611, it is very definite that they are "the babies or little children weaned from the milk to whom doctrines are taught." Notice the punctuation mark after the word "breasts." It is a period (.) in contrast to the question mark (?) used in the New International Version. In the New International Version, the gist of the message doubts whether doctrines could really be taught to children weaned from the

⁸ 1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."

milk, and to those just taken from the breast. Without any great human authority telling us, God is revealing the appropriate translation of the Scriptures in the light of the real spiritual message of the Word of God.

6. Is there still a slightest of doubt that the people, John the Apostle addressed in 1 John 2:1, 2:18, were not literal-physical little children? Were they not literal-physical adults? But in the eyes of God they were spiritual little children!
7. Who are the spiritual “babes” and “little children?” The foregoing verses give us the clue as to who they are. They are physical adults, but having the virtues of little children. Some characteristics that distinguish little children from adults are their inherent meekness, modesty, and submissiveness. These are attributes that could hardly be found in physical adults in spiritual matters. The virtues of meekness, modesty, and submissiveness make anyone less philosophical, less emotional, and less sensual. These are what God is looking for in a man as to make him believe and accept spiritual things which, otherwise, look foolishness to the natural man.
8. The humility of a little child qualifies him to be *“without knowledge between good and evil.”* The natural man views this to be physical as indeed referring to a literal little child. But God sees this from a different view. This could be traced from the garden of Eden from where *“knowledge of good and evil”* was first mentioned.

Genesis 2:16-17 “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it...”

The serpent’s temptation was directed to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, called the forbidden tree:

Genesis 3:4-5 “And the serpent said unto the woman...for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

That was the temptation of the serpent, actually the devil also called Satan. Satan wanted the woman to know good and evil. What? Were not Adam and Eve upon creation not taught by God to know what is good and evil? Why does it take the eating of the fruits of the forbidden tree, the *tree of knowledge*, “to know good and evil?”

9. To the first question, God gave His divine standard of what is good and evil to Adam and Eve upon their creation.
10. The serpent's temptation of Eve centering on "acquiring knowledge to know good and evil" must be a different kind. Good and evil known by man upon his creation and good and evil after his fall, must be two different standards of "good and evil."
11. Little by little, the "*line upon line, here a little and there a little*" of Isaiah 28:10 is leading us to the two standards of good and evil.
12. Evil things come from the heart as our Lord told His listeners in:

Matthew 15:19 "For out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murder... adulteries... false witness, blasphemies."

Even in the Old Testament, this was already mentioned:

Genesis 6:5 "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great...and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Proverbs 16:9 "A man's heart devised his way..."

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

The tree of knowledge is slowly being perceived as referring to man's *reasoning*. This, together with *feeling* are what influence man to develop his *own standard of good and evil*.

13. The eating of the *fruits* of the tree of knowledge, therefore, marked the birth of man's own standard of good and evil. "The old serpent, called the Devil and Satan"⁹ *won over man to have God's standard of good and evil counterfeited!* And God Himself confirmed this after man's fall:

Genesis 3:22 "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil..."

⁹ Revelation 12:9 "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

14. Suddenly, God's choice of the "little ones who had not knowledge of good and evil" (Deuteronomy 1:39), and Jesus Christ's, "Except ye be converted and become as little children" (Matthew 18:3) have become very clear.
15. These "little ones," "babes," and "little children," may be physical adults who do not yet have *man's standard of good and evil*. They are, therefore, still open to God's standard.
16. To follow the natural man's way of understanding the Word of God will open the Bible to ridicule and contempt. Imagine the Book of Psalms speaking about strength coming from the mouth of infants:

Psalm 8:2 "Out of the mouth of babes and suckling hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

Does anybody believe that strength could come from the lips of infants as to silence an enemy? Is the cry of a baby enough to stop an enemy from his advances? No wonder 1 Corinthians 2:14 states that "*spiritual things are foolishness to the natural man for he cannot understand them, because they can only be spiritually discerned.*" Spiritual things are beyond the reach of the intellect, the senses, and feeling of the natural man. That is simply the truth.

How many people can understand spiritual things? How many could accept spiritual things? How many could bow their heads to the Word of God? Are they many? Or only a few?

GIDEON LEARNED THE LESSON OF NOAH AND ABRAHAM

Gideon learned the lesson of his predecessors, Noah and Abraham. His original men of thirty two thousand (32,000) to fight one hundred thirty five thousand (135,000) Midianites, Amalekites, and the people from the East¹⁰, were reduced to only ten thousand (10,000). God knew who were worthy to fight the enemies:

Judges 7:2-3 "And the Lord said to Gideon, the people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites unto their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore go

¹⁰ These were the number of the enemies of Gideon who were defeated in the battle:

Judges 8:10 "Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand (15,000) men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east; for there fell a hundred and twenty thousand (120,000) men that drew sword."

to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand (22,000); and there remained ten thousand (10,000)."

The general idea of the story is the people of God against the numerous enemies. Originally, Gideon's thirty two thousand (32,000) men were to fight one hundred thirty five thousand (135,000) enemies. This was in the ratio of one Israelite against four enemies (1:4), or 4.2 enemies to be exact. It really needed an extraordinary courage to fight at such an overwhelming odds. More than two thirds did not have the courage, and returned to their respective homes. Let us take a cursory message of this portion of the story. The spiritual language of God as it applies to the word will be recognized in the message:

1. There are only two (2) spiritual protagonists: God and His followers vs. Satan and his demons.
2. Man should remember that he is given free will to choose either of the two protagonists.
3. The ratio of one for every four of the enemies (1:4) shows the physical impossibility of victory. That is why in the eyes of the twenty two thousand (22,000), it was sheer desperation.
4. God wants to give the message that man's own capability and strength are not the ingredients for victory over the enemies.
5. God did not look at the individual physical vigor and ability, but on *the will to fight*.
6. Man in his natural state would not have the will to fight for he anticipated certain defeat. On spiritual battle, do people realize and accept this?
7. The will to fight comes only from the assurance that God will fight for His chosen with His supernatural power. How easy to say this! Perhaps all people may profess this, but how true is it in the light of the Scriptures?
8. Are we not reminded of "the little ones?" Could little children depend on their individual capability? The "little ones" do not have that kind

of self-confidence, that they simply rely on that Somebody Who could bail them out from certain defeat.

9. Now we know who the twenty two thousand (22,000) who were “fearful and afraid” are, as the message relate to us today.

God is omniscient and with His foreknowledge knew who among the remaining ten thousand (10,000) men were worthy warriors. The physical impossibility of defeating the enemies, now that the number was further reduced, all the more became incontrovertible. The ratio now stands at one for every thirteen enemies, 1 is to 13.5 to be exact. If the twenty two thousand (22,000) people left because of the great odds against them (1:4), what more now that the handicap was further aggravated at 1:13.5? Who could beat a horde of enemies using the same kind of weapon in the hand-to-hand combat? God’s spiritual message of defeating Satan and his hosts has become more articulated.

The wonder of wonders! God wanted Gideon to defeat the enemies of 135,000 not with 10,000, but *with only 300 men!* Could many people accept God’s wisdom? He, therefore, instructed Gideon to give the “water test” to select the true and worthy men of God:

Judges 7:4-7 “And the Lord said to Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there; and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whosoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. ⁵So he brought down the people unto the water; and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. ⁶And the number of them that lapped, putting their hands to the mouth, were three hundred (300) men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. ⁷And the Lord said unto Gideon, by the three hundred men that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the other people go every man unto his place.”

Let us consider the following in the light of the Scriptures:

1. God said that ten thousand (10,000) were still too many to fight the one hundred thirty five thousand (135,000) enemies, lest His people would

boast in victory, saying, "Mine own hand hath saved me." So He reduced them to just three hundred (300) men. The odds became the more shocking, increasing the ratio to one Israelite for every four hundred fifty (1:450) enemies.

2. God wanted His people to see victory, not on their own personal capability, but on God's supernatural power and mercy. What a great message! The two spiritual protagonists are:
 - God and His followers vs. Satan and his demons
 - Christ vs. the Devil
 - Righteousness vs. wickedness
 - Good vs. evil
 - Truth vs. lies, falsehood, and deception¹¹

God reveals the spiritual message that man can never conquer wickedness, which is falsehood, lies, and deception with his own intellectual, emotional, and physical capability.

3. To prove this, God used the "water test." By means of "water" God separated the deserving from the undeserving, the sincere from the insincere, and the worthy from the unworthy.
4. Several references are made to water:

To symbolize the Word of God

Ephesians 5:26 "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

To signify the Holy Spirit

John 7:37-38 "...Jesus stood...saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given..."

¹¹ John 8:44 "...the devil...abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."

To represent people

Revelation 17:15 "...the waters which thou sawest...are peoples and multitudes, and nations, and..."

5. The mode of selection is: "lappeth of the water with the tongue" or "bow down upon the knees to drink." To bow with the knees indicates subservience or submissiveness. If this were to the Word of God or to the Holy Spirit, those who did it should have been chosen. But it was the reverse. Those who bowed down with their knees to drink were the ones who were kicked out. Therefore, the reference for *water* could not have been for the Word of God or for the Holy Spirit, but for the *people!*
6. In effect, the nine thousand seven hundred (9,700) men showed unusual regard or servility to "people." "People" here, therefore, refers to the real nature of man – earthly or worldly and "souliness" (intellectual and emotional).

The real nature of man is alluded to by Paul as "the old man in the man."¹² "Bowing down upon the knees to drink water" therefore means *souliness*, the opposite of spirituality.

7. Souliness is the love for the use of the intellect and feeling – human capability. These are the fruits of the *soul*. Human reasoning and emotion make man to think of himself – that is the equivalent of "bowing down upon the knees to drink water." Water is "people." "People" refers to other people and to man himself. The mind and emotion are stumbling blocks to the acceptance of spiritual things. Human wisdom in spiritual matters is condemned:

1 Corinthians 3:18 "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."

1 Corinthians 1:19-21 "...I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.²⁰ Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?²¹ For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God..."

¹² Colossians 3:9-10 "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the *old man* with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

Ephesians 4:22 "...put off...the *old man*, which is corrupt..."

Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy... after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Feeling is very deceiving:

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Proverbs 28:26 "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."

The intellect and feeling are the components that make "spiritual things" foolishness to the natural man. Remember 1 Corinthians 2:14 which refers to the natural man.

8. The fact that the nine thousand seven hundred (9,700) men were included among the ten thousand (10,000), who were "not fearful and afraid," indicates that they also believed in God as the remaining three hundred (300) men. This signifies religiosity. Were not the Scribes and Pharisees during the time of Christ very religious and fully confident of their relationship with their God?
9. But religiosity does not mean spirituality. The reader must understand the distinction between the two, in the same way that he must see the difference between the natural man¹³ and the spiritual man¹⁴.
10. Realizing this distinction, could we now see the wisdom of God in choosing only three hundred (300) out of the original thirty two thousand (32,000) men?
11. The three hundred (300) men are the "little ones." They are the "little children," the "babes" who "had not known good and evil" and therefore "did not bow down to spiritual water" or to human capability.

¹³ 1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 2:15 "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. ¹⁶ For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

12. No wonder the nine thousand seven hundred (9,700) who showed "souliness" were kicked out, for they do not deserve to be Disciples of Christ.

Luke 14:26 "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Using human wisdom, certainly this contradicts the very word of God on honoring and loving these "relatives."

Deuteronomy 5:16 "Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee..."

But God is speaking in parables.¹⁵ He has to explain "hating these relatives."

Deuteronomy 13:6 "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul..."

The *spiritual relatives* symbolizes "souliness." Hating *souliness* means to be a *spiritual babe* in the eyes of God. The 9,700 would not have been worthy spiritual warriors against evil and wickedness, against falsehood and deception, for they had not the strength to condemn precepts and wisdom of men, and anything against the truth.

13. Those that "lapped with their hands to drink water" did not show much subservience to the "old man" in the man, in comparison. These were the equivalent of "the little ones." Paul saw himself within this category. Paul typified a spiritual man as "a little one." While he had the "old man" in him, he however had the desire and the will to put it away. That is why he said:

1 Corinthians 15:31 "...I die daily."

Death of the "old self" is directly proportional to spiritual perfection.

¹⁵ Ezekiel 20:49 "Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?"

14. The victory of Gideon and his three hundred (300) men over the one hundred thirty five thousand (135,000) enemies could not have been accounted to their own personal capabilities. It was by the power of God, with His mercy, that man is able to defeat Satan and his evil spirits. Satan represents anything not of God, not of the truth.

Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:13-17 "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

GOD'S PREROGATIVE OF CHOICE

God's selection of Gideon's men was illustrated by our Lord Jesus Christ in His Parable of the Net.

Matthew 13:47-48 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; ⁴⁸Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."

Can the fisherman be faulted for retaining some and throwing away the others? Certainly, not one of the fishes could question the fisherman for doing so, for he knows what he was doing. If man accepts God's omniscience, he could never question Him for His prerogative of choice for this is based on His foreknowledge. *Man is never deprived of his free will.* He is free to make his own decision and God will never take a hand to control him. But God will never go wrong with His judgment. Who can accept this fundamental truth?

MAN'S CONCEPT FOR THE SAVED

Man's notion for the number of people to be saved is just the opposite of God's concept. In practically all religious sects that compose *Christianity Today*, man's boasting is that of numbers. Thus, we hear things as:

- "We are many here."
- "We compose the majority."
- "Our number is increasing in leaps and bounds."
- "We must be on the right track, judging by the size of our membership."
- "The majority must be correct."

In other words, man is taken by the bandwagon mentality. These are all the fruits of the intellect and feeling. It is easy for man to see goodness in many people. Man sees righteousness all around with good human relations and through various charitable activities counting this as spiritual credit. But to God these pertain to the physical and not yet to the spiritual. Thus:

Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; ..."

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Man has established his own standard of "good and evil." This is the "knowledge" that he acquired after the Fall.

Man knows about the fewness of the chosen people in the Old Testament. From Adam to Gideon, as discussed, but man no longer believes that this could still be true in the New Testament, after "*God was manifest in the flesh.*"¹⁶ Man reasons out, "God has already changed. He is now a loving and merciful God. That is precisely the reason why Jesus Christ died on the cross in order to save many people from eternal damnation." What man seems to overlook is the immutability of God:

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the Lord, I change not..."

¹⁶ 1 Timothy 3:16 (KJV only) "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh..."

and the immutability of His word, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will never pass away."

Ecclesiastes 1:9 "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

THE CHOSEN IN AD 30-33

Is the truth that had been proven since Abel and Seth, to Noah, to Abraham, to Gideon, equally true during the time of Jesus Christ? Many believe that this trend of "only a few" had been shattered when "God was manifest flesh." Many people will be astonished to find Jesus Christ proved it in His own ministry.

From the time our Lord changed water into wine to the amazement of many people¹⁷, to the many sick people He healed¹⁸, to the five thousand (5,000) He fed in one occasion¹⁹ and another four thousand (4,000) men in another²⁰, excluding women and children, those great multitudes of people that followed and listened to His sermons²¹ – Jesus Christ was only demonstrating how "He called many people."

It will show that salvation is centered on the true recognition of Jesus Christ. Watch how He underscored the importance of His identity.

John 8:24 [KJV] "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

¹⁷ John 2:1-11

¹⁸ Matthew 12:15 "...great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all."

¹⁹ Mark 6:30-44

²⁰ Matthew 15:32-39

²¹ Matthew 15:29-31 "And Jesus departed...and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them; insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel."

John 5:43 "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

John 8:28 "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man (not people and self), then shall ye know that I am he..."

John 10:25-30 "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not, the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.²⁶ But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. ²⁷My sheep hear (understand) my voice, and I know (choose) them, and they follow (obey and submit to) me... ³⁰I and my Father are one."

But how many of the multitudes who listened to His sermons really recognized Jesus? How easy to say, "He is the Christ." How simple to speak of, "Jesus is the Son of the living God." But do people realize that to profess this, it must have come as revelation from the "Father which is in heaven?"²²

Let us consider the following, that many people probably have not noticed:

Matthew 16:15 "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"

Matthew 16:16 "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Matthew 16:17 "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

1. What did Simon Peter mean by saying, "You are the Christ?"
2. What did it suggest when Simon Peter said, "You are the Son of the living God?"
3. What did Jesus mean in saying, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee?"

²² Matthew 16:16-17 "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the *Christ, the Son of the living God*. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for *flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*."

4. What did Jesus mean by saying, "It was my Father which is in heaven that revealed it unto you?"
5. What did Jesus mean by saying, "I am come in my Father's name?"
6. What did Jesus mean in saying, "Until ye have lifted up the Son of man?" Why? Who were (are now) being lifted up by the people anyway?
7. What did Jesus mean by saying, "I and my Father are one?"
8. What did Jesus mean by saying, "I am He?"
9. Could anybody professing to know Jesus Christ give the answers to the foregoing questions flawlessly and without any traces of doubts whatsoever?
10. Why did Jesus Christ concentrate on *His identification* and in the *introduction of the Father*?
11. What did Jesus mean when He said He had *manifested and declared the name of the Father* in the following?

John 17:6 "I (Jesus) manifested thy (Father) name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."

John 17:26 "And I (Jesus) have declared unto them thy (Father) name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

How many of the great multitudes that Jesus fed and healed, and had listened to His sermons, could answer the foregoing questions? Were they many or only a few? Is it really easy to find the answers to the questions?

Why did the very apostles of Jesus, who belonged to the inner circle of His ministry, also had difficulty looking for the answers to the questions?

John 14:8-10 "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and

how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me?"

Was Philip the only apostle who wanted to see the Father? Could we not see that the *other apostles also wanted to see the Father? Could the Father be seen?* Is not the Father a spirit? As Jesus said in John 4:24 *"God is a spirit..."* Could human reasoning through philosophy reveal the clear identity of God and Jesus Christ? What did Jesus mean when He said, *"I and my Father are one?"* Did not Philip and the other apostles fully recognize the Father at that point in their Christian life? Is not true recognition of God and Jesus Christ endowed only by divine revelation?²³

IDENTITY OF GOD AND IDOLATRY

If the reader will notice, in almost everything Jesus Christ did He directed the attention of the listeners either to the introduction of the Father or to Himself. Could we not see this as the central subject in the book of John? Did He have to do this? Did not His listeners, the Jews, presumed to have known the Father Who is the God and the Lord of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Could we not relate this to what Paul wrote as he emphasized his own, and the other apostles', recognition of God?

1 Corinthians 8:6 "But to us there is but one God, the Father; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

What did Paul and the other apostles see in:

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord."

What did Paul and the other apostles see in Jesus giving "the First of all the commandments," when He was asked by a Scribe in:

Mark 12:28 "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had

²³ 1 Corinthians 12:3 "...and that no one can say that Jesus is *the Lord*, but *by the Holy Ghost*." (Who is the Lord recognized by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the other prophets?)

Matthew 11:27 "...neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him..."

answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?"

Mark 12:29 "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord."

In the New International Version of the Bible, and other translations, the phrase "first commandment" is changed to "the most important commandment." It was after Jesus Christ said this that He began summarizing "the laws and the prophets" into just two commandments of, "loving God and that of the neighbor."²⁴ Could we see in the same manner the listing of the Ten Commandments, the first being directed to the identification of God and the command not to worship "another?"

Exodus 20:2-3 "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Did the Jews, in the eyes of Jesus Christ, truly recognize the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? This was answered by our Lord in:

John 8:19 "Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."

If the Jews did not know the God that they were worshipping, could that be acceptable to God? The following matters need to be considered:

1. Peter wrote that, in order to purify the soul, one needs to obey the truth:

1 Peter 1:22 "...ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."

The truth is, as Jesus stated in Mark 12:29, before being able to love God and the neighbor, one has to know and clearly recognize, "*The Lord our God is one Lord.*" This is the "first" or the "greatest" of all the commandments, according to Him.

²⁴ Mark 12:30-31 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself..."

2. In the eyes of Jesus Christ, did the Jews recognize “the Lord and God?” If not, were they able to obey the truth?
3. What more, what was in the heart of the Jews was exposed through the word as Jeremiah wrote:

Jeremiah 24:7 “And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.”

If only the Jews returned to God with their whole heart, then they would have been given a heart to know the Father and Jesus Christ!

4. As it was, Jesus saw them as not having returned with their whole heart for they did not recognize *Him!*
5. Another truth that was evidently inconsistent with the claim of the Jews was:

Jeremiah 31:34 “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord...”

For not properly identifying Jesus Christ and the Father, the Jews who were the physical descendants of Abraham were not even considered the chosen people of God; but *only the disciples who recognized Him*. However, the Jews were claiming all along that they were the direct physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Read Chapter 5: GOD IS IDENTIFYING HIMSELF for His clear identity.

6. Our Lord was speaking spiritual things, but the Jews could only understand corporal things. And for this reason, our Lord was completely justified in calling His listeners:

John 8:44 “Ye are the sons of your father the devil...he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

7. But the Jews insisted on being the children of Abraham, and did not listen to what Jesus Christ was telling them. Therefore, Jesus gave this sweeping statement:

John 8:47 "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

John 8:37 "I know that ye are Abraham's seeds; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you."

8. Physically the Jews were the children of Abraham and the Bible talks of them as the chosen people of God in the Old Testament. In general, spiritually they are not because they are not "of Christ." Are not the "letter" or the literal and the spiritual aspect of the word put to light in the following?

*Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.
²⁹And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*

9. Spiritually only the Disciples of Christ who recognized Him understand what He is saying. They followed Him, remained faithful to Him, and these were the real spiritual chosen people of God. They were the "*little ones who had not knowledge of good and evil.*"
10. Christ's chosen were not many. In fact, they were only a "handful" as shown in the account of the apostles themselves.

Acts 2:1-3 "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."

Acts 1:15 "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples...the number of names together were about a hundred and twenty."

Harvest for our Lord's own ministry confirmed His statement, "*For many are called, but few are chosen.*"

THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES

Was the trend reversed during the time of the apostles? We find in the book of Acts that Christ's disciples aggressively preached the gospel, and instances of mass "conversions" were recorded:

Acts 2:40-41 "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Acts 4:4 "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."

Let us not misconstrue the people who are "*called*" and those that are "*chosen*." Did we not see the same thing in the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ? Multitudes heard "*the voice shouting in the wilderness*" and were baptized by John. Many of these followed our Lord. Great multitudes followed our Lord in the mountains, along the seashore, and wherever He went. He fed five thousand men in one instance, and another four thousand men excluding women and children in another. He healed many people from their diseases. Were these great multitudes really "*chosen*," or were they only "*called*?" Succeeding events led to the answer. Our Lord was arrested, and later mocked and tortured. He was presented to the high priests, and lastly to Pontius Pilate. When Pilate presented Jesus Christ and Barrabas to the Jews for their choice whom to set free, where were these great multitudes? Did the people of Israel hear a dissenting voice from a deafening shout "*Crucify Him? Crucify Him!?*"

Where were these great multitudes when the promised Holy Spirit came at Pentecost? Did not the apostles only counted a scanty one hundred twenty (120) deserving souls at the time of final accounting? Could people still insist on thwarting the great message of, "*many are called, but few are chosen*," and keep on invoking God's mercy and love? Man should be able to distinguish truth from the dictate of the intellect and the influence of feeling.

The Acts of the Apostles confirmed the trend set by our Lord. They were always aware of the wiles of the tempter that they were not lacking in their warning to the Christians:

1. Warning for the preaching of another gospel different from the *original teaching of the apostles*:

Galatians 1:8 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Paul felt that some people were creeping and tried to inject strange doctrines different from the original gospel. Religious sects take this warning of Paul as referring to the doctrines of the opposing denominations that are different from their respective doctrines. Let this serve as a stern reminder.

2. Paul again warned of an introduction of "another Jesus" different from the Jesus recognized by divine revelation²⁵:

2 Corinthians 11:4 "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."

Would Paul not write by divine revelation that a different *Jesus* or *different recognitions about Jesus* were to be introduced to the product of *mass conversions* of Christians? Let us remember that the Bible is the inspired word of God. This warning of Paul was confirmed historically, when Constantine the Great called the Nicean Council of 325 A.D. In that "religious summit," a clash of beliefs ensued among the followers of Arius, and the followers of Athanasius. The followers of Arius defended his teaching denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, while the followers of Athanasius took the stand of Jesus Christ being both God and man and He is the second person of the Trinity.

3. Paul again warned of strange doctrines that could waylay those who found the truth by writing:

²⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:3 "...and that no one can say that Jesus is *the Lord*, but *by the Holy Ghost*." (Who is the Lord recognized by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the other prophets?)

Matthew 11:27 "...neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him..."

Ephesians 4:14 "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried with every wind of doctrine, by the sleights of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

How deceitful indeed is Satan when people are misled into thinking that this refers to their respective religious sects. Paul directed this admonition to the Christians who followed the original kind of Christianity. May the reader see the distinction between pure Christianity from the kind that he has in mind.

With all these warnings from Jesus Christ during His time, could the great message of, "*many are called, but few are chosen,*" be possibly reversed in the ministry of the modern apostles? Do we expect a reversal of the trend set by our Lord in spite of the jitters expressed by the original apostles, all pointing to the continuance of the trend? We will find later, as we continue reading the chapters that the answer is confirmed by present day events in *Christianity Today*.

POST-APOSTOLIC TIME TO THE PRESENT

Events following the apostolic age dictated today's Christian religious realities. This only authenticated Christ's classic pronouncement, "*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*"

The teaching of the different doctrines on the identity of Jesus, as Paul warned in 2 Corinthians 11:4 came into reality; and today we are the living witnesses! The Sabellian or Oneness doctrine in the second (2nd) century, the Arian doctrine, and the Athanasian Creed or the Trinity doctrine in the third (3rd) century became the foundations of 21st century religious sects' belief in God. These are what compose *Christianity Today*. Non-Bible believing people will wonder why so-called Christians cannot see eye to eye on this matter.

The basic issue remains the real identity of Jesus Christ. If one will notice, Jesus Christ concentrated on the introduction of Himself – through *the* "declaration and manifestation of the name of the Father."

John 17:6 "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."

John 17:26 "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

But it was very clear the Jews missed His point. The Jews professed sonship of Abraham, and affirmed worshipping the God of David, called the Lord of hosts,²⁶ the God that never change,²⁷ and the first and the last.²⁸ But our Lord rebutted the claim of the Jews by saying:

John 8:19 "...Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."

Comparatively, people of the 21st century Christianity profess sonship of God, and also claim worshipping the true God. Refuting the avowed recognition of God of modern day Christianity:

1. For those claiming there is one Almighty God and one mighty God, or one supreme God and one minor God; God refutes them:

Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me..."

Is not God a jealous God?²⁹ Could the Almighty God allow worship of a mighty God without getting jealous? Let many people see the contradiction and inconsistency with the truth resulting from this doctrine.

2. For those who deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, does not Jesus Christ answer them straightforwardly when He said in:

Matthew 4:10 "Then saith Jesus...thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

²⁶ 2 Samuel 6:2 "And David...bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts..."

²⁷ Malachi 3:6 "For I am the Lord, I change not..."

²⁸ Isaiah 44:6 "Thus saith the Lord the king of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God."

Isaiah 48:12 "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he, I am the first, I also am the last."

²⁹ Exodus 34:14 "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God."

Could Jesus Christ be dishonest to Himself accepting worship from His disciples?

Matthew 28:17 "And when they (disciples} saw him (Jesus, the Son), they worshipped him..."

What more, is the following verse, plus many more, not enough refuting the denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ?

1 John 5:20 "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true...even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

3. For those who simply say Jesus Christ is the Father, He is also the Son and the Holy Spirit; may the revelation of Jesus to John the apostle in the island of Patmos serve as a stern warning:

Revelation 13:11 "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."

The real lamb of course is the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. The lamb-look-alike is the dragon identified as the old serpent:

Revelation 12:9 "And a great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world..."

The counterfeit lamb is distinguished by the language of the real lamb. While the counterfeit looks like the real lamb, the language of the real exposes the imitation lamb. Here is the language of the real Lamb:

John 6:63 "...the words that I (Jesus the real Lamb) speak unto you, they are spirit..."

Romans 7:14 "For we (Paul and the real Christians) know that the law is spiritual..."

The real Lamb speaks the *Spiritual Language* of God, while the counterfeit lamb articulates the *Literal Language* of the Old Serpent.

4. For those who say Jesus Christ is the Father, and the Holy Spirit is but a force of God, here is what the Bible says:

2 Corinthians 3:17 "Now the Lord is that Spirit..."

Who is the Lord? Who is the Spirit? What more, why did Jesus say in:

John 14:23 "...if a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

If Jesus said that it is He and the Father who reside in the believer, why does Paul say, the one actually residing in the real Christians is the *Holy Spirit*?

1 Corinthians 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit dwelleth in you?"

1 Corinthians 6:19 "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you...?"

5. For those who say that Jesus Christ is only one of the three (3) divine persons of God: the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus the Son; and these three are all God distinct and separate from each other, who really is the one true God? It is very easy to say that there is only one God and one Lord! But how does God clearly become one under this doctrine? If each of the three persons is God, and one is not the other two, how could there be one true God and one clearly recognizable Lord? What is the name of the one Lord and one God? Who is the God of Abraham and Peter? Who is the God to be seen in heaven? Believing in one God is not enough. That is only in the category of the devils:

James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe..."

God is never a mystery to His chosen.³⁰ The very first thing that God does is to reveal Himself to His chosen people. This is not only true in the Old but in the New Testament as well:

Isaiah 48:16 "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning..."

³⁰ Colossians 1:26 "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Hebrews 8:11 "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

Proponents of the Trinity Doctrine interpose the defense by quoting:

Deuteronomy 29:29 "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

The three so-called persons of God cannot possibly fall under the category of secret things, because the Bible defines secret things and revealed things. Secret things are those that are not written in the Holy Scripture:

Revelation 10:4 "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."

The Bible contains things about the Father, about the Son, and about the Holy Spirit. Therefore, these things cannot be secret! To invoke the mystery of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is an open admission that God is not truly recognized. This is what our Lord saw in the religious people during His time!

John 8:54-55 "Jesus answered...it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him..."

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE KNOW THEIR GOD

The Bible states the condition for becoming a chosen of God. Prophet Jeremiah, by divine revelation, wrote:

Jeremiah 24:7 "And I will give them a heart to know me that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart."

Returning to God with a whole heart is a condition set for anyone to have *a heart to know or recognize* the "One Lord and one God." If any man, therefore, professes to have returned to God with a whole heart, but does not have the *heart to know God*, either the man or God is telling a lie. Could God possibly

tell a lie? A man who was not given a heart to know God cannot possibly belong to the family of God. This is a divine concept both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament:

In the Old Testament

Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

In the New Testament

Hebrews 8:11 "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

The condition set by God to be given a heart to know Him is, "return to God with a whole heart" and:

John 5:43 "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. ⁴⁴How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only."

Could we now see the following parallelism indicating that, indeed, the word of God never pass away?

1. Of all the peoples of the world, it was to the Jews, the physical descendants of Abraham, to whom the laws of God were entrusted. Of all the peoples of the world, it is to the Christians to whom the Holy Bible is revealed as the word of God.
2. Just as the Jews during the time of Christ were divided into religious sects; today, Christianity is similarly divided into different religious denominations.
3. Our Lord during His time proved that the Jews who claimed to be the children of Abraham did not know the God of their father. Today our Lord, who is the Word,³¹ through the word exposes the Christians who

³¹ John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

claim to be the children of God, do not also know the *“One Lord and one God”* of the Sacred Scripture.

4. The Jews claimed righteousness and love for God, but Jesus Christ rejected their assertion and called them hypocrite. Could God, through the Word, not say the same thing today, when *To Know God* is a *prerequisite* to “loving God,” and eventually “love of neighbor?”³²

Romans 10:2 “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

5. And to those people who followed our Lord and were presumed to have recognized Him, here is what Jesus saw in many of them:

John 6:26 “... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.”

These people followed our Lord because they only wanted *“to eat and be filled.”* They only wanted *to satisfy their body.* They wanted material-physical things from our Lord. But Jesus said:

John 6:63 “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

If God opens the hearts of people praising Him, will He not find their real motive? Is it the satisfaction of physical-material needs or spiritual well being? Can many people accept Jesus' statement *“...the flesh profited nothing, the words that I speak unto you they are spirit...”*?

Revelation 19:13 “And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.”

³² Mark 12:28-30 “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? ²⁹ And Jesus answered him, The *first of all the commandments is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: ³⁰ And thou shalt *love the Lord* thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.”

How many people can distinguish *religiosity* which is akin to morality from *spirituality*? Did not Jesus see the former in the Scribes and Pharisees, saying, "*Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.*"

6. Our Lord continuing with His observation of the people following Him, found that only those who clearly understood what He said remained with Him:

John 6:60 "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, this is a hard saying; who can hear it?"

John 6:67 "Then said Jesus unto the Twelve, will ye also go away?⁶⁸ Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life."

Do we need to repeat the question, "How many of the people who profess to follow the Word clearly understand the great spiritual message of the word of God?"

THE GREAT MULTITUDES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

From the book of Genesis, the message of God had always been "*many were called, and only few were chosen.*" Man will however be surprised to see what appears to be a great contradiction in:

Revelation 7:9-12 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; ¹⁰And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. ¹¹And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, ¹²Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

The Natural Man takes the events in the book of Revelation as historical phenomena. He could not see the homogeneity of the spiritual message of the Word of God from the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation. As such therefore, he finds the word of God full of contradictions. That is what the Scribes and Pharisees saw in Jesus Christ. He said, "*Think not that I am come*

to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill," yet they saw Him nullifying it. We have seen that Jesus truly came to fulfill the law, but not the Natural Man understands it.

How could there be so many people standing before the throne, clothed with white robes, and praising and worshipping God? Was the message "only a few" revised or nullified? Probably the appropriate question is, *when* and *where* did all these multitudes of holy people come from? These were the "*few chosen*" people of God accumulated over a long period of time from many places since creation. These were taken from many "different families and cities"³³ throughout man's history. May we further be reminded of the use of the word *multitude* used to describe the number of people who followed and listened to the sermons of our Lord during His time. Does the term indicate hundreds, thousands, or millions of people? "*Heaven and earth will pass away,*" says the Lord, "*but my words will never pass away.*" God once said of His people:

Deuteronomy 7:6 "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. ⁷The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people."



³³ Jeremiah 3:14 "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you Zion."