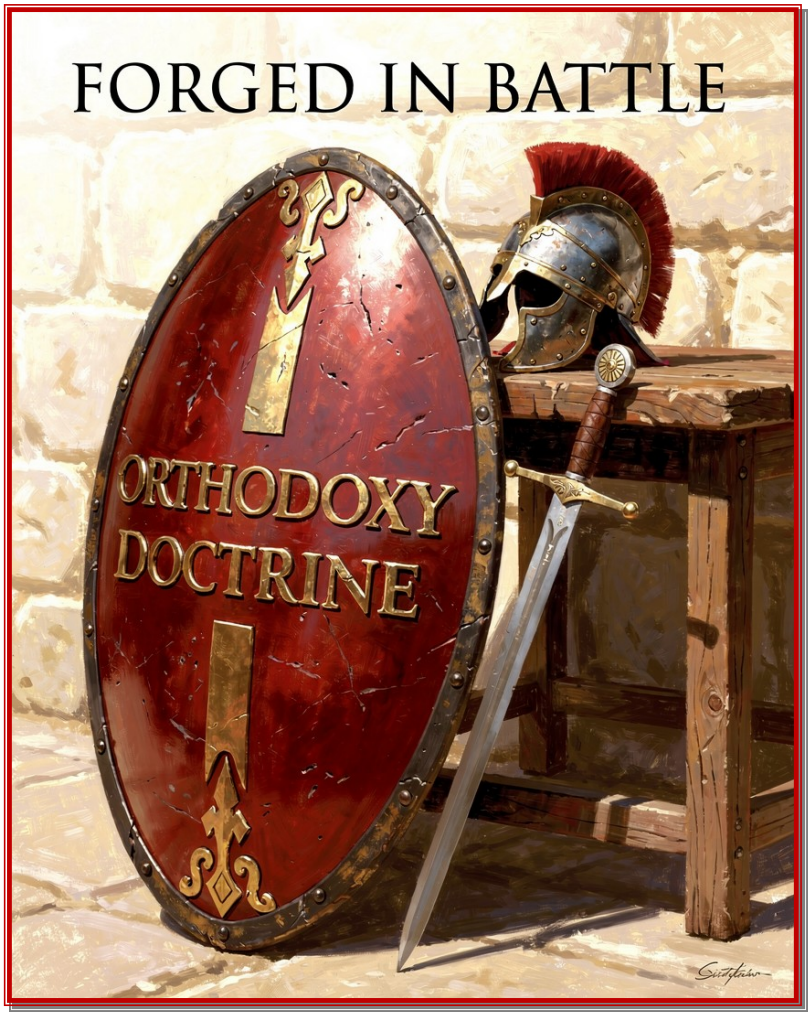
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE MADE SIMPLE

What Every Christian Should Know



Paul Lorenzen

Alpha Chi Publishing

Christian Doctrine Made Simple:
What Every Christian Should Know

[Digital Edition]

© **2026 Paul Lorenzen** All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission from the publisher.

Published by **Alpha Chi Publishing** Nampa, Idaho

ISBN (Print Paperback Edition): **979-8-9972654-1-0**
ISBN (Print Hardback Edition): **979-8-1920563-2-5**
ISBN (Digital PDF Edition): **979-8-9972654-0-3**

Library of Congress Control Number: **2026920539**

Interior design and typesetting by **Paul Lorenzen**

Printed in the United States of America

Available Formats of This Book

This book is available in **three complete formats**, designed to give every reader full access to the material in the way that best fits their study habits and learning preferences:

1. Digital Edition (PDF Format)

A fully navigable PDF edition, including active links, audio/video integration, and searchable text.
Download using the link or the **QR Code** in the table below**.**

2. Print Edition

A printed, bound version for traditional reading and study.
Owners of the print edition may download **both the Digital Edition and the Full Audio Edition at no additional cost**. Purchase at Amazon.com using the link or the **QR code** in the table below.

3. Full Audio Edition

A complete audio version of the book, including chapter readings and all audio sidebars.
Download using the link or the **QR Code** in the table below**.**

Free Access for Print Edition Owners

If you purchased the print edition, you are entitled to **free access** to:

- The **Digital Edition (PDF)**
- The **Full Audio Edition**

Full Digital Version	Print Edition at Amazon	Audio Version
Click Here	**Amazon.com**	Click Here
	Search on **Christian Doctrine Made Simple Lorenzen**	

A Word About Navigation

This book is available in two formats: a digital PDF edition and a print edition. Both contain identical content. In the digital edition, navigation links appear with colored backgrounds to distinguish their purpose. In the print edition the links are removed but the visual indicators remain to indicate where the audio and video clips are available in the downloadable PDF Portal page.

- **Blue links** navigate ***within*** the book — moving between the Table of Contents, chapters, and section indexes. Index items at the top of each chapter have hyperlinks to go immediately to that section.

- **Red links** open ***external*** audio or video files in your browser. The reading of the **Eusebius** commentary is the actual voice of **Eusebius** (our AI Guide). The reading of the rest of the text is by **Nancy Narrator**, our other AI reader.

Each chapter includes two types of external media links. At the top of the chapter is a red link to the **full-chapter audio**, along with the total running time for that chapter. Within the chapter, each segment begins with a link to the **audio for that segment**. Segments containing commentary from Eusebius also include a choice of a **video version** of his sidebar commentary. You may listen to the entire chapter at once using the link below the chapter title or proceed segment by segment, alternating between narrator audio and Eusebius audio or video as you prefer. Video will give a more entertaining experience.

In the print edition, the same link indicators appear, but because the book is printed in black and white, external links are shown as a **black bar with white text** instead of colored backgrounds

To access the external audio and video files while reading the print edition, you have two options:

1. **Open the full digital edition**, which contains all navigation links exactly as they appear in the PDF.
2. **Use the Portal Index PDF**, which provides every external link in sequence without the full book text. The external link identifiers are identical in the print edition and Portal Index.

A free digital edition is available to all print edition readers. You may open the digital edition or the Portal Index on your phone, tablet, or computer while reading the printed book, and select the corresponding link whenever you wish to listen or watch the external media.

Full Digital Version	Portal Index PDF
Click Here	Click Here
	

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the one who, half a century ago, climbed into the back seat of the pastor's car, landed squarely on my lap, turned with a smile, held out her hand, and said, "Hi, I'm Joyce,"—and in that single moment changed my life forever.

For every late night you endured while I finished projects, for every 100-page appraisal report you patiently proofread, and for every Greek and Hebrew tutoring session you endured with unwavering support, this book is for you, **Joyce Lorenzen**.

Eusebius, ever eager to lend his commentary to my words, insists on offering his "two cents" to this dedication. Should you wish to hear his sage counsel, simply click on his image or the hyperlinks below or use the QR code below the image.



Eusebius Audio	*CD-00-Eusebius-Joyce*	Eusebius Video

Christian Doctrine Made Simple:
What Every Christian Should Know

Preface

Nancy	*CD00-AudioFull - 12 minutes*



Note: To hear the entire preface audio recording, use the link above the photo of Lake Tahoe. If you would like to listen to the segments of the text read, click on the hyperlinked word before each section. You can pause the audio recording if you want to stop and linger for a while on a scripture passage, a box quote, or some other chapter content, then restart the audio recording. To watch the videos of **Eusebius** instead of just listening to him, click on the **Eusebius Video** hyperlink in the text just above his Sidebar comments.

Nancy	*CD00-A01A.mp3*

You are standing on the Nevada side shore of Lake Tahoe early in the morning. The state line between California and Nevada runs right through the middle of this vast lake. The sun is just beginning to rise over the mountains, turning the water into a sheet of glass. Lake Tahoe stretches out before you—**22 miles across**, **over 1,600 feet deep**, cold, clear, and impossibly blue. You need to get to the California side, but instead of driving around the lake, you decide to water-ski across it. You strap on your skis, grip the tow rope, and nod to the speed boat driver. The boat roars to life, the line snaps tight, and ***suddenly*** you are up on the water, skimming across the surface at thirty miles an hour.

The wind tears at your face. Spray explodes around your legs. The cold water slaps your shins like handfuls of ice. The boat hits a wake and you bounce hard, fighting to keep your balance.

Your arms burn. . . . Your legs shake. . . . The shoreline on the far side seems to crawl toward you, inch by inch, as the miles pass beneath your skis. By the time you finally reach the California side of the lake, you are ***exhilarated, breathless, and exhausted***. You step out of your skis, collapse onto the dock, and try to catch your breath while replaying what you just accomplished.

A bystander walks over and asks, “So… did you have a really great *experience* on the lake?”

You grin and answer, “I sure did!”

And in one sense, you did. You crossed it. You felt it. You tasted the spray and fought the waves. But in reality, you only touched the top six inches of a lake that is so deep that it could swallow the **Empire State Building** and still have room to spare.

That is exactly what this book does.

Christian Doctrine Made Simple will take you across the great lake of Christian theology—God, Scripture, humanity, sin, Christ, salvation, the Spirit, the church, and the last things. Each doctrine is deep, wide, and rich enough to occupy a lifetime of study. Graduate students spend years diving into these waters, and scholars devote entire careers to exploring a single doctrinal shoreline. But this book is not designed to plunge you into the depths. It is designed to pull you across the surface—clear, fast, and **exhilarating**—giving you a true experience of the waterscape without requiring you to master its full depth. You will feel the spray, see the contours of the lake, and gain a real sense of its shape and beauty, even though we are only skimming the top few inches. But for now, enjoy the ride across the surface. If at any point you want to stop, sink down, and explore the depths of a particular doctrine, the recommended readings at the end of each chapter, and in the appendix, will guide you. But for now, put on your skis, grip the rope, and enjoy the ride across the top of the lake.

And, for those who are a little more adventurous, each chapter ends with an application and a weekly assignment. They are designed to help you apply the truths of that chapter in your daily life the following week. They are optional, of course. But for those who say "so what" about the doctrine, these are intended to be one way to find that "so what."

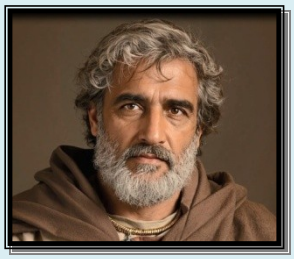
Meet Eusebius, your Speedboat Driver

As you sit on the dock catching your breath, the driver of the boat steps out and offers you a hand. He is dressed in simple fourth-century robes, his face weathered by study and years of service, his eyes bright with the kind of clarity that comes from a life spent near Scripture. He smiles warmly.

You blink, still trying to process the fact that your boat driver looks like he stepped out of the early church. Then he speaks:

Eusebius Audio	*CD00-A02E*	Eusebius Video

Meet Eusebius, your Speedboat Driver



My friend, you have crossed the lake. But you have only tasted its surface.

The depths of this lake run far below what you have just experienced. And so it is with the doctrines of our faith. They are deep, rich, and vast. But today, I will take you across the surface so you may see their shape, their beauty, and their unity.

I am Eusebius of Caesarea—pastor, historian, and eyewitness to the Council of Nicaea in the year you reckon as A.D. 325. For many years I have served the church as a guardian of Christian doctrine, preserving the faith handed down from the apostles and recording the works of God in history.

In this book, I will be your guide. I will not plunge you into the depths all at once. Instead, like a skilled pilot pulling a skier across Lake Tahoe, I will take you across the great lake of Christian theology. You will feel its breadth, its beauty, and its unity as we move swiftly across its surface. And when the time is right, I will invite you to explore its depths more fully. But for now, take hold of the rope, steady your footing, and let us begin the journey together.

Nancy	*CD00-A03B.mp3*

A Book On Systematic Theology?

One day, while working on this book, my wife asked me what I was working on. I turned to her and said, "I'm writing a book on systematic theology." She looked at me in shock and said, "*I thought you hated systematic theology!*"

And she was right!

I've never enjoyed the big, heavy systematic theology textbooks. They're long, they're technical, and they often feel like they were written for scholars in a library rather than ordinary Christians trying to follow Jesus. But even though I've never loved the *format*, I've always believed that the *ideas* behind systematic theology matter. Every Christian needs to understand the basic doctrines of the faith — just not in a 1,200-page academic volume.

So I told her, "I'm writing a book for people like me — people who ***hate systematic theology***, but still need to know a little about it."

That's exactly what this book is.

This is a book on systematic theology for people who *hate* systematic theology.

So what is this book trying to do?

Think of it this way:

We're water skiing across the lake, not scuba diving to the bottom.

This book takes the results of all that **deep** academic work required for mastering the subject of theology and brings the conclusions **up to the surface**, where ordinary believers can see it, understand it, and enjoy it. In essence, we have done the "scuba diving" and brought the results to the surface of the **Lake of Doctrine**, making it available to those who want to water ski across the surface, or perhaps do a little snorkeling.

We're covering the major doctrines of the Christian faith in clear, simple language — the kind of language you'd hear in a Sunday school class or a small group Bible study.

No jargon. No academic footnotes. No 1,200-page textbooks.

Just the core truths of the Christian faith, explained in a way that makes sense to anyone who loves Jesus and wants to understand their Bible better.

Why is Eusebius Our Guide

As we walk through these doctrines together, I've chosen **Eusebius of Caesarea** to serve as our guide — not because he was perfect, but because he stands at a unique crossroads in Christian history. He lived close enough to the time of the apostles to preserve their story, yet far enough into the life of the church to witness how believers wrestled with Scripture, defended the faith, and clarified essential doctrines. He knew the Scriptures deeply, he knew the early church personally, and he watched the great questions of theology take shape in real time. In many ways, Eusebius is the bridge between the world of the New Testament and the world we live in the 21st Century. That makes him the best companion for a **Made Simple** journey like this — someone who can help us see the big picture without overwhelming us, guiding us gently across the lake rather than dragging us into the deep waters of academic theology.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Want to go deeper?

At the end of each chapter — and again in the appendix — you'll find suggestions for further reading:

- simple books for beginners
- intermediate books for growing Christians
- advanced books for those who want to study more seriously

You will even find a source where you can actually read the words of the early Christian teachers like Ignatius, Tertullian, Origin, Jerome and Augustine. You can go as deep as you want, at your own pace. Just make sure you have enough oxygen in your tank when you go down deep.

Memory Verses

To facilitate better assimilation of the chapter content, we have included a suggested Bible memory verse at the beginning of each chapter. This is, of course, optional, but if the book is used in a small group, it would be a fun way to create a competition in the group to see who can memorize the verses best.

Application Sections

Each chapter ends with an application to real life and a weekly assignment. These sections are intended to make the theoretical doctrine of the chapter personally applicable in the believer's life. If used in a small group or Sunday School class, these assignments can be a way to incorporate some accountability within the group.

Teaching Aids

A teaching aids packet will be available with power point slides for each chapter and additional teaching resources. Contact ***Alpha Chi Publishing*** at *info@alphachipublishing.com* for the current version of this packet.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

The "Made Simple" book series. This book is one of a series of books titled "[*Subject Matter*]**Made Simple**." Its purpose is to take a complex subject, in theology, politics, history, economics and similar subjects and make the complex simple to understand to the average laymen in the subject. A key feature to the **Made Simple** series is that each book has an artificial intelligence created character who acts as a guide through the subject, making appropriate (and sometimes inappropriate) comments, or explanations at strategic points in each chapter.

Some of the characters already developed, with more to come, are **Shlomo** - my Hebrew expert from the first century, **Marcos of Antioch** - a convert of the Apostle Paul, my guide in early church history from the first century, **Eusebius** - my theologian from the 4th century, **Joe Liberty** - an Average Joe from the 21st Century who is my economic guide, and **Patriot Henry** from 1776 - my guide to the US Constitution and Federalist Papers. Each one adds his own unique input to the book.

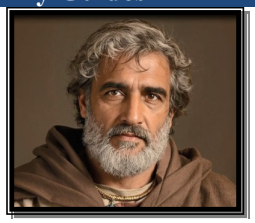
Meet Some of My Guides



Shlomo
Biblical Hebrew



Marcos of Antioch
Church History



Eusebius
Theology



Joe Liberty
Economics

A brief note about tools: Parts of this book were drafted with the assistance of artificial intelligence — which means I occasionally had to referee arguments among my own guide characters about who deserved credit. Shlomo insisted the best lines were obviously his. Average Joe Liberty claimed he asked all the important questions. Patriot Henry declared the whole project a triumph of freedom. Marcus of Antioch quietly reminded everyone that he was quoting sources before it was cool. Eusebius reminded them that the Council of Nicea in 325 AD was not all that orderly all the time, either!

Meanwhile, the AI just sits there politely, waiting for me to finish laughing.

So let the record show: **I** am the author. The ideas, explanations, illustrations, and doctrinal positions are mine. AI simply helped me write faster — it didn't think for me. In fact, whenever the AI program offered any new information, I double checked it against the actual sources which I either have in personal library or could find original documents online. So, none of the content of this book is "original" from the AI program. All original content is from me and/or verified by me from primary sources. Any mistakes that remain belong to me, not to Shlomo, Joe, Henry, Marcus, Eusebius, or the AI machine.

Paul Lorenzen
Nampa, Idaho
June 2, 2026

Table of Contents

Navigation: each chapter or section label has a hyperlink that will take you directly to that chapter or item in the book. There is a hyperlink at the top of each chapter or section that will bring you back to this table of contents. Within each chapter there is an index of the sections in that chapter with links for navigation within that chapter. Appendices are also linked for easy navigation.

Preface

Introduction

Chapter 1 - Scripture: The Doctrine of Revelation and Inspiration

Chapter 2 - Theology Proper: The Doctrine of God First Person of the Godhead

Chapter 3 - Christology: the Doctrine of the Second Person of the Godhead

Chapter 4 - Pneumatology: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 5 - Trinity: The Doctrine of the Triune Godhead

Chapter 6 - Anthropology: The Doctrine of Man

Chapter 7 - Hamartiology: The Doctrine of Sin

Chapter 8 - Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation

Chapter 9 - Ecclesiology: The Doctrine of the Church

Chapter 10 - Eschatology: The Doctrine of Last Things

Chapter 11 - Orthodoxy: Forged in Battle

Appendices and Reference Materials

Appendix A - Seven Ecumenical Councils
Appendix B - The Creeds of the Church
Appendix C - Timeline of Church People and Events
Appendix D - **Indices**
- *Concepts & Terms*
- *Doctrines and Related Terminology*
- *People*
- *Places & Events*
- *Greek*
- *Hebrew*
- *Scriptures*

Appendix E - Recommended Reading
Appendix F - About the Author

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Christian Doctrine Made Simple:
What Every Christian Should Know

Full Chapter Audio	*CD001Audio-Full - 32 minutes*

Introduction

The Simple Shared Core of Belief

> What more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For Holy Scripture sets a rule to our teaching, that we dare not "be wise more than it behooves to be wise," but be wise, as he says, "unto soberness, according as unto each God has allotted the measure of faith.
>
> Augustine, *De Bono Viduitatis* (*On the Good of Widowhood*), Ch. 1, §2 — addressed to Juliana, c. 414 AD.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker
who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.
2 Tim 2:15 [NASB]

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Meet Eusebius**, Your Guide and Expert Theologian
1.2 What is Orthodoxy?
2.0 What About Minor Differences in Doctrine?
2.1 **Eusebius**: This How You "Do" Systematic Theology
3.0 What is Systematic Theology Anyway?
3.1 Start With the Verse itself
3.2 Look at Everything That Author Write
3.3 Listen to the Early Church
3.4 Pull it All Together
4.0 Role of the Seven Ecumenical Councils
4.1 Council of Nicaea (325)
4.1.1 **Eusebius** Points Out the Important Iota
4.2 Council of Constantinople (381)
4.3 Council of Ephesus (431)
4.4 Council of Chalcedon (451)
4.5 Second Council of Constantinople (553)
4.6 Third Council of Constantinople (680-681)
4.7 Second Council of Nicaea (787)
4.8 Patristic Writings
5.0 Final Thoughts
5.1 **Eusebius** Reflects on the "Battles"

Nancy | CD001-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction

The Christian faith didn't just appear out of nowhere, and its core beliefs didn't fall into place by accident. From the very beginning, ordinary believers and church leaders have opened their Bibles, asked honest questions, and worked hard to understand what the apostles taught. This introduction is meant to give you a simple, clear doorway into that story—what "orthodoxy" means, why it matters, how Christians have read the Bible through the centuries, and how the early church made important decisions about what is true. Then how those truths were finally organized into what we call "Systematic Theology." Before we look at specific doctrines, it helps to see the basic framework that shaped the faith we've received.

Before we proceed, our guide for this journey would like to introduce himself to you.

Deut 6:6–7; Ps 119:105; Isa 8:20; Jer 6:16;
Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 3:16–17; Jude 3; Heb 13:7

... Return to Intro Index ...

Eusebius Audio | CD001-Segment-2V | Eusebius Video

1.1 Meet Eusebius

Meet Eusebius, Your Guide and Expert Theologian

Grace and peace to you.



I am Eusebius of Caesarea, born along the Mediterranean coast of Roman Palestine, about fifty miles from Jerusalem, in the latter half of the third century by your present way of counting years. I lived through the final and most brutal persecution of the church under Emperor Diocletian, and—thanks be to God—I also witnessed the remarkable peace that followed when Emperor Constantine rose to power.

Although I was ordained as a priest and later served as **Bishop of Caesarea Maritima**, my deepest love was the work I did among the scrolls and manuscripts of the great library of Caesarea. There I gathered the stories of the apostles, the martyrs, and the teachers who shaped the Christian faith. Books and witnesses were my companions, and preserving the memory of God's work in the world became my calling.

One of my greatest honors was to be present at the **Council of Nicaea in AD 325**, assembled by Emperor Constantine, where the church confronted profound questions about the identity of Christ and confessed the truth that has guided believers ever since. Some have called me the "historian of the council," though no such title was formally given. I suspect the title arose simply because I wrote so much about it afterward as an eyewitness—and because my *Ecclesiastical History*, a record of the church from the apostles to my own day, became widely known. Though I confess, I believe some of my other works are better books.

You may find it remarkable, as I often did, that at Nicaea the peace of the whole Christian world seemed to rest upon a ***single letter of the Greek language***—one small **iota**. Yet such was the seriousness of the matter before us. The question was whether the Son of God was **ὁμοούσιος** (*homo-ousios*, "of the same essence") with the Father, or merely **ὁμοιούσιος** (*homoi-ousios*, "of similar

Meet Eusebius, Your Guide and Expert Theologian

essence"). Only one letter distinguishes the two words, yet the difference between them is as vast as heaven and earth.

To say that the Son is *homo-ousios* with the Father is to confess that He shares the very same divine nature—true God from true God, eternal, uncreated, and worthy of worship. But to say He is only *homoi-ousios* is to place Him among the creatures, higher than the angels perhaps, but still not fully God. And if Christ is not truly God, then He cannot save; and if He is not truly man, then He cannot represent us.

Thus the entire hope of the gospel hung upon that single iota.

I assure you, the debates were not mere quarreling over words. They were a struggle for the very heart of the Christian faith, and the church was right to guard the truth with such care.

But enough reflecting on those exciting and rather heated debates. On with my story.

After the council, Emperor Constantine entrusted me with a task unmatched in scope: to supervise the preparation of **fifty handwritten copies of the entire Bible in Greek** for the churches of his newly unified empire. I oversaw their production in the Caesarean scriptorium, never imagining that two manuscripts preserved in ***your*** day—**Codex Vaticanus** and **Codex Sinaiticus**—might be survivors of that very commission. If so, they are among the most precious witnesses to the Scriptures in all the world.

In these pages, I have the honor of walking with you—not as a distant figure from the past, but as a fellow student of the Scriptures and a devoted follower of Jesus. Together we will explore the great doctrines of the Christian faith, the questions that shaped them, the controversies that refined them, and the hope they offer to every generation.

My task is simple: to help you see how the church has understood the person and work of Jesus Christ, and why these truths matter for your life today. Let us begin our journey with the same conviction that guided the early believers: that in knowing Christ, we come to know the heart of God Himself.

But remember this—**knowing Christ and merely knowing about Christ are two different things**. In the chapters that follow, you will learn **about** Him with your **mind**. But more importantly, you must come to **know** Him with your **heart**.

Until we meet again in the first chapter of this book, I leave you with the words of the blessed Apostle Paul:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

... Return to Intro Index ...

Nancy | CD001-Segment-3

1.2 What is Orthodoxy?

When Christians use the word *orthodox*, we're simply talking about "right belief" and "right worship." The word comes from two Greek terms: ***orthos***, meaning straight or true, and ***doxa***, which originally meant opinion or belief and later came to mean glory or praise. Put together as ***orthodoxia***, the idea is straightforward: believing and worshiping in a way that lines up with the teaching passed down from the apostles. From the earliest centuries, Christians used this word to tell the difference between the faith taught in Scripture and ideas that didn't match what the church had always believed.

Orthodoxy isn't a man-made system or a clever arrangement of doctrines. It's much simpler than that. Orthodoxy is the faith that *held up* when challenges came. Whenever a new idea appeared that didn't sound quite right, the church went back to Scripture, tested the teaching, and kept what was true. Over time, false ideas fell away, and what remained was the steady, reliable core of Christian belief. The early church didn't sit down and design doctrine from scratch; it clarified the truth as questions and controversies arose.

Because of this, orthodoxy is best understood as the **historic, biblical center** of the Christian faith — the truths believers across the world and across the centuries have agreed on. Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Christians may differ on many things, but they all affirm the same core beliefs summarized in the **Nicene Creed**: the Trinity, the full deity and humanity of Jesus, His incarnation, His resurrection, and the hope of the world to come. Anyone — whether an individual or a church — who can sincerely affirm the Nicene Creed stands within the stream of historic Christian orthodoxy.

Orthodoxy isn't about chasing new ideas or inventing creative theological systems. It's about **faithfulness** — holding on to the truth God gave His people, guarding the message handed down from the apostles, and confessing the same gospel that has anchored the church for two thousand years. In the simplest terms, orthodoxy is the church's steady witness to the truth of Scripture, preserved through conflict, clarified through debate, and passed from one generation of believers to the next.

Deut 32:7; Isa 8:20; Jer 6:16; Ps 119:160;
Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Tim 1:13–14; Jude 3

> "He, therefore, alone having become man, but still continuing to be God, never had any sin, nor did he assume a flesh of sin, though born of a maternal flesh of sin"
>
> Augustine, On Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants, Book 2, Chapter 38

... Return to Intro Index ...

2.0 What About Minor Differences in Doctrines?

Christians have always understood that there's a difference between the **core** of the faith and the many **secondary** issues where sincere believers may disagree. The word *orthodoxia* means "right belief" or "true worship," and throughout history it has pointed to the essential truths all Christians share: the Trinity, the full deity and full humanity of Jesus, His resurrection, salvation through Christ, and the authority of Scripture. These are the non-negotiables — the center of the Christian faith.

But inside that center, there has always been room for family differences. Christians may not agree on everything: how churches should be structured, how often to take communion, what worship should look like, how spiritual gifts work, or how the end times unfold. These are important conversations, but they don't break orthodoxy because they don't touch the heart of the gospel or the truths summarized in the Nicene Creed.

A simple way the church has expressed this is: **In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity.** In other words, we stand together on the core truths, we give each other space on secondary matters, and we treat one another with Christlike love in everything.

Because the church has always held a shared confession — even while expressing it in different cultures and traditions — anyone who can affirm the Nicene Creed stands within historic Christian orthodoxy. But when a person or group denies the essential truths of that creed, they step outside that historic stream. The church has traditionally called such teachings *heterodox* — beliefs that don't line up with the universal Christian confession.

Deut 29:29; Mic 6:8; Ps 119:160; Isa 8:20;
Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 15:3–4; Eph 4:4–6; Jude 3

> For concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and artifices of speech.
>
> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture IV*, §17

... Return to Intro Index ...

Eusebius Audio | CD001-Segment-4V | Eusebius Video

2.1 Eusebius - This is How You "Do" Systematic Theology

This is How You "Do" Systematic Theology



My friends, theology is not guesswork. It is a path—four steps walked in order."

First, we begin with **exegesis**, asking what the sacred text *actually says* in its own words, grammar, and context. Next comes **biblical theology**, tracing how each theme unfolds across the story of Scripture. Then we turn to **historical theology**, listening to how the church through the ages has understood these truths. Finally, we arrive at **systematic theology**, gathering all the biblical teaching into a clear, orderly summary.

This four-step journey keeps us anchored in Scripture, guided by the church, and able to speak God's truth with clarity in our own day. In the chapters that follow you will see the results of these four steps even though the earlier steps are not always visible.

... Return to Intro Index ...

Nancy | CD001-Segment-5

3.0 What is Systematic Theology, Anyway?

Most Christians don't curl up with giant theology textbooks for fun. They're long, they're technical, and they often feel like they were written for scholars in a quiet library instead of ordinary believers sitting in a church pew. But behind those big books is a very simple idea: Christians have always wanted to understand what the Bible teaches — clearly, carefully, and in an organized way.

Over time, the church learned that there are **four basic steps** that help us do that. And when we put them in everyday language, they're not complicated at all.

... Return to Intro Index ...

3.1 Start With The Verse Itself — "What did the author mean?"

The first step is slowing down and paying close attention to a single verse or passage. You read it the way you'd read a personal letter from a friend — noticing the words, the tone, and the situation. You ask simple questions: What was the writer actually saying? Who was he talking to? What would the first readers have understood?

Take John 3:16 as an example. Before we jump into sermons or commentaries, we start by asking, "What did Jesus mean when He said this to Nicodemus? Why did this conversation happen at night? What was Nicodemus struggling to understand?"

This careful, respectful work of letting the verse speak for itself is called **exegesis** — a fancy word that just means "drawing out the author's original meaning."

... Return to Intro Index ...

3.2 Look at Everything That Author Wrote — "How does this fit into the whole book?"

Once you've studied a single verse, the next step is to zoom out and see how it fits into the whole book. With John 3:16, you'd ask, "How does this verse fit into Jesus' whole conversation with Nicodemus? What themes has John already introduced? How does he talk about 'life,' 'light,' 'believing,' and 'the world' in the rest of his Gospel?"

Then you zoom out even further and look at everything else the same author wrote — the letters of 1, 2, and 3 John, and even Revelation. Patterns start to appear: John talks about God's love, eternal life, and believing in Jesus the same way across all his writings. Finally, you look at how this theme shows up in the rest of Scripture — Moses lifting up the serpent, the prophets speaking of God's saving love, Paul explaining salvation by grace through faith.

This step is called **Biblical Theology** — tracing how a doctrine develops across the Bible itself.

... Return to Intro Index ...

3.3 Listen to the Early Church — "How did Christians before us understand this?"

After looking at the verse and then the whole Bible, the next step is to listen to how Christians in the centuries after the New Testament understood the same passage. You ask: What did early pastors and teachers say? How did the church wrestle with tough questions? What did the great councils decide when believers disagreed?

With John 3:16, you might look at how Irenaeus (A.D. 130 - 202) or Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-215) explained God's love for the world, or how Augustine (A.D. 354-430) talked about believing in Christ and receiving eternal life. These early church leaders also wrote commentaries on the books in the Bible so you could read their commentaries on John 3:16. You'd also notice how the early church used verses like this when defending the full deity of Jesus at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325.

This step is called **Historical Theology** — learning from the Christians who came before us. Not because they were perfect, but because they were faithful brothers and sisters trying to understand God's Word just like we are.

... Return to Intro Index ...

3.4 Pull it All Together — "What do we believe as a whole?"

Finally, after looking closely at the verse, tracing its theme through the Bible, and listening to the early church, you gather everything together and organize it into clear statements of belief. This is where you ask, "So what does the whole Bible teach about this subject?"

With John 3:16, you take the meaning of the verse, the themes John develops in his writings, and the insights of the early church, and you summarize what Scripture teaches about God's love, the person of Christ, faith, salvation, and eternal life.

This step is called **Systematic Theology** — putting the teachings of the Bible into an orderly, easy-to-understand structure. It's how we end up with clear doctrines about who God is, what salvation means, and how the Christian life fits together. If you are a member of a church, you probably have read your church's **Statement of Faith**. It is probably posted on the church's website for all to read. That Statement of Faith is actually an ***abbreviated*** Systematic Theology.

Classic examples of systematic theology include:

- The **Westminster Confession of Faith** (1647)
- Wayne Grudem's **Systematic Theology** (1,291 pages, 1994)

These are excellent resources — but they're also huge, detailed, and often overwhelming for the average Christian.

Ps 119:18; Neh 8:8; Isa 34:16; Prov 2:1–5;
Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 2:15; Luke 1:1–4; 2 Tim 3:16–17

> There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.
>
> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture VI*, §1

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.0 Role of the Seven Ecumenical Councils

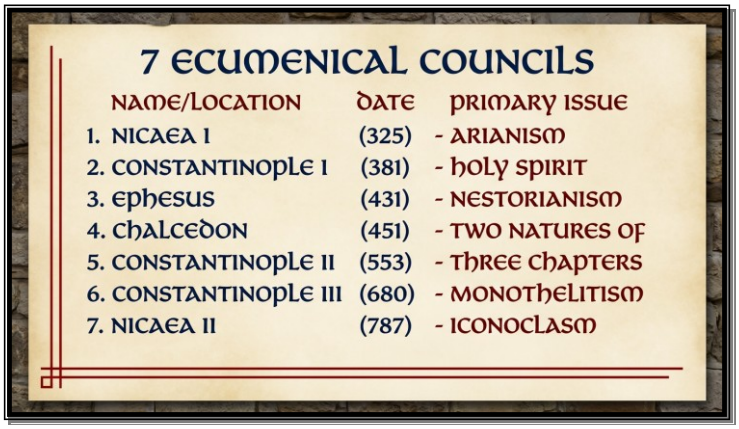
Before Christians ever tried to organize doctrine into neat categories, they first had to deal with real questions and real challenges. That's why **historical theology comes before systematic theology**. The early church didn't start with textbooks — it started with problems. When someone began teaching something that didn't match the church's understanding of Scripture, the bishops and pastors gathered to talk it through. These meetings were called **councils**, and their job wasn't to invent new ideas but to test everything against the faith handed down from the apostles.

When a teaching lined up with Scripture, the councils affirmed it. When it didn't, they rejected it. Each time this happened, the church drew another clear line around what Christians had always believed. Over the centuries, this process helped define the boundaries of **orthodoxy** — the core truths of the Christian faith.

Through this steady, careful work, the meetings known as the **Seven Ecumenical Councils** became the church's most trusted voice for clarifying essential doctrine and protecting the unity of believers. These councils didn't deal with minor issues; they addressed the biggest questions about who Jesus is, how salvation works, and what the Bible teaches about God. Understanding the basics of what these councils decided gives us a clearer picture of how the early church defended the gospel.

It's also important to remember that all seven councils took place **before** the split between the Eastern and Western churches and **long before** the Protestant Reformation. In other words, these decisions belong to the whole Christian family — the shared foundation that all major Christian traditions still look back to in our time.

Deut 13:1–3; Isa 8:20; Jer 6:16; Ps 119:160;
Acts 15:6; Acts 17:11; 1 Tim 6:20; Jude 3



... Return to Intro Index ...

4.1 Council of Nicaea (325)

The **first** major council of the church met in **A.D. 325** in the city of **Nicaea** (in modern-day Turkey, just south of the current Istanbul). The issue on the table was huge: a teacher named **Arius** was claiming that Jesus, the Son of God, was not fully divine. He believed the Son was a created being — higher than humans, but not equal with the Father. The church knew this didn't match what Scripture taught, so bishops from across the empire gathered to settle the matter.

After examining the Scriptures, the council declared that the Son is *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father — a Greek word meaning **"of the same essence."** In other words, Jesus is fully and truly God. To make this clear, the council produced what we now call the **Nicene Creed**, a statement that firmly rejected Arianism and affirmed Christ's full deity.

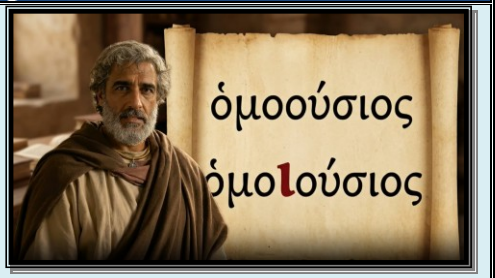
... Return to Intro Index ...

Eusebius Audio | CD001-Segment-6V | Eusebius Video

4.1.1 Eusebius Points Out the Important Iota

Eusebius Points Out the Important Iota

This Council at Nicea is the most important of the seven great councils. The conclusion rested on one Greek letter -- the Iota. Without the iota, Jesus is fully God. With the iota, Jesus is just another created being, less than God. So the full doctrine of the incarnation -- Jesus the "God - Man" -- was at risk in this Council!



Nancy | CD001-Segment-7

One of the most memorable parts of the debate came down to a single Greek letter — the **iota**. The church affirmed the word *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος), meaning *"of the same essence."* Arius and his supporters preferred *homoiousios* (ὁμοιούσιος), meaning *"of similar essence."* On paper, the difference between **same** and **similar** looks tiny — just one letter, the iota — but the church understood that everything was at stake. A saying spread across the empire: *"The whole world is hanging on one small letter."* And in a very real sense, it was, because the heart of the Christian confession depends on who Jesus truly is.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.2 Council of Constantinople (381)

The **second** major council met in **A.D. 381** in **Constantinople** (modern-day Istanbul, Turkey). Its main goal was to finish the work started at Nicaea and deal with a new problem that had arisen in the church. A group called the Pneumatomachians was teaching that the Holy Spirit was not fully divine. The church knew this didn't match Scripture, so the bishops gathered again to settle the issue.

The council reaffirmed everything Nicaea had declared about the Son and then expanded the creed to make the church's belief about the Holy Spirit unmistakably clear. They confessed the Spirit as "the Lord and giver of life," fully divine, worthy of worship, and equal with the Father and the Son. The result was the **Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed**, the form of the creed most Christians still use in our churches. You can see that version and the original Nicene Creed in parallel at the end of the chapter on Pneumatology (doctrine of the Holy Spirit) in this book That chapter presents both the original from the 325 A.D. Council and the revised-expanded version from the 381 A.D. Council for side-by-side comparison.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.3 Council of Ephesus (431)

The **Third** Ecumenical Council met in **A.D. 431** in the city of **Ephesus** (about 330 miles southwest of Istanbul, on the Aegean coast of western Turkey). The issue they faced was **Nestorianism**, a teaching that split Christ into two separate persons — one divine and one human. The church knew this didn't match the way Scripture speaks about Jesus, so the bishops gathered to address it.

The council affirmed that Christ is **one person**, fully God and fully man, united without division. To protect this truth, they upheld the title **Theotokos** — "God-bearer" — for Mary. This wasn't about elevating Mary; it was about safeguarding the reality of the incarnation. If the one born of Mary is truly God the Son in the flesh, then calling her "God-bearer" simply states what Scripture teaches about who Jesus is.

Because Nestorianism denied this unity, the council rejected it as contrary to Scripture and outside the bounds of orthodox Christian belief.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.4 Council of Chalcedon (451)

The **Fourth** Ecumenical Council met in **A.D. 451** in **Chalcedon**, a city located directly east across the strait from modern-day Istanbul, on the Asian side. The issue they faced was **Eutychianism**, a teaching that blurred Christ's two natures into one. Instead of confessing Jesus as fully God and fully man, Eutychianism mixed the two together in a way that distorted the true picture of who Christ is.

To address this, the council produced what we now call the **Chalcedonian Definition**. It clearly stated that Jesus Christ is **one person in two natures** — fully God and fully man — and that these two natures exist **"without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation."** This careful wording protected both the full deity and the full humanity of Christ and became the standard for orthodox Christian belief about Jesus.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.5 Second Council of Constantinople (553)

The **Fifth** Ecumenical Council met in **A.D. 553** in **Constantinople** (modern-day Istanbul, Turkey). Its purpose was to clear up lingering confusion after Chalcedon and address interpretations that still leaned in a Nestorian direction. Some writings known as the **"Three Chapters"** were being used to support ideas that divided Christ into two separate persons, so the council examined these materials carefully.

The bishops condemned the **Three Chapters** because they encouraged misunderstandings about Christ's unity. At the same time, the council reaffirmed the heart of Chalcedon — that Jesus Christ is **one person** with **two natures**, fully God and fully man. Their goal was simple: to secure a consistent, faithful Christology that honored both **Nicaea** and **Chalcedon** and stayed true to the teaching of Scripture.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.6 Third Council of Constantinople (680–681)

The **Sixth** Ecumenical Council met in **A.D. 680–681** in **Constantinople** (modern-day Istanbul, Turkey) to address a teaching called **Monothelitism**. This view claimed that Jesus had only **one will**, even though the church had already confessed that He has **two natures** — one divine and one human. The bishops recognized that if Christ lacked a true human will, then His humanity wasn't complete, and the incarnation itself would be compromised.

After examining Scripture and the teaching of earlier councils, the council concluded that Christ has **two wills** — a **divine will** and a **human will** — perfectly united and never in conflict. This further clarified the full reality of Christ's humanity and upheld the framework established at Chalcedon: **one person in two natures**, fully God and fully man.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.7 Second Council of Nicaea (787)

The **Seventh** Ecumenical Council met in **A.D. 787** in **Nicaea** (in modern-day Turkey, just south of the current Istanbul) to settle the long-running **iconoclast controversy**. The central question was simple but serious: *Is the use of icons in Christian worship faithful to Scripture, or is it a form of idolatry?*

After careful discussion, the council concluded that honoring icons is **not** the same as worshiping them. They affirmed that **veneration** — showing respect or honor — is appropriate because icons point us to the reality of Christ's incarnation. But **worship** belongs to God alone. By making this distinction, the council upheld the truth that the Son truly became visible, physical, and human. Because Christ took on flesh, it is legitimate to depict Him in art.

The council therefore rejected **iconoclasm** — the destruction or banning of icons — as a misunderstanding of Christian doctrine. Their decision restored the use of icons in the life of the church and remains the settled position of historic Christian orthodoxy.

Further Discussions on the Councils. In the Appendix there is a more detailed discussion of each of these Councils and their conclusions for those interested in going a little deeper into the development of Christian doctrine through the Councils. In addition, there is a Timeline Appendix that places these Councils, the church "Fathers," and other relevant events or persons in a unified timeline from the death and resurrection of Jesus to the beginning of the Reformation. To place these and other items discussed in this book in their context, it will be helpful to refer to this Timeline Appendix when needed.

... Return to Intro Index ...

4.8 Patristic Writings

Church leaders from the period immediately following the New Testament to the present have written extensively, especially in the early centuries when the core doctrines of the Christian faith were being shaped through vigorous debate with various heretical movements. To appreciate the contours of orthodox theology, it is invaluable to hear the voices of these early teachers—commonly called the **Patristic Fathers**. In the chapters that follow, you will encounter box quotations drawn from their works, offering glimpses into how they understood humanity, creation, salvation, and the image of God, and how their insights contributed to the church's doctrinal clarity. Some of these are paraphrases but most are actual quotations that can be found in their writing available on the internet using the Recommended Reading listings at the end of each chapter.

These writings have been gathered into the monumental collection known as the ***Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers***—(38 volumes available in both hardback and electronic versions) all included in the recommended reading sections. Engaging these texts provides a window into what is often called **historical theology**: the development of Christian doctrine through preaching, debate, and apologetic writing across the centuries. Their voices help us see how the church has understood Scripture, defended truth, and articulated the faith once delivered to the saints.

Deut 13:1–3; Isa 9:6; Ps 110:1; Isa 53:3–5;
John 1:1–14; Col 2:9; Phil 2:5–11; 1 Tim 3:16

> Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready, for you know not the hour in which our Lord will come.
>
> Didache

... Return to Intro Index ...

5.0 Final Thoughts.

Taken together, these themes — **orthodoxy**, the **essentials of the faith**, the **work of systematic theology**, and the **role of the ecumenical councils** — form the foundation for everything that follows in this book. The goal is not to overwhelm the reader with technical details but to give a **clear, trustworthy pathway** into the heart of Christian belief. When we understand how the church has read Scripture, clarified doctrine, and defended the truth across the centuries, we are better prepared to explore the doctrines themselves with confidence and gratitude.

With this foundation in place, we are ready to look at the **ten fundamental Doctrines of Orthodoxy**. After that, we will conclude with a final chapter explaining what we mean when we say that the theology we believe was **"forged in battle."**

... Return to Intro Index ...

Eusebius Audio | CD001-Segment-8V | Eusebius Video

5.1 Eusebius Reflects on the "Battles"

Eusebius Reflects on the "Battles"

That statement, "Forged in Battle," is not an exaggeration! These seven Councils were the "Superbowls" of the Battles, where these major doctrines were hammered out. There were other smaller ones that handled other issues, but if you understand these seven, you will understand the true essence of **Orthodox Christian theology**. Now, on to chapter 1.



"For prayer is not righteous except through Christ, Whom he sold in his atrocious sin: but the prayer which is not made through Christ, not only cannot blot out sin, but is itself turned into sin."

Augustine, Exposition of the Book of Psalms, Psalm 109, Section 9

Nancy | CD001-Segment-9

Final Note: The assumption in the design of this book is that an individual or a small group would go through the book taking one chapter per week. At the end of each chapter is an assignment suggested for that week between the chapters. These are, of course, optional. But they provide a suggested way to integrate the concepts learned into the actual "real world" life of the believer(s) using this book.

To find a free online copy of the ***actual*** book, ***Ecclesiastical History,*** written by the ***real*** **Eusebius** you can use the link below. You must set up a free account with archive.org to view the entire book.

https://archive.org/details/eusebiusecclesia0000euse_v9k8/page/n5/mode/2up

... Return to Intro Index ...

Recommended Reading

The following works provide helpful background for readers who want to explore Christian doctrine more deeply. They are arranged in three levels—layman, scholar, and historical sources—so that readers may choose the depth most appropriate for their needs.

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Mere Christianity** — C. S. Lewis A clear, accessible introduction to the core beliefs of the Christian faith.
- **Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know** — Wayne Grudem A simple overview of foundational doctrines in short, readable chapters.
- **Basic Christianity** — John Stott A classic explanation of who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him.
- **Know What You Believe** — Paul Little A friendly, straightforward introduction to the major doctrines of the Christian faith.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Christian Theology** — Millard Erickson A comprehensive, evangelical systematic theology written in clear prose.
- **Systematic Theology** — Wayne Grudem A widely used evangelical theology with extensive Scripture references.
- **Institutes of the Christian Religion** — John Calvin A foundational theological work exploring God, Scripture, salvation, and the Christian life.
- **The Christian Faith** — Michael Horton A modern, academically rigorous systematic theology rooted in Reformed tradition.

Church Fathers and Historical Sources

- **Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers** The primary writings of the early church, including Irenaeus, Athanasius, Augustine, and many others.
- **Christian Classics Ethereal Library** A free online library containing readable editions of major Christian works from the first 1,500 years of church history.
- **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** A curated collection of medieval Christian writings for readers who want to explore theology after the patristic era. A widely used evangelical theology with extensive Scripture references.
- **Institutes of the Christian Religion** — John Calvin A foundational theological work exploring God, Scripture, salvation, and the Christian life.
- **The Christian Faith** — Michael Horton A modern, academically rigorous systematic theology rooted in Reformed tradition.


FORGED IN BATTLE

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 1

Full Chapter Audio	*CD01Audio-Full (39 minutes)*

Scripture:
The Doctrine of Revelation and Inspiration

The Torah[1] speaks in the language of men

> "I have learned to yield this respect and honor only to the canonical Scriptures: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error."
>
> — Augustine, *Letters* 82.3

**All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching,
for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness;
II Timothy 3:16 [NASB]**

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.0.1 **Eusebius** Quotes himself
1.1 Definition of Revelation and Inspiration
2.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Revelation and Inspiration
2.1 Old Testament Terms
2.2 New Testament Terms
2.3 **Eusebius** Discusses the Term "God-Breathed"
3.0 The Nature of Revelation
3.1 General Revelation
3.2 Special Revelation
3.3 Validation of Special Revelation
4.0 The Inspiration of Scripture
4.1 Meaning of Inspiration
4.2 Mode of Inspiration
4.3 Plenary Dynamic vs Plenary Verbal
4.4 **Eusebius** Discusses Plenary Verbal vs Plenary Dynamic
5.0 Inerrancy of Scripture
5.0.1 **Eusebius** Discusses Inerrancy
5.1 Definition
5.2 Scope of Inerrancy
5.3 Christ's View of Scripture
6.0 Authority and Sufficiency
6.1 Authority

[1] **Torah** is the Hebrew word for Law and refers to the first five books of the Bible, Genesis - Deuteronomy.

6.2 Sufficiency
7.0 Clarity and Preservation
7.1 Clarity (Perspicuity)
7.2 Preservation
7.3 **Eusebius** Agrees with Dr. Wallace
8.0 Conclusion
9.0 Application
9.1 **Eusebius** Gives Encouragement

Nancy	*CD01-Segment-1*

1.0 Introduction

Revelation is the foundation of all Christian theology. Without God's self-disclosure, humanity could not know His character, His will, or His saving purposes. Inspiration explains how that revelation was preserved in written form, and inerrancy affirms the truthfulness of that written revelation. Together, these doctrines establish the authority, reliability, and sufficiency of Scripture for faith and life. This chapter surveys the Biblical vocabulary of revelation, the nature of inspiration, the meaning of inerrancy, and the theological implications that follow. This chapter is the first because, without this Creator's self-revelation, His creatures would never be able to understand Him.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

Eusebius Audio	*CD01-Segment-2V*	Eusebius Video

1.0.1 Eusebius Quotes himself

Eusebius Quotes Himself



Some people say that it is immodest to quote from your own works. But I think there is a statement in my book *Ecclesiastical History*, that speaks to this chapter of Paul's book, if I may *humbly* say so myself.

In that book I wrote, "Some books have been universally acknowledged from the earliest times, while others have been disputed, yet known to most. But those which the apostles delivered, as the words of Christ Himself, have been received without question."

As you read through this chapter on inspiration and inerrancy, keep in mind that the church carefully evaluated and selected to be part of the New Testament, those books that clearly show themselves to be truly ***God-Breathed*** and ***without error*** regarding God's plan of redemption for us. The Jewish Rabbis did the same for the Old Testament and when Jesus quoted from the Old Testament He validated the Rabbis' decisions. So be confident, fellow traveler, that we **DO** have God's inspired and inerrant Word!

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

1.1 Definition of Revelation and Inspiration

Nancy | *CD01-Segment-3*

Revelation is God's act of making Himself known—through creation, conscience, history, and especially through His spoken and written Word. The term *revelation* derives from the Greek *apokalypsis* (ἀποκάλυψις), meaning "unveiling" or "disclosure." Inspiration refers to the divine superintendence over the human authors of Scripture so that their writings are the very Word of God. Second Timothy 3:16 describes Scripture as *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), "God-breathed," indicating that its origin is divine rather than human. Inerrancy affirms that Scripture, being God-breathed, is true and trustworthy in all things necessary for humanity's salvation and relationship with the Creator. According to the ***Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*** (1978) "we affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses." While Christians differ on whether inerrancy applies to every factual detail in the Biblical documents or specifically to those truths necessary for right relationship and fellowship with God, this author affirms the latter: that the Scriptures are inspired and inerrant in all things necessary for the salvation of humanity, allowing for inaccuracies in things such as scientific explanations, mathematics, exact chronology, etc.

Ps 19:1–4; Ps 119:160; Dan 2:22; John 17:17; Rom 1:19–20; 1 Cor 2:10–13;
2 Tim 3:16–17; Heb 1:1–2; 2 Pet 1:20–21; Jude 3

> "Some insist the Bible is merely a human book. Which is odd, since humans rarely agree long enough to finish a committee report."
>
> Source unknown

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

2.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Revelation and Inspiration

Because the Bible is the inspired Word of God, the **words** He chose matter. God did not reveal Himself in vague ideas but in clear, meaningful terms that carry His truth. For that reason, each chapter in this book highlights a few key Hebrew and Greek words (the original languages of the Old and New Testaments) that express the main ideas we are studying. Beginning here in Chapter 1—and continuing throughout the book—we will pause to look at the most important Biblical vocabulary behind each doctrine. These words help us see what God Himself emphasized and allow us to understand His truth with greater clarity and confidence. There are many very reliable English translations of the Bible, and there is no major doctrine that cannot be easily seen in these fine translations. However, we need to remember that it was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Those who dig deep in their study of the Bible will inevitably need to have some familiarity with these languages to mine the deeper truths.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

2.1 Old Testament Terms

The Old Testament uses several key Hebrew terms to describe the way God discloses Himself to His people, each adding depth to our understanding of divine revelation. The verb *gālāh* (גָּלָה - to reveal) carries the idea of *uncovering* or *revealing*, a term used when something previously hidden is brought into the light (Deuteronomy 29:29*)*. In the context of revelation, it emphasizes that truth about God is not discovered by human effort but is graciously unveiled by God Himself. The verb *nābā'* (נָבָא - to prophesy) describes the act of *prophesying*—speaking forth God's message under divine compulsion (Jeremiah 1:7). It does not primarily mean predicting the future; rather, it refers to the prophet serving as God's authorized spokesman, declaring His will, warnings, promises, and judgments. The noun *dābār* (דָּבָר - word, matter, thing**)** is even broader, referring to a *word*, *speech*, or *authoritative utterance*. When used of God, it signifies His powerful, effectual communication—the same "Word of the LORD" that came to the prophets and shaped Israel's history (1 Samuel 3:21). Together, these terms show that revelation is not human speculation but **God's initiative**: He uncovers truth (*gālāh*), raises up messengers to proclaim it (*nābā'*), and speaks with binding authority through His Word (*dābār*).
These terms emphasize that revelation is **God-initiated**, not human discovery.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

2.2 New Testament Terms

The New Testament uses several key words to describe how God makes His truth known. One is *apokalypsis* (ἀποκάλυψις), meaning an "unveiling" or "disclosure," as in Romans 1:17 where God **reveals** His righteousness in the gospel. Another is *phanerōsis* (φανέρωσις), meaning a "manifestation" or "making visible," used in 1 Corinthians 12:7 to describe how the Spirit's work becomes evident in the church through spiritual gifts. Scripture itself is described with the rare word *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), "God-breathed," in 2 Timothy 3:16—the only place in the New Testament where this term appears, and the first known instance in ancient Greek literature where it is applied to a written document rather than to a prophetic voice. Finally, Peter uses the verb *pherō* (φέρω), "to carry along," in 2 Peter 1:21 to explain how the Holy Spirit carried along the human authors so that what they wrote was truly the Word of God. Together, these words paint a simple picture: God reveals, God makes known, God breathes out His Word, and God carries along its writers so that His truth reaches us faithfully.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

2.3 Eusebius Discusses the Term "God-Breathed"

Eusebius Audio	*CD01-Segment-4V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses the Term "God-Breathed"



The Apostle Paul in Second Timothy 3:16 uses a word that is found *only once* in the entire Bible: θεόπνευστος. It is a combination of the Greek words for God and breath. So literally, it means "God-breathed." Some scholars have claimed that Paul invented this word because it had never been found in literature before Paul. However, we now know that it was used three times in non-Biblical documents written about 100 years before Paul. All three of those times, though, it is used referring to a man making an utterance where he claimed to be *speaking* for a god. However, Paul's use in Second Timothy is applying the term to a *written* document -- the Scriptures. So this unique term means that the very documents - the words - that comprise the Bible are breathed out by the breath of God. The word for breath, however comes from the word *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) which means spirit and also refers to the **Holy Spirit**. So you could also say that θεόπνευστος means delivered from God the Father by the Holy Spirit.

Nancy	*CD01-Segment-5*

The vocabulary underscores that Scripture is both **divine in origin** and **human in expression**.

Deut 29:29; Ps 19:7–11; Ps 119:130; Jer 1:7–9; 1 Sam 3:21; Amos 3:7;
Rom 1:17; 1 Cor 12:7; Eph 3:3–5; 2 Tim 3:16–17; 2 Pet 1:20–21; Rev 1:1

> "We have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to New Testament manuscripts."
>
> — Daniel B. Wallace, *Reinventing Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 55.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

3.0 The Nature of Revelation

Revelation has come to us in two forms. The first is **General Revelation** (sometimes called *Natural Revelation*), which is God making Himself known through creation, conscience, and the order of the world. The second is **Special Revelation** (often referred to as *Biblical revelation* or *redemptive revelation*), where God speaks more directly through His words and actions recorded in Scripture.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

3.1 General Revelation

General revelation refers to God's universal self-disclosure through creation, providence, and conscience. This revelation is sufficient to render humanity **accountable** before God, but it is not normally considered sufficient for salvation. As noted in the chapter on ***Hamartiology*** later, accountability is tied to moral awareness and personal transgression, not merely to inherited fallenness.

Some theologians, however, acknowledge the possibility that a human response to general revelation—marked by humility, repentance, and reliance on a merciful Creator—may be included among the redeemed. This view does not treat general revelation as capable of producing salvation by itself, but recognizes that God may respond graciously to genuine seekers who respond to the light they have received. Others maintain that special revelation is always required for saving faith.

This book affirms that general revelation is universally available, morally significant, and theologically foundational, but that salvation *ordinarily* comes through God's special revelation in Christ and Scripture.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

3.2 Special Revelation

Special revelation includes God's direct speech, prophetic messages, the incarnation of Christ, and the written Scriptures. It is necessary for knowing God's redemptive purposes and for understanding truths that cannot be derived from creation or conscience alone. Doctrines such as the Trinity, the divine attributes (including omniscience, omnipresence, and immutability), and God's covenantal mercy — *ḥesed* (חֶסֶד), His steadfast love—are known only because God has chosen to reveal them.

While general revelation discloses God's existence, power, and moral standards, special revelation discloses His **identity, character, and saving intentions**. Through special revelation, God makes known the person and work of Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the nature of salvation, and the shape of the Christian life. Without this revelation, humanity could perceive that God exists, but not who He is or how He redeems. This limitation is illustrated in Paul's encounter with the philosophers of Athens in Acts 17, where the city was filled with idols—including an altar "to the unknown god." Their religious instinct acknowledged a divine reality, but without special revelation they lacked knowledge of God's identity and redemptive purpose. Paul's sermon bridged that gap: the God they worshiped without knowing is the God who has now made Himself known in Jesus Christ.

Thus, special revelation is the indispensable means by which God clarifies what general revelation can only suggest: His **name (**Y H W H **-** יהוה**)**, His nature, His covenant mercy - ḥesed (חֶסֶד), and His saving work in history.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

3.3 Validation of Special Revelation

Because Special Revelation is ordinarily mediated through human authors or messengers, it must always be tested and validated. Throughout history, many writings have claimed divine origin—the Qur'an, the Book of Mormon, and other claimed revelations. The mere assertion of divine authority does not establish authenticity. Any claim to special revelation must be examined in light of the truths God has already made universally known in General Revelation. God does not contradict Himself. Therefore, genuine special revelation will always harmonize with the moral order, the character of God, and the realities of creation that General Revelation makes clear. When a document or teacher presents a message that conflicts with what God has revealed through creation, conscience, or the providential structure of the world, that claim fails the test. Special Revelation must be validated by General Revelation, not the other way around. This principle guards the church, and any "religion," from false claims and preserves the unity of God's self-disclosure.[2]

Ps 19:1–4; Ps 97:6; Prov 20:27; Acts 14:16–17; Acts 17:22–31; Rom 1:19–20; Rom 2:14–15; Heb 1:1–2; John 1:14,18; John 14:6–9; 2 Tim 3:15–17; Deut 13:1–4; Isa 8:20; 1 Thess 5:21; 1 John 4:1

> "General revelation is addressed to all men, and is accessible to all men; special revelation is addressed to sinners as such, and is accessible only to faith."
>
> *— B. B. Warfield, "The Idea of Revelation," in The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield*, Vol. 1

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

4.0 The Inspiration of Scripture

We now turn to the **meaning** of inspiration, the **mode** of inspiration, and the views regarding how specific was that guidance: **plenary verbal** or **plenary dynamic**. The word plenary means full, entire, and complete -- nothing lacking, nothing partial. So to be plenary verbal, the entire text, word-for-word, would need to be inspired. But plenary dynamic would mean that the words themselves are flexible but the idea the words convey is completely inspired.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

4.1 Meaning of Inspiration

Inspiration is the divine act by which God ensured that the Biblical authors wrote exactly what He intended, without overriding their personalities, vocabulary, or historical context. The diversity of Scripture's writing styles demonstrates this divine-human synergy. Luke and Acts exhibit polished,

[2] **Additional validation** for both General and Special Revelation can be observed in the broader fields of human inquiry. Archaeological discoveries, scientific investigation, historical research, and academic disciplines such as textual criticism all contribute supporting evidence. Because God's revelation is given within real time, real space, and actual human history, the data of history, science, and linguistic study naturally align with and **reinforce** the truths disclosed in Scripture. These external lines of evidence do not replace revelation, but they do corroborate its reliability and coherence.

neo-classical Greek, reflecting Luke's education and literary skill. Second Peter, by contrast, shows the marks of a less refined hand, with rougher syntax and limited vocabulary. John's writings—especially the Gospel and First John—use simple, almost "first-grade" Greek, yet convey profound theological depth. Matthew's Gospel displays a strong Semitic influence, with Hebrew idioms and structures carried into Greek expression. These variations show that inspiration does not flatten human individuality; rather, the Holy Spirit "carried along" the authors (2 Pet. 1:21) so that their distinct voices faithfully conveyed God's authoritative Word.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

4.2 Mode of Inspiration

Inspiration is the divine act by which God ensured that the Biblical authors wrote exactly what He intended, without overriding their personalities, vocabulary, or historical context. At times, the authors were consciously aware that they were speaking or writing the very words of God—Moses repeatedly brought the actual words of God on tablets or presented other written documents. The Israelite prophets famously declare, "Thus says the LORD," (*ko amar adonay* - כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה) and introduce their messages as "the word of the LORD" coming to them.

Paul likewise affirms divine authority in certain passages, as when he writes, "This is what the Lord says" in First Corinthians 7. At other times, the Biblical writers express their own pastoral judgments, as Paul does in the same chapter when he distinguishes between a direct command from the Lord and his own Spirit-guided counsel. Yet even these personal reflections fall within the scope of inspiration, for the Spirit "carried along" the authors so that their distinct voices, perspectives, and experiences faithfully conveyed God's authoritative Word. Inspiration, therefore, preserves both the divine message and the authentic human expression through which God chose to communicate it (2 Pet. 1:21).

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

4.3 Plenary Dynamic vs Plenary Verbal.

The term ***Plenary*** inspiration means that **all** of Scripture comes from God, but Christians have described the way God guided the writers in two different ways. **Plenary verbal inspiration** teaches that God's guidance extends to the very words the Biblical authors wrote—not dictation, but a Spirit-directed process in which the writers freely used their own vocabulary, style, and personality while still writing the exact words that God intended. **Plenary dynamic inspiration**, on the other hand, emphasizes that God inspired the thoughts and message of Scripture, allowing the authors greater freedom in choosing the specific words as long as the meaning God intended was faithfully expressed. Both views affirm that the whole Bible is inspired and trustworthy; they simply differ on whether the Spirit's work operated primarily at the level of **words** or **ideas**.

The **plenary verbal** view teaches that God inspired the very *words* of Scripture, but this view faces a challenge when we look closely at the actual Hebrew and Greek hand copied manuscripts made before

the invention of the printing press. Because the Bible was copied by hand for centuries, we sometimes find **textual variants**—places where two manuscripts differ slightly. In those cases, it is not always certain which wording was the original one written by the inspired author. A simple example is in Luke 11:20 where the original was most likely the "finger of God." However, some manuscripts have "finger of God" replaced by "Spirit of God" reflecting the wording in the parallel passage in Matthew 12:28. If inspiration operates at the level of exact words said by Jesus, which reading is the inspired word: Finger of God or Spirit of God? The **plenary dynamic** view does not struggle here, because it holds that God inspired the **message**, not necessarily one fixed wording. Both expressions communicate the same truth: Jesus cast out demons by the direct power of God. You can explore the idea of textual variants further in the recommended reading section at the end of the chapter.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

4.4 Eusebius Discusses Plenary Verbal vs Plenary Dynamic

Eusebius Audio	*CD01-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses Plenary Verbal vs Plenary Dynamic



I have supervised the production of hundreds of hand-written copies of the Bible and, invariably, a scribe will accidentally make a small copying error. Or he may even make an intentional small change in spelling, word order or even substitute a different word. When this happens, if my supervisor misses that, the change remains and becomes what people in ***your*** day refer to as a "textual variant:" two different hand copied manuscripts with different words. That causes a problem for those who hold the **Plenary Verbal** doctrine because that doctrine needs to know the actual original inspired word.

However, those who hold the **Plenary Dynamic** doctrine do not have a problem with that because that change usually does not change the meaning of the passage. So since the meaning is inspired, not the actual word, that is not a problem for the Plenary Dynamic advocate, since the clear inspired meaning can still be seen. And since the meaning is still clear, even with that textual variant, it is still the inspired word of God.

Exod 24:3–4; Deut 18:18; Jer 1:7–9; Ezek 2:7; Luke 1:1–4; John 14:26; Acts 1:16; 1 Cor 2:12–13; 1 Cor 7:10–12; 2 Tim 3:16–17; Heb 1:1–2; 2 Pet 1:20–21; Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20

> "The Gospel has come down to us by the will of God, delivered to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith."
>
> — Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.1.1

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

Nancy	CD01-Segment-7

5.0 The Inerrancy of Scripture

What do we mean by inerrant? Are even scientific and mathematical statements without error? How are these issues addressed? We now turn to that question.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

5.0.1 Eusebius Discusses Inerrancy

Eusebius Audio	CD01-Segment-8V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses Inerrancy

I have to constantly remind the people in my church that the Bible is not a scientific manual or a mathematics textbook. It does not claim to be without error, as the modern scientists of your era would consider error. It uses terms and explanations that were commonly understood in the time period when the book was written.



What it ***does*** claim is to be without error in *spiritual matters* where it speaks to our redemption and our life as a disciple of Jesus.

So be careful in ascribing scientific or mathematical accuracy to the Bible when God's intention was to communicate how to become right with Him and how to live a life worthy of a disciple of Jesus.

The Bible is inerrant, without error, in that respect even though it may be also accurate in many other areas beyond that as well.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...



5.1 Definition

While views differ on the details, it is generally agreed that inerrancy is the doctrinal affirmation that Scripture, being *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος, "God-breathed"), is true, trustworthy, and without error in all that God intends it to teach**,** particularly in matters necessary for salvation, faith, and godly living. This view maintains that the purpose of Biblical inspiration is primarily redemptive and theological, not the production of exhaustive precision in every historical, scientific, or incidental detail. As James Orr argued, Scripture's truthfulness must be understood "according to the purpose for which it was given," meaning that minor factual irregularities or non-essential historical variations do not compromise its divine authority or its reliability in communicating God's saving revelation.[3]

Thus, inerrancy—rightly defined—asserts that the Bible is without error **in all that it affirms for the salvation of humanity and the formation of Christian doctrine and living**, while allowing that some peripheral or non-redemptive details may reflect the ordinary limitations of human authors writing within their educational, historical, and cultural contexts.

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

5.2 Scope of Inerrancy

Inerrancy applies to the whole of Scripture in the sense that the Bible, as a unified canon, faithfully communicates God's redemptive truth and serves as the final authority for Christian faith and practice. (Thus the famous protestant proclamation of ***Sola Scriptura*** **-** Scripture alone!) It also applies to the details of Scripture, meaning that the individual parts—whether laws, narratives, psalms, or teachings—reliably contribute to the larger message God intends to convey. Inerrancy extends to the teachings of Scripture, ensuring that its doctrinal affirmations about God, humanity, sin, salvation, and the Christian life are trustworthy and without error in all that God purposes them to communicate.

Finally, inerrancy applies to the historical claims of Scripture, not by demanding modern scientific precision, but by affirming that the Biblical authors truthfully reported God's acts **in history** in a manner consistent with ancient literary conventions. Understood this way, inerrancy safeguards the reliability of Scripture in all matters essential to salvation and godliness, while recognizing that its purpose is theological rather than encyclopedic, and at the same time permitting the writers to have the normal human limitations of their culture and intellectual scientific development in history.

Christianity and Judaism stand out among the world's religions because their claims can be examined and supported through scientific fields such as archaeology**,** ancient Near Eastern studies**,** textual criticism**,** linguistics**,** geography, and historical research. These disciplines continually confirm the cultural settings, people groups, places, and events described in Scripture, giving believers confidence that the Biblical story is ***rooted in real history***.

[3] James Orr, *Revelation and Inspiration* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), esp. pp. 199–205, where Orr distinguishes between Scripture's **theological infallibility** and the expectation of **absolute factual precision** in every detail.

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

5.3 Christ's View of Scripture

Jesus affirmed the authority and reliability of the Old Testament not merely by citing it, but by **building His teachings on it**, interpreting His mission through it, and treating it as the unbreakable Word of God. He quoted from or alluded to every major division of the Hebrew Bible—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings—and, according to the consensus of Biblical scholarship, referenced every Old Testament book except Esther. His use of Scripture ranges from direct citation (e.g., Deuteronomy in His temptation) to legal interpretation (e.g., Exodus and Leviticus in His teaching on the greatest commandments) to messianic fulfillment (e.g., Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth).

Jesus also extended this authority forward by granting His apostles the right to speak and teach in His name, promising that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth and bring His words to their remembrance (John 14–16). This apostolic authority is further confirmed by Peter's testimony that "men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21), indicating that the same divine guidance that shaped the Old Testament prophets would also govern the apostolic witness.

Thus, Christ's view of Scripture encompasses both the inspired writings He received and the apostolic witness He commissioned, forming the foundation for the church's confidence in the authority of both Testaments.

Psalm 119:89; Psalm 119:160; Isaiah 40:8; Deuteronomy 8:3;
Matthew 4:4–10; Matthew 22:29; John 10:35; Luke 24:44–45

> "The Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit."
>
> Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*, 2.28.2

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

6.0 Authority and Sufficiency

Is the Bible the only authoritative source for Christian doctrine? That is the crucial question we address now.

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

6.1 Authority

Because Scripture is **God-breathed**, it stands as the final standard for doctrine, ethics, and worship. The Psalms function as the church's inspired hymnbook, shaping the prayers, praises, and laments of God's people across generations. Proverbs offers God's own wisdom for daily life, grounding moral discernment not in human insight but in the fear of the Lord.

The New Testament continues this pattern: Paul exhorts the Ephesian believers to be filled with the Spirit by speaking to one another "in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," showing that corporate worship is formed and governed by the Word (Ephesians 5). Likewise, Paul teaches Timothy that all Scripture is profitable "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16), establishing the Bible as the church's authoritative guide for belief and behavior. Paul's reference was, of course, to the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures as the New Testament Greek documents were not yet fully formed. But they were covered by implication and other references.

In every dimension of Christian life—what we teach, how we live, and how we worship—Scripture provides the normative, Spirit-given pattern by which the people of God are shaped.

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

6.2 Sufficiency

Scripture contains everything necessary for salvation and godly living. It does not answer every question humans may ask, but it answers every question God intends His people to know regarding their relationship with Him, with the church, and with fellow believers. This conviction stands at the heart of the Reformation principle of **Sola Scriptura**—the belief that Scripture alone is the church's final and sufficient authority in matters of faith and practice. The Reformers did not reject all tradition, but they rejected any tradition that claimed binding authority apart from, or contrary to, the written Word of God. In contrast to the medieval appeal to unwritten ecclesiastical customs, councils, and magisterial pronouncements, the Reformers insisted that the church must be governed by what God has revealed, not by human additions. Thus, while Scripture does not provide exhaustive information on every subject, it provides a complete and trustworthy revelation of everything necessary for knowing God, trusting Christ, and walking in obedience. Its sufficiency lies not in answering all conceivable questions, but in perfectly revealing all that God requires for salvation and faithful Christian living.

Ps 19:7–11; Ps 119:89,105,130,160; Prov 1:7; Prov 2:6; Prov 9:10; Matt 4:4; Matt 22:29; Luke 24:27,44–45; John 10:35; Acts 17:11; Rom 15:4; Eph 5:18–20; Col 3:16; 2 Tim 3:15–17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:20–21; Jude 3

> "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture."
>
> *— Westminster Confession of Faith 1.6*

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

7.0 Clarity and Preservation

Since it has been about 2,000 years since the writing of the New Testament documents and even hundreds of years more for the Old Testament documents, how can we have confidence in the documents we have now?

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

7.1 Clarity (Perspicuity)

Scripture is clear in its essential teachings, though some passages require careful study. The doctrine of clarity—*perspicuitas Scripturae*—means that the Bible's central message about God, sin, salvation, and godly living can be understood by ordinary believers who read it with honest diligence. Not every verse is equally transparent, and some portions of Scripture contain symbolism, ancient idioms, or complex argumentation, that call for **competent exegesis** and patient interpretation. Even Peter acknowledged that some of Paul's writings are "hard to understand," yet he still affirmed their authority as Scripture.

The Reformers appealed to this clarity when they insisted that the gospel does not depend on secret traditions or ecclesiastical elites, but is openly revealed in the written Word. Thus, while Scripture contains depths that reward lifelong study, its essential truths are accessible to all believers, enabling the whole church—not only scholars or clergy—to hear, believe, and obey God's Word.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

7.2 Preservation

God has preserved His Word through centuries of transmission, even though the original autographs (the original document as it came from the hands and pen of the Apostles, prophets and other inspired writers) have not survived. From the earliest periods of Israel's history, Jewish scribes carefully copied the sacred Hebrew texts by hand, developing meticulous traditions to guard against error. The Christian church inherited this same reverence for the Greek Scriptures (including the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the ***Septuagint*** and referenced as LXX), producing thousands of handwritten manuscripts in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, and other ancient languages.

Until the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, every copy of the Bible was reproduced manually, a process that inevitably introduced **textual variants**—small differences between hand-made copies of the manuscripts. Yet the abundance of these manuscripts (well over 25,000 complete or partial copies of the Old and New testaments copied prior to the invention of the printing press), far from undermining confidence, allows scholars to compare readings and reconstruct the original text with remarkable accuracy. As Dr. Daniel B. Wallace notes, **less than one-tenth of one percent** of all textual variants have any bearing on meaning, and none affect any doctrine essential to the Christian faith. Thus, while the discipline of the analysis of the hand-copied Biblical manuscripts is complex and rewarding—indeed, a lifetime study for many—the overall witness of the manuscript tradition demonstrates that God has ***faithfully preserved*** His Word for His people.

... Return to Chapter 1 Index ...

7.3 Eusebius Agrees with Dr. Wallace

Eusebius Audio	*CD01-Segment-10V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Agrees with Dr. Wallace



Dr. Dan Wallace, from your **own** time, is one of the greatest living experts on the subject of the original text of the Bible. I want you to digest for a moment his statement reported in the previous paragraph.

There are approximately 138,000 individual words in the Greek text of the New Testament. Dr. Wallace indicates that there are over 500,000 variants. That means about four variants per word! Some people have taken that number and made the claim that it is impossible to know if we have the original inspired text of the New Testament.

But listen to the other statement by Dr. Wallace. He said that less than one tenth of one percent of the variants have any bearing on meaning, and **none of them** affect any doctrine essential to Christian faith.

I supervised in my scriptorium in Caesarea the copying of hundreds of copies of the Bible. We were extremely careful and I am proud that Dr. Wallace agrees that we did a very good job of transmitting to ***your*** time, the true, inspired, and inerrant Word of God.

Ps 19:7–8; Ps 119:130; Deut 30:11–14; Neh 8:8; Matt 11:25; Luke 24:27,45; John 7:17; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 3:15–17; 2 Pet 3:15–16

> "The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning."
>
> — F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), 15.

Return to Chapter 1 Index

Nancy	*CD01-Segment-11*

8.0 Conclusion

Revelation, inspiration, and inerrancy form the foundation and source of Christian theology. This chapter on the nature of Scripture lays the foundation for all future chapters on Christian doctrine.

God has spoken, and He has ensured that His Word is faithfully preserved in Scripture. Because the Bible is *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος)—breathed out by God—it is authoritative, trustworthy, and sufficient.

Without this special revelation, humanity would be left with only general revelation, able to deduce God's existence and power but unable to know His name, His character, or His saving purposes. Like the Athenian philosophers who erected an altar "to the unknown god," we would be wandering in search of truth that we could never fully grasp (Acts 17). But God has not left us to speculation; He has spoken clearly in His Word. Therefore, all doctrine, all preaching, and all Christian living must begin with and be measured by this divine revelation.

Ps 19:1–4; Ps 119:89,160; Isa 40:8; John 1:14,18; John 17:17; Acts 17:22–31; Rom 1:19–20; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 2:12–13; 2 Tim 3:15–17; Heb 1:1–2; 2 Pet 1:20–21

> "I want to know one thing—the way to heaven… God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that Book!"
>
> — *John Wesley, Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions* (1746)

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

9.0 Application

Because Scripture is inspired and inerrant, the believer is called to approach it with diligence, humility, and eagerness. The Bereans in Acts 17 provide a model for this posture: they received the apostolic message with readiness, yet examined the Scriptures daily to confirm its truth. In the same way, Christians today are not passive recipients of tradition or opinion, but active students of God's Word, testing all things by the standard of Scripture.

Your assignment for this week: Choose one of the scripture passages below; copy it on a note card and carry it with you this week. Review it every morning and see if you can have it memorized by the end of the week. Psalm 119:11 says "Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." So hide one of these passages in your heart this week.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:7-9; John 17:17; Matthew 5:17-18

By reading this book, you are following this admonition. To assist you further in fulfilling this endeavor, we include a list of recommended reading at several levels of background.

> "The Scriptures obtain full authority among believers only when men regard them as having sprung from heaven, as if the living words of God were heard."
>
> — John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1.7.1

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …

9.1 Eusebius Gives Encouragement

Eusebius Audio	*CD01-Segment-12V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Gives Encouragement

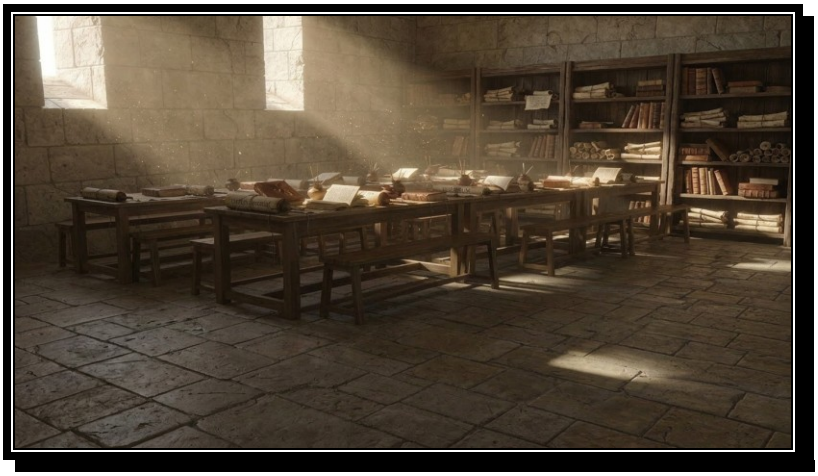


The Bereans applied themselves daily to the Scriptures to be sure they understood correct doctrine. I encourage you to do the same. As you do the assignment for this week, be sure to stop and meditate on the passage you have selected. Even the most ***scholarly*** Bible student needs to not only know the Scripture but must also know the One who inspired it.

So be sure to mediate and take the passage into your heart as well as into your mind. In the Bible, the word "know" can mean either to know in your **mind** or to know in your **heart**.

While this book is intended to help you know more about Christian doctrine in your **mind**. You also want to be sure you know that doctrine in your **heart** as well. So study, then meditate, and be sure the doctrine reaches your heart as well as your mind.

… Return to Chapter 1 Index …



Depiction of an ancient scriptorium where the Bible was hand copied

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Taking God at His Word** — Kevin DeYoung A concise, readable defense of the authority, clarity, necessity, and sufficiency of Scripture.
- **Know Why You Believe** — Paul Little A classic introduction to why Christians trust the Bible as God's revelation.
- **How We Got the Bible** — Neil Lightfoot A simple, accessible explanation of canon, manuscripts, and transmission.
- **The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict** — Josh McDowell Lay-friendly apologetic material supporting the reliability of Scripture.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible** — B. B. Warfield The definitive historical and theological treatment of inspiration.
- **Canon Revisited** — Michael Kruger A rigorous defense of the canon's authenticity, authority, and self-attestation.
- **Scripture and Truth** — D. A. Carson & John Woodbridge, eds. Scholarly essays addressing revelation, inspiration, and hermeneutics.
- **The Doctrine of the Word of God** — John Frame A comprehensive, philosophical, and theological exploration of Scripture.
- **The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy** The modern benchmark articulation of inerrancy, with explanatory articles.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.
Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. *Website: https://www.ccel.org/fathers*
Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.)

For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 2

Full Chapter Audio	*CD02Audio-Full (20 minutes)*

Theology Proper:
The Doctrine of the First Person of the Godhead

God is that which nothing greater can be conceived

In a modest London drawing-room, two gentlemen of **atheistic** inclination found themselves in a most animated dispute concerning the Almighty. After much huffing, puffing, and rearranging of waistcoats, one finally exclaimed in a very loud and frustrated voice, '*My good sir, I will permit you to* **Not** *believe in the God you want to, and I shall* **Not** *believe in the God I want to.'*

[There is] one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.
Ephesians 4:6

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.01 **Eusebius** Explains Transcendence and Immanence
1.1 Definition
2.0 Biblical Vocabulary
2.1 Old Testament Vocabulary
2.1.1 **Eusebius** Explains Copying the Divine Name in Manuscripts
2.2 New Testament Vocabulary
3.0 Nature of the Doctrine
4.0 Biblical Development
4.1 Old Testament
4.2 New Testament
5.0 Consequences / Implications
6.0 Remedy / Divine Provision
7.0 Special Issues / Clarifications
8.0 Conclusion
9.0 Application
9.0.1 **Eusebius** Explains God as Father

Nancy | *CD02-Segment-1*

1.0 Introduction

The doctrine of God—often called *Theology Proper*—is the foundation of all Christian belief. Every other doctrine flows from who God is: His nature, His character, His works, and His purposes. Scripture does not begin by arguing for God's existence; it simply **declares** Him. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible reveals a God who is personal, eternal, holy, sovereign, and actively involved with His creation. Understanding who God is shapes how we worship, how we pray, how we live, and how we understand ourselves. As you will see when we arrive at the chapter on the Trinity, God is revealed as a Trinity. While addressing the general personal attributes of the full **Godhead**, this chapter also addresses God in the sense of the Father, distinct from God the Son or God the Holy Spirit.

In this chapter we speak of both God the Father in a Trinitarian sense (covered in chapter five) and God in the sense of the unity of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9). Since God is "Triune," we can see both senses in many of the referenced passages and in our discussion below.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

1.0.1 Eusebius Explains Transcendence and Immanence

Eusebius Audio | *CD02-Segment-2V* | Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains Transcendence and Immanence



In theology there are two terms referring to God that seem to contradict each other. **Transcendence** and **Immanence**.

Transcendence is that characteristic of God that says he is outside of time and space. He is outside of his creation. The prophets declared that he "inhabits eternity" and no earthly mind can contain his majesty.

Immanence, on the other hand, teaches that God actually participates ***inside*** His creation. He guides, sustains, and speaks. He is not a distant ruler but a loving Father.

While they seem contradictory, they are both true. The God who dwells beyond all things is also the God who walks among his creation. His transcendence inspires our awe; His immanence invites us into a loving relationship.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

Nancy | CD02-Segment-3

1.1 Definition

The Doctrine of God is the study of God's being, attributes, and works as He has revealed Himself in Scripture**.** A general definition of the Doctrine of God is *Theology Proper.* It is what the Bible teaches about who God is and how He acts. Wayne Grudem defines Theology Proper as "The study of God and His attributes."[4]

This doctrine does not attempt to define God exhaustively—no human mind can—but it seeks to understand what God has made known about Himself. In this section of systematic theology, we are focusing on what the New Testament identifies as *God the Father*, using the Trinitarian categories that the Church later articulated more precisely after the close of the New Testament canon.

Exodus 34:6–7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28;
John 4:24; John 14:9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6

> "To think rightly about God is the foundation of all true theology."
>
> — J. I. Packer

Return to Chapter 2 Index

2.0 Biblical Vocabulary

It would be impossible in a brief chapter to cover all the vocabulary referencing God in both the Old and New Testaments. Below we cover just a sample of the more prominent terms.

Return to Chapter 2 Index

2.1 Old Testament Vocabulary

In the Old Testament, several key Hebrew terms reveal the character and work of God. The word *ĕlōhîm* (אֱלֹהִים - God) appears more than 2,500 times and, though grammatically plural, is consistently paired with singular verbs when referring to Israel's God, emphasizing His majesty, fullness of power, and absolute sovereignty as Creator and Judge.

God's covenant name, YHWH[5] (יהוה), is referred to as the tetragrammaton (the "four letters) and occurs nearly 6,800 times. It is tied to the self-revelation "I AM" in Exodus 3:14, expressing His self-existence, eternality, and covenant faithfulness; English Bibles typically render it as LORD in small

[4] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020), 143.

[5] Jewish tradition, from the earliest known periods, has not actually pronounced this name but, instead, when encountering these four letters (known as the "tetragrammaton") in the Hebrew text, would substitute the word "*Adonay*", meaning **LORD**. Because of that tradition, continued to this day by Orthodox Jews in modern Israel, the actual pronunciation of the personal name of God is still a mystery.

capital letters to distinguish it from places where the Hebrew text actually uses the word for "lord." In the Hebrew text, there are only the Hebrew consonants written with no vowels.

The name was (and still is) considered too sacred to actually pronounce so the Jews substituted the word *Adonay*, meaning Lord, and when vowels do appear with the four consonants, they are the vowels for that word, reminding the reader to say the word Lord instead of trying to pronounce the divine name. It is thought that when Jesus referred to Himself as the "I Am" in the seven I AM statements, that the implication is that he was identifying Himself with the Exodus 3:14 passage of the self-revelation of the name of God.

The title *ădōnāy* (**אֲדֹנָי)**, meaning "Lord" or "Master," highlights God's authority and rule and became the spoken substitute for the divine name in Jewish tradition. Other significant titles include *ʾEl Shaddai* (**אֵל שַׁדַּי** - God Almighty), which stresses God's omnipotence and sufficiency, especially in covenant contexts, and *ʾEl ʿElyōn* (**אֵל עֶלְיוֹן** - God Most High), a title that underscores His supremacy over all nations, powers, and spiritual beings.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

2.1.1 Eusebius Explains Copying the Divine name in Manuscripts

Eusebius Audio	CD02-Segment-4V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains Copying the Divine Name in Manuscripts



In the scriptorium when we copied the Bible, we handled the divine names and titles with the greatest reverence. When the scribe came to the sacred name of God — **YHWH** — they would pause, wash their hands, and write it in a distinct form, never as an ordinary word.

As Christians, we continued this devotion through what we called the ***nomina sacra***—the 'sacred names.' Titles such as **God**, **Lord**, **Jesus**, and **Christ** were written in abbreviated form, marked with a line above them, so that even the shape of the letters bore witness to their holiness.

This was not mere custom. It was our confession. By setting apart the divine names, we reminded every reader—and every scribe—that the One whose name we wrote is not common but holy, worthy of awe in every stroke of the pen."

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

2.2 New Testament Vocabulary

The New Testament continues this revelation with its own vocabulary. The primary Greek term *theos (*θεός - God**)** functions as the standard word for "God," most often referring to God the Father, though it is also applied to the Son in passages such as John 1:1 and John 20:28, affirming the full deity of Christ. The title *kyrios* (κύριος - Lord), is used for both the Father and the Son; when applied to Jesus, it frequently echoes the Old Testament use of YHWH in the Greek Septuagint[6], making "Jesus is Lord" a profoundly theological confession of His divine identity. Finally, the relational term *patēr* (πατήρ - father), expresses God's personal and covenantal nature. Jesus uses it uniquely of His own relationship to God, while believers are taught to pray "Our Father," (*Pater hēmōn* - Πάτερ ἡμῶν) revealing both intimacy and authority within the Trinitarian framework.

These terms reveal God's power, holiness, covenant faithfulness, and personal involvement with His people.

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14–15; Exodus 6:2–3; Deuteronomy 10:17;
Psalm 97:9; Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 42:8; Psalm 16:2

> "If God were small enough to be understood, He wouldn't be big enough to be worshiped."
>
> — a modern proverb

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

3.0 Nature of the Doctrine

Scripture reveals several essential truths about the nature of God. He is **Spirit**, not limited by physical form or bound by material constraints. He is **personal**, speaking, willing, loving, judging, and entering into real relationship with His creatures. God is **infinite**, without limit in His being or perfections, and **eternal**, existing without beginning or end. He is **immutable**, meaning unchanging in His character, purposes, and promises. Scripture also presents God as **holy**, meaning both morally perfect and set apart[7] from all creation, and as **sovereign**, ruling over all things and accomplishing His purposes without frustration. God is **good**, displaying kindness, faithfulness, grace, and righteousness in all His works.

Although Scripture affirms that God is one—the only true and living God—it also reveals that this one God is Triune: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three coequal and coeternal Persons sharing the same divine essence. This creates a deliberate and important tension in the biblical witness. On the one hand stands the foundational confession of Israel, the **Shema**, where Moses declares, "Hear, O Israel! The

[6] Septuagint refers to the Greek Translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, produced about 200 BC in Alexandria, Egypt. It is often referred to with the letters LXX, meaning 70, as the tradition is that it was produced by 72 Jewish rabbis. However, it was too lengthy to write out the Roman numerals for 72 so it was shortened to LXX (70).
[7] The technical term for this is "transcendent," which you will find in many books on theology.

LORD (*YHWH* - יהוה) is our God, the LORD (*YHWH* - יהוה) is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4, NASB). This affirmation of God's oneness shaped Jewish monotheism for centuries.

On the other hand, both the Old and New Testaments present the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as distinct Persons who act, speak, and relate in ways that cannot be reduced to mere modes or manifestations. At times, all three appear within the same passage—such as at Jesus' baptism or in the Great Commission—revealing a unity of essence alongside a distinction of Persons. The doctrine of the Trinity arises from holding these two strands of biblical revelation together without diminishing either one.[8]

These truths form the bedrock of Christian theology.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 6:3; Malachi 3:6; Psalm 90:2; John 4:24;
Matthew 3:16–17; Matthew 28:19; James 1:17

> "We know God only because He first chooses to make Himself known."
>
> — Herman Bavinck

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

4.0 Biblical Development

The understanding of God did not happen all at once. It was what we call "progressive revelation." God revealed himself in His own times and places appropriate to the development of the Covenants as history progressed.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

4.1 Old Testament

The Old Testament consistently emphasizes God's identity and work through its unfolding narrative. It presents **God as Creator**, the One who brings the heavens and the earth into existence by His sovereign word (Genesis 1–2). It reveals **God as Covenant Maker**, calling Abraham, forming a people for Himself, and establishing His law at Sinai (Genesis 12; Exodus 19–20). God is portrayed as **holy**, exalted in purity and majesty, as Isaiah witnessed in his temple vision (Isaiah 6). He is also **Sovereign King**, ruling over all nations and all creation, a theme celebrated throughout Psalms 93–99. The Old Testament further depicts God as **Redeemer**, delivering His people from bondage and acting with steadfast love on their behalf (Exodus 6). Above all, it affirms that He is **the only God**, a truth

[8] It needs to be noted that the term "trinity" is not "Biblical" in that it is not found in the actual Bible text. It was first used by a Christian leader by the name of **Tertullian** about 190 AD. The actual formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, explained in a later chapter, was not solidified until the second ecumenical council called the First Council of Constantinople, in 381 AD.

encapsulated in the Shema: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” (Deuteronomy 6:4, NASB).

The revelation of God’s character and His relationship with creation unfolds progressively throughout Scripture, and this unfolding is closely tied to the series of covenants He establishes with key figures in the biblical narrative, as summarized in the table below.

Major Biblical Covenants		
Covenant	**Description**	**Primary Biblical References**
Edenic Covenant	God’s original arrangement with Adam and Eve in the garden, establishing humanity’s purpose, stewardship, and blessing before the Fall.	Genesis 1:26–30; 2:15–17
Adamíc Covenant	God’s post-Fall covenantal pronouncements including judgment, the curse, and the first promise of redemption (protoevangelium).	Genesis 3:14–19
Noahic Covenant	God’s covenant with Noah and all creation, promising never again to destroy the earth by flood and establishing the sign of the rainbow.	Genesis 8:20–22; 9:1–17
Abrahamic Covenant	God’s covenant with Abraham promising land, descendants, and blessing to all nations through his seed; foundational to Israel’s identity.	Genesis 12:1–3; 15:1–21; 17:1–14
Mosaic Covenant	God’s covenant with Israel at Sinai, giving the Law and forming Israel as a holy nation under God’s rule.	Exodus 19–24; Deuteronomy 5
Priestly Covenant	God’s covenant with Phinehas granting a perpetual priesthood to his descendants as a reward for zeal for God’s holiness.	Numbers 25:10–13
Davidic Covenant	God’s covenant with David promising an eternal throne, a lasting dynasty, and a future king from his line.	2 Samuel 7:8–16; Psalm 89
New Covenant	God’s promised covenant of internal transformation, forgiveness of sins, and the indwelling Spirit, inaugurated by Christ.	Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 36:25–27; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8

The Old Testament progressively reveals God’s character through His actions, promises, and covenant relationship with Israel, while the New Testament brings this revelation to its fullness by unveiling God’s purposes and nature in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

4.2 New Testament

The New Testament continues and expands the Old Testament's revelation of God by unveiling His character and purposes with greater clarity and fullness. Jesus Himself **reveals the Father**, making Him known in a way no one else could (John 1:18[9]; 14:9). He also **shares the divine name "I AM"**, identifying Himself with the God of Israel (John 8:58). The New Testament further shows that **the Holy Spirit is fully divine and personal**, as seen when lying to the Spirit is equated with lying to God (Acts 5:3–4). The triune nature of God is explicitly displayed in the **baptismal formula**, where Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are named together in one divine identity (Matthew 28:19). God's **love** is revealed supremely in the cross of Christ (Romans 5:8), while His **sovereignty** is displayed in the work of salvation, planned and accomplished according to His purpose (Ephesians 1). Finally, God's **holiness and justice** are perfectly fulfilled in Christ's atoning work, where righteousness and mercy meet (Romans 3:21–26).

The New Testament does not replace the Old Testament revelation—it completes it.

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 6:2–7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 6:1–5; John 1:18;
John 8:58; Matthew 28:19; Romans 3:21–26

> "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."
>
> — A.W. Tozer

Return to Chapter 2 Index

5.0 Consequences / Implications

Understanding who God is shapes every dimension of the Christian life. His greatness and goodness draw us into worship, and His fatherly care invites us to approach Him confidently in prayer. God's holiness calls His people to live in obedience, while His sovereignty provides deep assurance in the midst of trials. Knowing that we are made in His image forms our identity, and His character establishes the foundation for all ethics, defining what is right and wrong. God's heart for the nations fuels the mission of the church, and His promises anchor the believer's hope for the future. The doctrine of God is not abstract—it is deeply practical.

Psalm 96:9; Isaiah 41:10; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 43:10; Matthew 6:9;
Romans 8:28; Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 28:19–20

> If anyone does not refrain from the love of money, he will be defiled by idolatry and so be judged as if he were one of the heathen.
>
> — Polycarp

[9] *It is worth noting that the term used in John 1:18 for "make known" is the Greek verb exēgēsato* (ἐξηγήσατο), which comes from the lexical form *exēgeomai* (ἐξηγέομαι), meaning "to explain, interpret, or declare." This is also the word from which we derive the English term "exegesis," the work a pastor performs when preparing to preach an expository sermon that draws out the meaning of a biblical passage.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

6.0 Remedy / Divine Provision

Unlike hamartiology[10], this section is not about "remedy for sin" but about **how God makes Himself known** so we can truly know Him.

God graciously makes Himself known in multiple ways. Through *general revelation*, creation, conscience, and providence testify to His power and divine nature (Psalm 19; Romans 1). Through *special revelation*, Scripture discloses His character, His will, and His redemptive purposes. In the *incarnation*, Jesus Christ stands as the perfect and final revelation of God, the One in whom God has spoken fully and definitively (Hebrews 1:1–3). And through the ministry of the *Holy Spirit*, God illumines Scripture, opens the heart to truth, and enables believers to know Him personally and intimately.

God does not remain hidden; He graciously **reveals Himself**.

Psalm 19:1–4; Isaiah 55:10–11; Deuteronomy 29:29; Isaiah 40:28;
John 1:18; Hebrews 1:1–3; Romans 1:19–20; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12

> "If God made us in His image, we have certainly returned the favor."
>
> — often attributed to Mark Twain;

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

7.0 Special Issues / Clarifications

Several important theological clarifications help guard our understanding of God from common misunderstandings. God cannot be fully comprehended by the human mind, yet He can be truly and personally known. The Trinity does not mean three gods, but one God who exists eternally in three distinct Persons. God's sovereignty never cancels human responsibility, for Scripture consistently affirms both realities. His immutability does not imply inactivity; rather, He acts in history without any change to His nature or character. When Scripture speaks of the "hand of God" or the "eyes of the Lord," such anthropomorphic language is metaphorical, helping finite minds grasp divine actions. And God's wrath is not opposed to His love; it is the necessary expression of His holiness against sin.

These clarifications help prevent common misunderstandings.

Deuteronomy 29:29; Isaiah 55:8–9; Malachi 3:6; Exodus 34:6–7;
John 1:18; Matthew 28:19; Romans 9:19–21; James 1:17

[10] Hamartiology, the Doctrine of Sin, is covered in detail later chapter seven.

> Martyrdom does not consist only in dying for one's faith. Martyrdom also consists in serving God with love and purity of heart every day of one's life.
>
> — Jerome

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

8.0 Conclusion

The doctrine of God is the cornerstone of Christian belief. Everything else—creation, salvation, the church, and the Christian life—rests on who God is. Scripture reveals a God who is holy, sovereign, loving, just, and faithful. He is the Creator, Redeemer, and King. He is one God in three Persons. And He invites His people to know Him, trust Him, and walk with Him.

> "The most portentous fact about any man is not what he, at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like."
>
> A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 1.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

9.0 Application

The Bible, especially in the New Testament, presents God as a Father. Knowing God as **Father** is not just a doctrine to affirm—it is a truth meant to steady your heart every day. The same Father who created the world, rules over history, and sustains all things is the One who invites you to trust Him, pray to Him, and rest in His care. His fatherly character means you are not dealing with a distant deity but with a God who knows your needs, hears your concerns, and works for your good even when you cannot see it.

Assignment for this week: Set aside time this week to meditate on the Lord's Prayer slowly and thoughtfully (Matt 6:9-13)**,** focusing on the very first words: *"Our Father."* As you meditate on the passage, think of the many ways a human father can provide support, assistance, guidance, role model, and discipline in shaping a child's character. Think through your last month and see if you can recognize any of these things happening in your life as a believer.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...

9.0.1 Eusebius Explains God as Father

Eusebius Audio	*CD02-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains God as Father

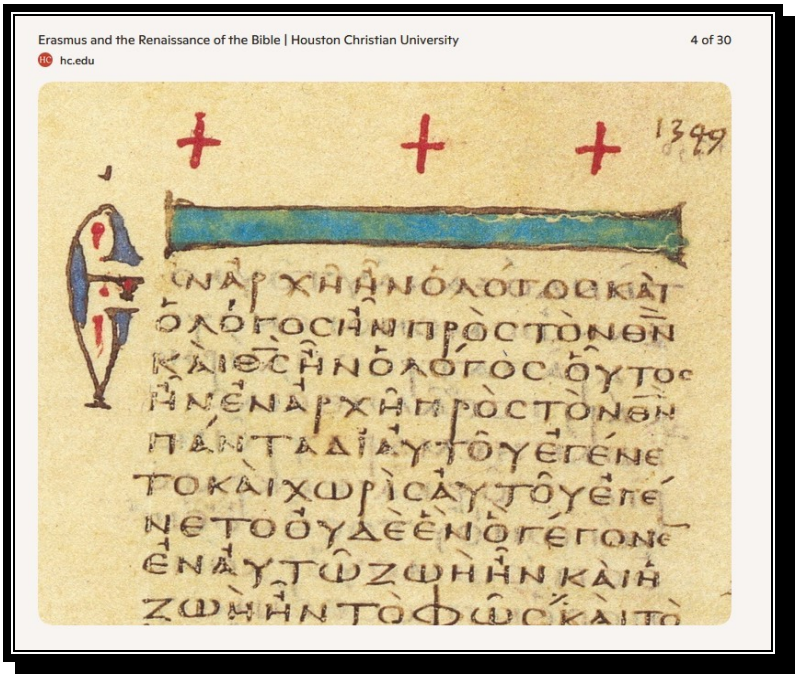


In our worship services we often recite together the Lord's Prayer. It begins with the affirmation of "Our Father."

But do you realize that of all the religions in the world, Christianity is unique in teaching of a God who is, at the same time, both the Creator of all and the One who adopts us through His Son and makes us His children. So we can call him "Abba Father." That expression is like calling him "Daddy."

As you meditate this week on the Lord's Prayer, do not rush past these opening words. They declare a truth unknown to the nations: the God who is **transcendent** above all things is also the **immanent** God who invites us to draw near as His beloved children. Such grace should fill our hearts with both reverence and joy.

... Return to Chapter 2 Index ...



John 1:1 in Codex Vaticanus, hand-copied in the early 4th century

Recommended Reading

Understanding the doctrine of God benefits from resources written at different levels. The following lists provide **accessible books for younger readers** and **scholarly works for deeper study**, each with full bibliographic references.

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Erickson, Millard J.** ***Introducing Christian Doctrine.*** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013. A simplified version of Erickson's major theology, written clearly enough for motivated teens and adult beginners.
- **Lewis, C. S.** ***Mere Christianity.*** New York: HarperOne, 2001. Classic, conversational, and deeply insightful; excellent for forming a basic understanding of God's nature and moral law.
- **Packer, J. I.** ***Knowing God.*** Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993. Warm, devotional, and accessible; ideal for helping younger readers grasp God's character.
- **Sproul, R. C.** ***The Holiness of God.*** Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1998. Clear, gripping, and unforgettable—especially strong on God's holiness and majesty.
- **Tozer, A. W.** ***The Knowledge of the Holy.*** New York: HarperCollins, 1978. Short chapters, vivid language, and a powerful introduction to God's attributes.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Bavinck, Herman.** ***Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 2: God and Creation.*** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. A monumental, rigorous treatment of the doctrine of God from a Reformed perspective.
- **Berkhof, Louis.** ***Systematic Theology.*** Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. A classic, concise, and highly structured presentation of God's being and attributes.
- **Frame, John M.** ***The Doctrine of God.*** Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002. Philosophically rich, biblically grounded, and exceptionally clear.
- **Muller, Richard A.** ***Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 3: The Divine Essence and Attributes.*** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. The definitive historical-theological study of classical theism in the Reformed tradition.
- **Sanders, Fred.** ***The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything.*** Wheaton: Crossway, 2010. A modern, scholarly yet readable exploration of Trinitarian theology.
- **Thomas Aquinas.** ***Summa Theologiae*****, Prima Pars.** Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. New York: Benziger Bros., 1947. The foundational medieval treatment of God's existence, nature, and attributes.

Church Fathers

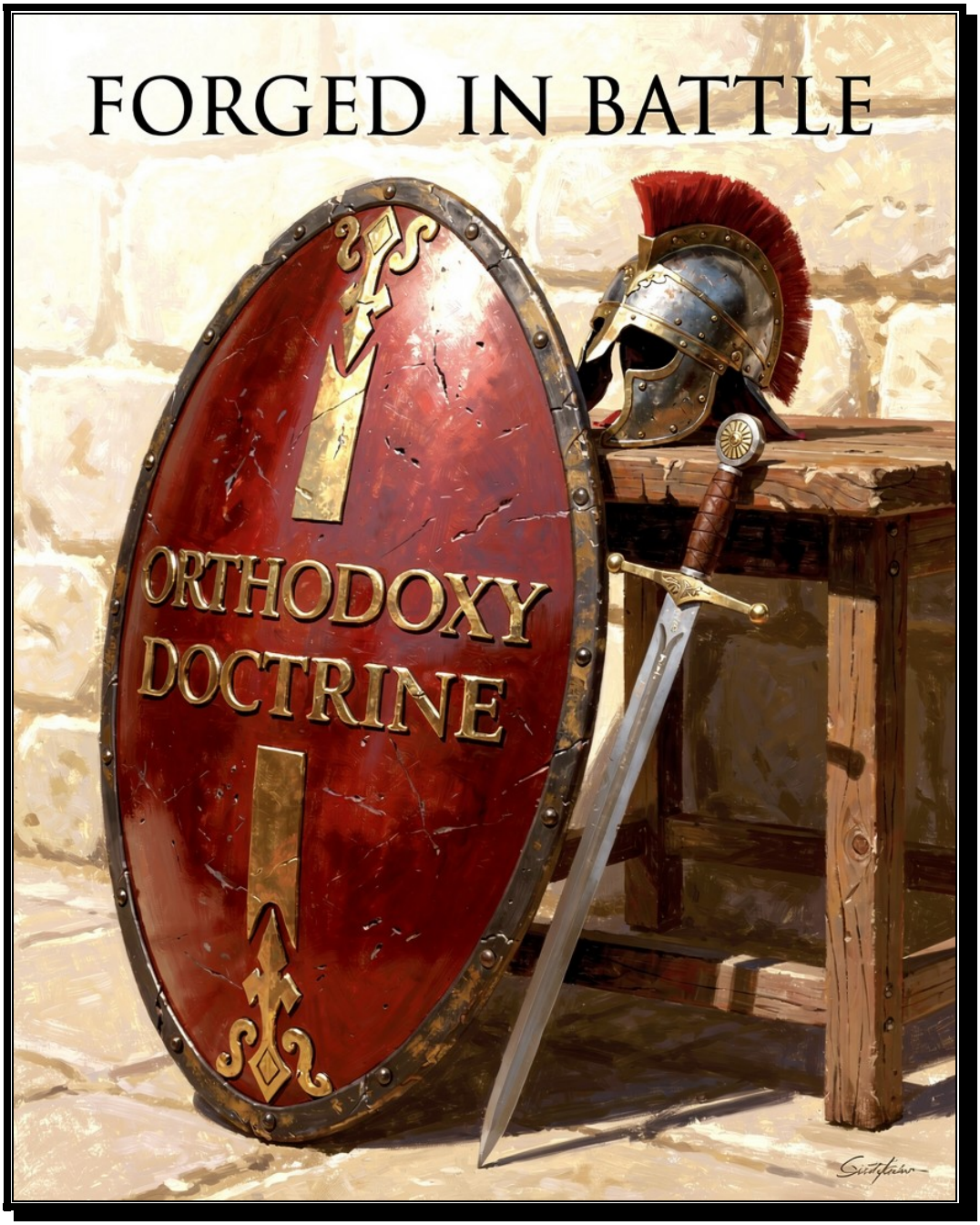
Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.

Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: https://www.ccel.org/fathers

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.



Hagia Sophia in Iznik, ancient Nicaea | Turkish Archaeological News


FORGED IN BATTLE
ORTHODOXY
DOCTRINE

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 3

Full Chapter Audio	*CD03Audio-Full (31 minutes)*

Christology:
The Doctrine of the Second Person of the Godhead

Jesus is either Liar, Lunatic, or Lord

"We believe in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God from God, Light from Light, Life from Life, Son Only-begotten… by whom all things were made; who for our salvation was made flesh, and lived among men, and suffered, and rose again the third day."

Eusebius of Caesarea Bishop and historian, reporting the Nicene confession in his post-council letter after the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea in 325 AD, From his post-council letter explaining why he signed the Nicene Creed

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh,
and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the
only *Son* from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:1, 14 [NASB]**

Return to Table of Contents

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.0.1 **Eusebius** Asks "Who Do You Say He Is?"
2.0 Definition of the Doctrine
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary
3.1 Old Testament Titles
3.2 New Testament Titles
3.3 **Eusebius** Explains Emmanuel
4.0 The Nature of the Doctrine
4.1 The Person of Christ: His Deity and Humanity
4.2 The Eternal Son: Pre-Existence and Incarnation
4.3 The Earthly Ministry of Christ
4.4 The Exalted Christ
5.0 Biblical Development
6.0 The Work of Christ
6.1 **Eusebius** Explains *Tetelestai*
7.0 Consequences of the Doctrine
8.0 Special Issues and Debates
9.0 Conclusion

10.0 Epilog: The Distinction Between the Eternal Word and the Historical Jesus
10.1 Eusebius Says that Many Theologians Agree with This
11.0 Application

Nancy CD03-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction

The doctrine of Christ stands at the center of Christian theology. Every major teaching of the faith—creation, revelation, salvation, the church, and the final restoration—ultimately depends on who Jesus Christ is and what He has done. From the earliest days of the church, believers confessed that the man Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God, the promised Messiah, and the only Savior of the world. The New Testament presents Him as fully divine and fully human, the incarnate Word who reveals the Father, accomplishes redemption, and reigns as Lord over all creation.

Because the identity of Christ is foundational to the gospel, the church has always guarded this doctrine with exceptional care. The first ecumenical council at Nicaea in A.D. 325 affirmed that the Son is "true God from true God," eternally begotten and of the same essence *homoousia* (ὁμοούσια) as the Father. This confession was not a philosophical speculation but a necessary conclusion drawn from Scripture and from the saving work of Christ Himself. Only one who is truly God and truly man can reconcile humanity to God.

Christology, therefore, is not an abstract study but the heart of the Christian faith. It explains why Jesus alone can save, why His life and death are sufficient, and why His resurrection and reign guarantee the hope of believers. A clear understanding of Christ's person and work provides the foundation for all other doctrines and shapes the life, worship, and mission of the church.

> Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood . . .
>
> *Source: Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), Definition of the Faith* — Chalcedon

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

1.0.1 Eusebius Asks "Who Do You Say He Is?

Eusebius Audio	*CD03-Segment-2V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Asks "Who Do You Say He Is?"



In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus posed a question to Peter. It was the most important question Peter would ever answer. Jesus asked "Who do you say that I am?"

For centuries, people, both in the church as well as outside the church have tried to answer that question.

Many got it wrong! The church gathered the best scholars and theologians of their times in the Seven Ecumenical Councils to resolve that question. This chapter shows you what those Councils decided.

But, although the **Councils** reached conclusions for the church, and those conclusions are described in this chapter, the ***most important thing to know*** is that Jesus is still asking that question . . . of **YOU**! Each person must give an answer to that question himself. This chapter will help you do that. Peter gave the right answer. . . . Can you? I hope so.

. . . Return to Chapter 3 Index . . .

2.0 Definition of the Doctrine

Nancy	*CD03-Segment-3*

Christology is the study of the person and work of Jesus Christ—the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, identified by the Hebrew title *Mashiach* (מָשִׁיחַ)**,** meaning "Anointed One." The New Testament renders this title in Greek as *Christos* **(**Χριστός**)**, from which we get the English word *Christ*. In this sense, the doctrine could be described as a study of the Messiah Himself—a kind of **Messiah-ology**—because "Christ" is both a **title** that identifies Jesus as God's anointed King and a **function** that describes His saving mission.

Christology therefore examines the one who is both fully divine and fully human: the eternal Son of God who took on true humanity without ceasing to be God, lived a sinless life, died a substitutionary death, rose bodily from the grave, ascended to the Father, and now reigns as Lord and Savior. It explains (1) who Christ is and (2) what He has done for our salvation.

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 9:6–7; Daniel 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; John 1:1,14;
Matthew 16:16; Romans 1:3–4; Hebrews 1:1–3

> Then, the proconsul urging him, and saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty, reproach Christ;" Polycarp declared, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"
>
> *Martyrdom of Polycarp*

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary

Before you look at the terms, you need to pay special attention to the use of the title **Son of Man,** which forms a direct bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Daniel's vision describes **"one like a son of man"** who comes with the clouds of heaven and receives everlasting dominion (Daniel 7:13–14), presenting a heavenly, exalted figure. Jesus then takes this title as His own in the New Testament, using it more than any other self-designation. By doing so, He identifies Himself both with true humanity and with the divine, eschatological ruler foretold in Daniel. The Old Testament reveals the **identity** of the Son of Man; the New Testament reveals the **person** of the Son of Man—Jesus Christ, fully man and fully God.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament Titles

Scripture first reveals the identity of Christ through the titles given to the promised Redeemer in the Old Testament. Chief among these is *Mashiach* (מָשִׁיחַ), "Anointed One," the royal and priestly figure set apart by God to deliver His people. Israel longed for this coming Messiah, the one who would establish God's kingdom and bring salvation to the nations. The prophets also speak of Him as the **Son of Man** in Daniel 7—a heavenly figure who receives everlasting dominion and whose kingdom will never pass away. These Old Testament titles form the foundation for understanding who Jesus would be when He came: the anointed King, the divine Son, and the ruler whose authority extends over all creation.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

3.2 New Testament Titles

The New Testament takes these expectations and reveals their fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. He is called *Christos* (Χριστός)**,** the Greek translation of *Mashiach*, identifying Him as the long-awaited Messiah. He is called the **Son of God**, a title that speaks not only of honor but of His divine identity and eternal relationship with the Father. Jesus also refers to Himself as the **Son of Man**, affirming His true humanity while claiming the authority of the Daniel like figure who reigns forever. John presents Him as *Logos* (Λόγος), the eternal Word through whom God is revealed and by whom all things were made. Matthew identifies Him as *Emmanouēl* (Ἐμμανουήλ)**, "God with us." (**That is actually a transliteration from the Hebrew into Greek which then is transliterated from Greek into English as **Emmanuel**. So

when you say that name or sing it in a song you are actually speaking English, Greek, and Hebrew all at the same time!) In declaring that title for Jesus, it indicates that God has drawn near in human flesh.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

3.3 Eusebius Explains Emmanuel

Eusebius Audio	*CD03-Segment-4V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains Emmanuel



In chapter two I explained the terms **Transcendence** and **Immanence**. The term **Emmanuel**, found in both the Old and New Testaments, is where these two terms meet!
The transcendent God, who is outside of time and space, becomes immanent in the incarnation when the Second Person of the Godhead actually becomes a human.

In Hebrew, the word **Emmanuel** literally means "with us God." That thought about how the transcendent God could join his creation and become one of us is difficult to explain.

However, a story-teller from the 20th century has done it probably better than any of us with his story about the ***Man and the Birds***. I encourage you to listen to the brief story and contemplate its message -- God with us.

The Man and the Birds -- Click ***HERE*** to listen - **CD03-*Segment-4Va*** *(5 minutes)*

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

Nancy	*CD03-Segment-5*

The New Testament further calls Him *Kyrios* **(**Κύριος**)**, "Lord." Although the word has a very wide range of meanings [see John 12:21], it is the divine title used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament for God Himself traditionally pronounced "Lord" in Hebrew instead of the actual four letter name of YHWH. In English translations of the Old Testament it is customary to use **LORD** in all capital letters to indicate that this is the actual name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3:1-15.

Next is the word *Sōtēr* (Σωτήρ), meaning "Savior," the one who rescues, redeems, and restores. Together, these titles reveal Jesus as both fully God and fully man—the promised Redeemer, the incarnate Lord, and the Savior of the world.

These terms form the biblical foundation for understanding Christ's identity and mission.

Psalm 2:2; Isaiah 61:1; Daniel 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:21–23;
John 1:1,14; Matthew 16:16; Titus 2:13

> For concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and artifices of speech.
>
> — **Cyril of Jerusalem**

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

4.0 The Nature of the Doctrine

Christology begins with the church's confession that Jesus Christ is one person with a unique identity and mission revealed across Scripture. The Bible presents Him as the eternal Son who became truly human, lived in perfect obedience, offered Himself in a saving death, rose in triumph, and now reigns in glory. Each of these truths forms a distinct facet of His person and work, and together they show why the church **must** affirm both His full deity and His full humanity. The following sections explore these core doctrines in order: **His person**, **His eternal pre-existence and incarnation**, **His earthly ministry**, and **His exaltation**.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

4.1. The Person of Christ: His Deity and Humanity

Christology begins with the confession that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man. Scripture presents Him as truly divine, sharing the very nature of the Father, and truly human, taking on our nature without sin. The church later summarized this mystery in the doctrine of the **Hypostatic Union**:[11] two complete natures, divine and human, united in one person without confusion, change, division, or separation. This union does not diminish either nature; instead, it reveals the fullness of God's saving purpose. Christ's deity ensures that His work has infinite worth, and His humanity ensures that He stands as our true representative. Together, these truths form the foundation of all Christian teaching about who Jesus is.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

4.2 The Eternal Son: Pre-Existence and Incarnation

Before He took on flesh, the Son existed eternally with the Father. Christology therefore affirms the **pre-existence** of the Son, who is not a created being but the eternal Word through whom all things were made. In the fullness of time, this eternal Son entered human history through the **Incarnation**—the

[11] See the description of the **Fourth Ecumenical Council** at Chalcedon in AD 451 in the appendix to this book for a more complete explanation of the *Hypostatic Union* doctrine.

moment when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The incarnation is not the beginning of the Son but the beginning of ***His human life***.[12] In Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal Son took on a true human nature, embracing the limitations of humanity while remaining fully divine. This act of divine condescension is the heart of the gospel: God with us, God for us, God in human flesh.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

4.3 The Earthly Ministry of Christ: Sinlessness and Redemptive Death

During His earthly life, Jesus lived in perfect obedience to the Father, fulfilling the law without fault. His **sinlessness** was not merely moral perfection but the necessary qualification for His saving work. As the spotless Lamb of God, He offered Himself in a **substitutionary death on the cross** that satisfies divine justice and reconciles sinners to God. On the cross, Christ bore the penalty of sin, standing in the place of His people and accomplishing what no human effort could achieve. His death is the center of redemptive history—the moment when God's justice and mercy meet in perfect harmony.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

4.4 The Exalted Christ: Resurrection, Ascension, Present Ministry, and Return

Christ's saving work did not end at the cross. He rose bodily from the grave in the **Resurrection**, demonstrating victory over death and inaugurating the new creation. He then ascended to the Father's right hand in the **Ascension**, where He reigns in glory. From this exalted position, Christ carries out His **present ministry** as intercessor, advocate, and head of the church, sustaining His people and advancing His kingdom. Christology also looks forward to His **Second Coming**,[13] when He will return in glory to judge the living and the dead, restore all things, and bring His redemptive work to its consummation. The exalted Christ is both the Lord who reigns now and the King who will come again.

Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:4–6; Daniel 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; John 1:1,14;
Philippians 2:5–11; Hebrews 4:15; Acts 1:9–11; I John 2:1

> "Very God of very God… being of one substance with the Father."
>
> — *Nicene Creed (AD 325)* — **Nicene Creed**

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

[12] See the **Epilog** at the end of this chapter for an expansion on this concept.
[13] See the chapter on **Eschatology** for a discussion of the "*parousia*" of Christ and the "rapture" of the Church at the second coming.

5.0 Biblical Development

Christology unfolds progressively across the storyline of Scripture as God reveals the identity and mission of His Son.

In the **Old Testament**, the coming Redeemer is promised through **types and prophecies**—the seed who will crush the serpent, the servant who suffers for His people, the king who reigns in righteousness, and the one who bears the sins of many.

The **Gospels** present the fulfillment of these hopes in the life, teaching, miracles, and identity claims of Jesus, revealing Him as the incarnate Son who brings God's kingdom near.

In **Acts**, the exalted Christ continues His work by pouring out the Spirit and empowering the church's witness to the ends of the earth.

The **Epistles** provide the theological explanation of His person and work, unfolding doctrines such as **justification**, **union with Christ**, and **reconciliation**.

Finally, **Revelation** portrays the risen Lord as the **Lamb who reigns** and the One who will return in glory to judge, restore, and make all things new.

Together, these stages reveal Christ in increasing clarity, from promise to fulfillment, from incarnation to exaltation, from the cross to the consummation of all things. Christ is the center of the entire biblical story.

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 53:4–6; Daniel 7:13–14; Zechariah 9:9;
John 1:14; Acts 2:32–33; Romans 5:1–2; Revelation 5:9–10

> Now the true soldiers of Christ must always be prepared to do battle for the truth, and must never, so far as lies with them, allow false convictions to creep in.
>
> Tertullian

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

6.0 The Work of Christ

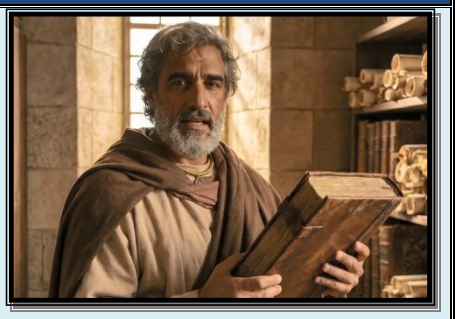
Before we begin this section, listen to Eusebius explain one of the most important Biblical terms that has absolute ***personal*** significance to you if you are a believer in Jesus.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

6.1 Eusebius Explains Tetelestai

Eusebius Audio	*CD03-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains Tetelelstai



This next section of the chapter presents the **finished** work of Christ. This is the ***most important part of this chapter***!

Jesus' work is **finished**. When Jesus died on the Cross, his last word, according to the Apostle John, was the Greek word *tetelestai* **(τετέλεσται)** which means It is Finished. The structure of this word in the Greek is what is called the "perfect tense." The way that is literally translated is . . . "it now stands complete because the act was finished and the results of that act remaining finished to the present day." In other words, Jesus finished it then and what he did still remains finished today.

The term was used in Jesus day to mark a debt "paid in full." It was like taking the mortgage on your house when you make the last payment and have it stamped "Paid in Full."

What Jesus said on the cross just before he died was "**Your** debt is now paid in full." That is the work of Christ . . . paying your debt in full for you.

. . . Return to Chapter 3 Index . . .

Nancy	*CD03-Segment-7*

Christ's saving work is a single, unified mission expressed through several inseparable dimensions. In His **obedience**, Jesus lived a perfect life that fulfilled the law on behalf of His people. Through His **atonement**, He offered Himself as a substitutionary, propitiatory, redemptive, and reconciling sacrifice, bearing the penalty of sin and satisfying the justice of God. His **resurrection** stands as the decisive victory over sin and death, inaugurating the new creation. In the **ascension**, Christ was enthroned at the Father's right hand as Lord and King, exercising sovereign authority over all things. From that exalted position, He carries out His ongoing **intercession** as our great High Priest, representing His people before the Father and sustaining them by His grace. Christ's work will reach its consummation at His **return**, when He will renew creation, judge the nations, and bring His redemptive purpose to its final and glorious completion.

Isaiah 53:4–6; Isaiah 53:10–12; Psalm 110:1; Daniel 7:13–14;
Romans 5:18–19; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 19:11–16

> "One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten… in two natures, without confusion, change, division, or separation."
>
> — *Council of Chalcedon (AD 451)* — Chalcedon

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

7.0 Consequences of the Doctrine

A right understanding of Christ produces clarity, stability, and confidence in the Christian life. It affirms that **salvation rests on a real Savior**—one who is both fully God and fully man—so that His work is sufficient and His mediation effective. It anchors the **gospel** in the finished work of Christ, ***not in human effort or religious performance***.

It shapes **Christian ethics** by rooting obedience in **union with Christ**, the believer's new identity and power for holy living. It centers **worship** on the person of Christ, directing praise to the One who reveals the Father and redeems His people. And it grounds **hope** in His resurrection and promised return, assuring believers that the future is secure because the risen Lord reigns and will make all things new.

Isaiah 45:22; Jeremiah 23:5–6; Isaiah 53:11; Daniel 7:13–14;
John 14:6; Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:1–4; 1 Peter 1:3–5

> The holy and inspired Scriptures are fully sufficient for the proclamation of the truth**.**
>
> Athanasius, *Against the Heathen, §1.3*

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

8.0 Special Issues and Debates

Orthodox Christian doctrine did not emerge as a pre-assembled system but as the **battle-shaped result** of centuries of conflict in which false teachings were identified, examined, and rejected. What we now call orthodoxy is the ***faith that remained*** after the church tested every claim against Scripture and cast aside the errors.

Across the early centuries, this refining process produced a series of doctrinal "battles" that clarified the church's confession of Christ. Challenges such as **Arianism**, which denied His full deity, and **Docetism**, which denied His true humanity, forced the church to articulate the biblical portrait of the incarnate Son. Later controversies like **Nestorianism**, which divided Christ's person, and **Eutychianism**, which confused His natures, culminated in the **Council of Chalcedon** (AD 451), affirming one person in two natures. Additional debates over **atonement theories**, the **Historical Jesus** movement, the **exclusivity of Christ** as the only Savior, and the believer's **union with Christ** further shaped the church's understanding. The fuller historical and theological details of these controversies are explored in chapter 11, where the battle-forged nature of Christian orthodoxy is examined in more depth.

Deuteronomy 13:1–4; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 53:3–5; Daniel 7:13–14;
John 1:1,14; Colossians 2:9; 1 John 4:1–3; Jude 3–4

> What He was, He laid aside; what He was not, He assumed. He takes upon Himself the poverty of my flesh so that I may receive the riches of His divinity.
>
> Gregory of Nazianzus

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

9.0 Conclusion

Christology stands at the center of Christian theology. Every doctrine flows toward Christ or from Christ. To know Him is to know God; to trust Him is to receive salvation; to follow Him is to walk in the life of the Spirit. The church confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord — fully God, fully man, the Savior of the world.

> But truly God Himself, who is almighty, the Creator of all things, and invisible, has sent from heaven, and placed among men, [Him who is] the truth, and the holy and incomprehensible Word, and has firmly established Him in their hearts.
>
> The Epistle to Diognetus 7.2

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

10.0 Epilog: The Distinction Between the Eternal Word and the Historical Jesus

In discussions of Christology, it is common to hear the claim that "Jesus appears throughout the Old Testament." While this language is often well-intentioned, it is theologically imprecise. Scripture does not present "Jesus" as existing prior to the incarnation. The name *Jesus* refers specifically to the incarnate God-Man, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, born in Bethlehem, and living a true human life in history. As with every human being, His human nature had a definite beginning at conception. The person who bears the name *Jesus* is the eternal Son united with a true human nature in a true ***hypostatic union***; therefore, the human aspect of His person cannot be projected backward into the Old Testament.

What the Old Testament ***does*** reveal is the eternal **Word** the ***logos*** **(**λόγος) — the second Person of the Trinity—active in creation, revelation, covenant, and redemption. The Word appears as the divine agent who speaks, commands, delivers, and reveals the Father. The New Testament identifies this eternal **Word** with the one who "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Thus, the Son is eternally existent with the Father, but **Jesus**, as the incarnate God-Man, is not. The incarnation marks the ***beginning*** of His ***human life***, not the beginning of His divine person.

Maintaining this distinction safeguards two essential truths. **First**, it preserves the full reality of the incarnation: the eternal **Word** truly became man, taking on a human nature that *did not previously exist*. **Second**, it protects the integrity of the Old Testament by recognizing that its divine manifestations and

appearances reveal the pre-incarnate Word, ***not the historical Jesus***. The continuity lies in the identity of the divine Person, not in the presence of the human nature.

For this reason, it is more accurate to say that the **Word** or the **Son** is present throughout the Old Testament, while **Jesus** appears, for the ***first time*** in history, at the incarnation. This distinction honors both the eternal deity of the Son and the true humanity of Jesus, the one Mediator who entered time and space for our salvation.

This distinction between the eternal Word and the incarnate Jesus is not a recent proposal but one recognized throughout the history of Christian theology. From the earliest centuries, the church fathers carefully reserved the name ***Jesus*** for the incarnate life of the Son, while identifying His eternal pre-existence with the ***Logos***, the **Word**, or the **Only-Begotten**. This pattern continues through the great theologians of the church, who consistently affirm that the divine person of the Son is eternal, while His human nature—and therefore the ***historical identity*** "Jesus"—begins at the incarnation.

This distinction between the pre-incarnate appearance of the Son, and the historical God-Man Jesus, has deep roots in the tradition, running from the early church fathers through modern theologians. Not all of them use identical terminology as stated in this Epilog, but they do reflect the concept using their own terminology and expressions.

So the ***Word*** is eternal; ***Jesus***, the God-Man, had a beginning and first appeared at the conception in Mary's womb.

Psalm 33:6; Proverbs 8:22–31; Isaiah 48:16; Daniel 7:13–14;
John 1:1–3,14; Philippians 2:5–7; Hebrews 1:1–3; I John 1:1-5; 1 John 4:2

> "In Jesus Christ the eternal Word of God became a man, without ceasing to be the eternal Word."
>
> Karl Barth — *Church Dogmatics* I/2, p. 151

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

10.1 Eusebius Says that Many Theologians Agree with This

Eusebius Audio	CD03-Segment-8V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Says that Many Theologians Agree with This



The **Epilog** that Paul . . . not the Apostle but Paul my co-author of this book . . . has included is not an aberration of doctrine. Competent theologians through the centuries have made similar statements about the fact that Jesus, the God-Man, had a beginning. Before the incarnation, God the Son did not have a human body with the name of Jesus. This same Jesus is not seen in the Old Testament, although the Word, the Logos, the Son, is clearly seen there.

As early as the middle of the second century, such scholars as Irenaeus of Lyons, and the great theologian Gregory of Nazianzus, as well as the well known St. Augustine, had made similar statements.

The implications of the idea expressed in this Epilog on how you understand the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is ***huge***! So you may want to stop before you proceed to the next chapter and read that **Epilog** again carefully and meditate on it for a moment.

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

Nancy	CD03-Segment-9

11.0 Application

The doctrine of Christ is not just something to study—it is the center of the Christian life. Everything God has done for us comes through His Son, and everything we need for life and godliness is found in Him. Knowing who Jesus is—fully God, fully man, our Savior and Lord—gives us confidence to trust Him, courage to follow Him, and hope to endure whatever comes. As you grow in your understanding of Christ, let it shape your worship, steady your faith, and remind you daily that your life is held together by the One who loved you enough to take on flesh, die in your place, and rise again in victory.

Assignment for this week: Set aside time this week to **read one Gospel story about Jesus** and intentionally ask, *"What does this show me about who Christ is, and how should I follow Him today?"* Write down one concrete step of obedience that flows from what you see—whether it is trusting Him more deeply, imitating His compassion, or sharing the Gospel of Jesus with someone who does not attend your church. This simple practice helps you move from studying Christ to **walking with Christ**, which is the true goal of Christology. Here are a few stories to consider.

Matthew 16:24–28; Matthew 5:13–20; Luke 6:27–38**;** John 13:31–35

... Return to Chapter 3 Index ...

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Lee Strobel,** ***The Case for Christ*** — A journalistic investigation into the historical reliability of Jesus and the New Testament.
- **Josh McDowell,** ***More Than a Carpenter*** — A concise, accessible defense of Jesus' identity and the trustworthiness of Scripture.
- **C. S. Lewis,** ***Mere Christianity*** — A classic, lay-friendly explanation of the core beliefs of the Christian faith.
- **J. I. Packer,** ***Knowing God*** — A devotional yet doctrinal exploration of the character and nature of God.
- **John Stott,** ***Basic Christianity*** — A clear introduction to the person of Christ and the essentials of Christian belief.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Athanasius,** ***On the Incarnation*** — A foundational patristic work explaining the necessity and meaning of the Incarnation.
- **Donald Macleod,** ***The Person of Christ*** — A rigorous theological study of Christ's person, natures, and mediatorial work.
- **Gerald O'Collins,** ***Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study*** — A comprehensive academic survey of Christology across Scripture and church history.
- **Richard Bauckham,** ***Jesus and the God of Israel*** — A scholarly defense of Jesus' inclusion in the divine identity of Israel's God.
- **N. T. Wright,** ***The Resurrection of the Son of God*** — A detailed historical and theological analysis of the resurrection accounts.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of Christian writings from the first 1,500 years of church history. This includes the **Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers** sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. **www.ccel.org/fathers**

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) — For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 4

Full Chapter Audio | ***CD04Audio-Full (37 minutes)***

Pneumatology:
The Doctrine of the Third Person of the Godhead

He is like a sunbeam whose grace is present

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified."

— Nicene Creed (AD 381)

**But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,
He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal
bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
Romans 8:11 [NASB]**

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** Introduces the Holy Spirit
2.0 Definition of the Doctrine
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary
3.1 Old Testament Terms
3.2 New Testament Terms
4.0 The Nature of the Doctrine
4.1 The Personhood of the Spirit
4.2 The Deity of the Spirit
4.3 The Procession of the Spirit
4.4 **Eusebius** Discusses the Filioque Controversy
5.0 Biblical Development
6.0 The Work of the Holy Spirit
7.0 Consequences of the Doctrine
8.0 Spiritual Gifts
8.1 Gifted Persons (Ephesians 4:7-13)
8.2 **Eusebius** Speaks to Spiritual Gifts
8.3 Ministry Gifts to Individual Believers
9.0 Special Issues and Debates
10.0 Conclusion
11.0 Application
12.0 Epilog by the Author
12.1 **Eusebius** Encourages You To Find Your Spiritual Gift
13.0 The Revised Nicene Creed

Nancy | *CD04-Segment-1*

1.0 Introduction

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit stands alongside Christology and Theology Proper as one of the central pillars of Christian faith. Scripture presents the Spirit not as an impersonal force or abstract power, but as the **third Person of the Godhead**—fully divine, eternally existing, and actively involved in every aspect of God's work in creation, redemption, and the life of the church.

From the opening verses of Genesis, where the Spirit hovers over the waters in the first day of creation, to the final invitation of Revelation, where the Spirit and the Bride say "Come," the Bible reveals the Spirit as the divine presence who gives life, empowers God's people, reveals truth, and unites believers to Christ. The early church confessed the Spirit as "Lord and Giver of Life," recognizing that without the Spirit there is no new birth, no sanctification, no spiritual understanding, and no church.

Pneumatology, therefore, is not an optional or secondary doctrine. It is the study of the divine Person who **applies** the work of Christ, **indwells** believers, **forms** the church, and brings God's **redemptive plan** to completion.

Genesis 1:2, Numbers 11:25, Psalm 104:30, Ezekiel 36:27;
John 14:26, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Revelation 22:17

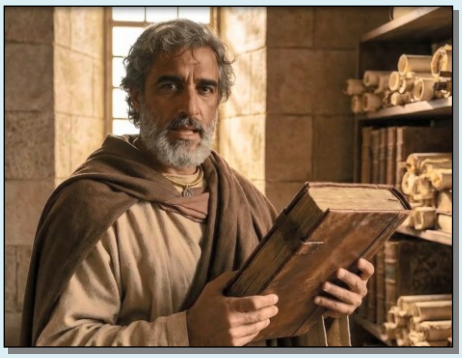
> . . . the Lord thus has redeemed us through His own blood, giving His soul for our souls, and His flesh for our flesh, and has also poured out the Spirit of the Father for the union and communion of God and man, imparting indeed God to men by means of the Spirit. . .
>
> — Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius Introduces the Holy Spirit

Eusebius Audio	*CD03-Segment-2V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Introduces the Holy Spirit



When our Lord ascended to the Father after His resurrection, He did not leave His people without strength or direction. He promised the Holy Spirit, and in the days that followed, the Spirit came and brought the power and guidance for the new church.

The Spirit enlightened the church concerning the Son and the Father, but the church did not immediately grasp the full meaning of the Spirit's person and work. Understanding grew slowly. In time, we saw that He was the One who chose leaders, who distributed gifts, and who equipped the saints to build up the Body of Christ."

You will read in this chapter how the church learned to recognize His voice, how He granted gifts for ministry, and how those gifts were meant not for personal honor but for the strengthening of the whole fellowship. You will also see how misunderstandings about the Spirit's work brought controversies—some of which troubled the church in my own day and continue even into your time.

Unity has always been essential for the progress of Christ's people. As you study this chapter, consider how the Spirit has gifted you, and how your faithfulness may contribute to the unity and growth of the church. For the same Spirit who guided us in the early centuries is the One who guides you now.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

Nancy	*CD04-Segment-3*

2.0 Definition of the Doctrine

Pneumatology is the study of the **Person and work of the Holy Spirit**—the third Person of the Trinity, eternally proceeding from the Father (and, in Western theology, from the Father and the Son - more on this below), equal in deity, glory, and majesty with the Father and the Son.
The doctrine affirms that the Holy Spirit is a **divine Person**, not an impersonal force or abstract power, but One who speaks, wills, guides, and acts with full personal agency. He is **fully God**, sharing the same essence as the Father and the Son, worthy of the same worship, honor, and glory. The Spirit is **eternal and uncreated**, present and active throughout the entire storyline of Scripture, from creation to consummation. He is the divine presence who works in **creation, revelation, regeneration, sanctification, and the ongoing life of the church**, applying the work of Christ, empowering God's people, and bringing the purposes of the Father to completion. Pneumatology explains who the Spirit is and how He works in the world and in the believer.

Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28–29;
John 14:16–17; John 16:13; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9–11

> For as the soul in man is not seen, being invisible to men, but is perceived through the motion of the body, so God cannot indeed be seen by human eyes, but is beheld and perceived through His providence and works.
>
> — Theophilus, Theophilus to Autolycus — Book I , Chapter V

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary

Because the biblical words for "spirit" carry such a wide range of meaning, Scripture frequently adds qualifiers to make clear when it is speaking of **the** divine Spirit of God rather than a human spirit, an angelic spirit, or a natural phenomenon. As you review the next two sections, note how frequently this is done.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament Terms

The Old Testament introduces the Spirit as *ruach* **(**רוּחַ**)**[14], a word meaning "breath," "wind," or "spirit," and it uses this term to describe the Spirit's life-giving and sustaining presence throughout God's work. *Ruach* is the divine breath that brings creation to life, the empowering presence who comes upon leaders, prophets, and kings to equip them for God's purposes, and the renewing power promised in the new covenant, where God's Spirit would cleanse, restore, and give His people new hearts, as vividly portrayed in Ezekiel 36–37. Through this rich vocabulary, the Old Testament presents the Spirit as the active, personal, life-giving presence of God among His people.

The Spirit is called **Spirit of God** (*rūaḥ ʾĕlōhīm* - רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים**),** emphasizing His divine power and presence, and **Spirit of the LORD** (*rūaḥ YHWH* - רוּחַ יהוה**),** highlighting His covenantal relationship with Israel. The prophets speak of Him as **His Holy Spirit** (*rūaḥ qodshō* - רוּחַ קָדְשׁוֹ), underscoring His purity and sanctifying work, and as **Good Spirit** (*rūaḥ ṭōvāh* - רוּחַ טוֹבָה**),** pointing to His guidance and benevolence. Isaiah further describes Him through a series of titles **Spirit of Wisdom** (*rūaḥ ḥokmāh* -

[14] רוּחַ **is grammatically a feminine noun.** Hebrew, however, has only **two grammatical genders**—masculine and feminine—so where Greek can classify the spirit (*pneuma*, **πνεῦμα**) **as neuter**, Hebrew has no neuter gender. It is essential to remember that in linguistics, **grammatical gender is a structural feature of the language, not a statement about biological sex**. Many Hebrew and Greek nouns have a grammatical gender that does not correspond to the physical sex of the person or thing they refer to. For example, the feminine noun *nephesh* (נֶפֶשׁ- person, soul) frequently refers to **men**, and the masculine noun *ʿeved* (עֶבֶד - servant) can refer to a **female servant**. Grammatical gender in Hebrew is simply a system of agreement—matching verbs, adjectives, and pronouns—not a comment on the biological nature of the referent. The classic example in Biblical Greek is the word for child (*paidion*, **παιδίον**) **which is grammatically neuter but clearly children are either masculine or feminine, not neuter (although some parents might wish it at times!).**

חָכְמָה רוּחַ), **Spirit of Understanding** (*rūaḥ bīnāh* - בִּינָה רוּחַ), **Spirit of counsel** (*rūaḥ ʿētsāh* - עֵצָה רוּחַ), **Spirit of might** (*rūaḥ gᵉvūrāh* - גְּבוּרָה רוּחַ), **Spirit of knowledge** (*rūaḥ daʿat* - דַּעַת רוּחַ) and **Spirit of the fear of the LORD** (*rūaḥ yirʾat YHWH* - יְהוָה יִרְאַת רוּחַ)—revealing the Spirit as the source of wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, and reverent awe. Together, these expressions show the Spirit as the personal, holy, life-giving presence of God who empowers, guides, renews, and sanctifies His people throughout the Old Testament.

The Spirit is portrayed as the divine power who gives life, inspires prophecy, and brings renewal.

Genesis 1:2; Numbers 11:25; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 36:27;
John 3:5–8; John 14:26; Acts 2:17; 2 Peter 1:21

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

3.2 New Testament Terms

The New Testament uses the Greek term *pneuma* (πνεῦμα - Spirit), and applies it to the divine Person who carries forward the saving work of Christ in the life of the believer and the church. He is identified as *to pneuma to hagion* (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον - the Holy Spirit), the sanctifying presence of God who indwells and transforms His people. He is called *to pneuma tou Theou* (τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ - the Spirit of God), emphasizing His full deity and eternal relationship with the Father, and *to pneuma Christou* (τὸ πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ - the Spirit of Christ), highlighting His role in applying the work of the Son and uniting believers to Him. Jesus refers to Him as *ho Paraklētos* (ὁ παράκλητος - Comforter, Advocate, Helper), the One who comes alongside God's people to teach, guide, strengthen, and intercede. The New Testament also names Him *to pneuma tēs alētheias* (**τὸ** πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας - the Spirit of Truth), who leads believers into all truth, and *pneuma huiothesias* (πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας - the Spirit of Adoption), who assures them of their status as God's children. Together, these titles reveal the Spirit as the divine, personal, life-giving presence of God who empowers, teaches, comforts, and secures His people in Christ.

These titles reveal the Spirit as divine, personal, relational, and active in applying salvation.

Isaiah 63:10–11; Joel 2:28–29; Ezekiel 36:27; Micah 3:8;
John 14:16–17; John 16:13; Romans 8:14–16; Galatians 4:6

> "This shows that the established authority of Scripture must outweigh every other; for it derives new confirmation from the progress of events which happen, as Scripture proves, in fulfillment of the predictions made so long before their occurrence"
>
> — Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean, Book 13, Chapter 5*

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

4.0 The Nature of the Doctrine

The First Council of Constantinople, held in A.D. 381, was convened to address growing confusion and controversy surrounding the person and work of the Holy Spirit. In the decades following the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325), the church faced a new challenge from the **Pneumatomachians**, a group that denied the Spirit's full deity and claimed He was a created being. Their teaching threatened the unity of the church's confession and undermined the doctrine of the Trinity. In response, Emperor Theodosius the First called the bishops of the churches to gather in Constantinople to settle the matter and reaffirm orthodox faith.

The council concluded decisively that the Holy Spirit is **fully divine**, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. It expanded the Nicene Creed to include a fuller statement on the Spirit, declaring Him to be "the Lord and giver of life," the One who proceeds from the Father, and who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son. This affirmation established the church's enduring confession of the Spirit's deity and clarified His essential role in the life of the church. The council's work provides the doctrinal foundation for the discussions that follow in these segments.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

4.1 The Personhood of the Spirit

The Spirit possesses all the attributes of personhood, exercising **intellect** as He teaches, instructs, and reveals the things of God, and expressing **will** as He distributes spiritual gifts according to His own sovereign purpose. He also displays **emotion**, for Scripture teaches that He can be grieved by the sin and resistance of God's people. Far from being an impersonal force, the Spirit **speaks, guides, intercedes, and acts with divine authority**, carrying out His work with intentionality, wisdom, and personal agency.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

4.2 The Deity of the Spirit

Scripture attributes to the Spirit every quality that belongs to true deity. He possesses **eternality**, existing without beginning or end; **omnipresence**, active in every place and among all God's people; **omniscience**, knowing the deep things of God; **creative power**, bringing life, order, and renewal; and **divine authority**, acting with the full prerogatives of God Himself. For this reason, the Spirit is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, receiving the same honor, reverence, and praise due to the one true God.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

4.3 The Procession of the Spirit

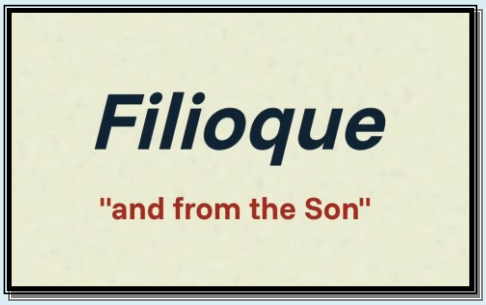
The word *Filioque* is a Latin term which means "and from the son." It is a very important but seldom understood term in theology. Eusebius will explain how this term had a major impact on the church in the year 1054 A.D.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

4.4 Eusebius Discusses the *Filioque* Controversy

Eusebius Audio	*CD04-Segment-4V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses the *Filioque* Controversy



The controversy over the *Filioque* arose long after my lifetime, yet its effects upon the church were profound. In the great Council of Constantinople in 381 AD, the church confessed that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. Many years later, in the West, the church in Rome—without calling another Ecumenical Council—added the phrase *"and the Son"* (*filioque*) to the creed. The word *Filioque* is a Latin term which means "and from the son." It is a very important but seldom understood term in theology. This change created a growing disagreement between the Eastern and Western churches.

In time, the tension became so great that the bishop of Rome excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Patriarch, in turn, excommunicated the Pope. It was a sorrowful moment in the history of Christ's people, and it contributed to the division between the Eastern and Western churches in A.D. 1054—a division that remains to this day.

In your century, I understand there is renewed effort to bring the Eastern and Western churches—now including the Protestant churches as well — into closer fellowship, seeking to resolve this ancient dispute. Such reconciliation would be a blessing, for the unity of Christ's church is strengthened when all confess together the faith handed down in the Nicene Creed.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

Nancy	*CD04-Segment-5*

The Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father (John 15:26). Western[15] theology adds "and the Son" (the *Filioque*), emphasizing the unity of the Godhead and the Spirit's role in applying Christ's work. This difference — the Holy Spirit "proceeding from the Father" versus "proceeding from the Father and the Son" — became one of the central catalysts that contributed to the split between the Eastern church (Constantinople) and the Western church (Rome) in the year A.D. 1054. It is known as the *Filioque*

[15] The term *Western church* refers to the Latin-speaking churches of Europe and Latin North Africa, centered in Rome and headed by the bishop of Rome, later known as the **Pope**. The term *Eastern church* refers to the Greek-speaking churches of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), Palestine, Egypt, and Syria, organized under several major patriarchates — Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem — with the **Patriarch of Constantinople** recognized as "first among equals" among these Eastern leaders.

Controversy, named after the Latin word *filioque* ("and the Son"), which the Western church added to the Nicene Creed without an ecumenical council.

Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28–29;
John 14:16–17; John 15:26; Acts 5:3–4; Romans 8:9–11

> "For among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life"
>
> — **Augustine**, *On Christian Doctrine, Book 2, Chapter 9, Section 14*

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

5.0 Biblical Development

The Spirit's work unfolds progressively across the storyline of Scripture.

- In the **Old Testament**, He appears as Creator, sustainer, empowerer, and revealer, bringing life, guiding God's people, and equipping leaders for their callings.
- In the **Gospels**, the Spirit conceives Christ, anoints Him at His baptism, and empowers His earthly ministry.
- In **Acts**, the Spirit is poured out at Pentecost, forming and energizing the church for its mission.
- In the **Epistles**, the Spirit regenerates, indwells, sanctifies, gifts, and seals believers, applying the saving work of Christ to their lives.
- And in **Revelation**, the Spirit stands at the end of the biblical story inviting the nations to come to Christ, completing the redemptive arc He has carried forward from the beginning.

The Spirit is the divine presence who brings God's redemptive plan to completion.

Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28–29;
Matthew 1:18; Luke 4:18; Acts 2:1–4; Revelation 22:17

> There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.
>
> — Cyril of Jerusalem**,** *Catechetical Lecture VI, §1*

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

6.0 The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit's work is unified in purpose yet expressed through several key dimensions that together reveal the fullness of His ministry.

Regeneration. The Spirit gives new birth, opening blind eyes, awakening faith, and transforming the heart at its deepest level. Through His life-giving work, sinners are brought from spiritual death to spiritual life, enabled to repent, believe, and begin walking in the newness that only He can create.

Indwelling. The Spirit takes up permanent residence in believers, making them temples of God and assuring them of His nearness. His indwelling presence is the ongoing source of spiritual life, communion with God, and the power to walk in obedience. It is important to note that the New Testament uses the expression "you are the temple of the Holy Spirit" in two ways. The primary usage (1 Cor 3:16–17) refers to the church in the plural — the gathered people of God as the Spirit's dwelling place. The secondary usage (1 Cor 6:19) applies the image to the individual believer in the context of personal holiness. Both are biblical, but the corporate meaning is the primary one.

Sanctification. This is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit by which He produces holiness in the believer, forming the character of Christ through continual renewal. He convicts of sin, cultivates spiritual fruit, and strengthens believers to put off the old self and grow in righteousness. In this way, sanctification is the Spirit's active, transforming presence in the life of every Christian.

Across Christian traditions, sanctification is understood in two main ways. Many confessions describe sanctification as a lifelong process that begins at conversion and continues until its completion in final glorification at the bodily resurrection when Christ returns. Other confessions affirm this ongoing process but also teach a crisis moment within it—often called a **"second blessing," "entire sanctification,"** or **"Christian perfection"**—in which the believer experiences a deeper work of grace enabling a more consistent life of holiness in this present age.

Yet all Christian traditions agree on the essential point: sanctification—whether understood as a continuous process, a crisis event, or both[16]—is the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. He alone renews the heart, empowers obedience, and conforms God's people to the image of Christ.

Illumination. The Spirit enables believers to understand Scripture, opening their minds to grasp its meaning and their hearts to receive its truth. He applies the Word with clarity and conviction, guiding believers into wisdom and obedience.

Empowering. The Spirit equips believers for service, witness, and spiritual endurance. He grants boldness in proclamation, strength in trials, and the divine enablement needed to fulfill the mission Christ has entrusted to His people.

[16] A **third** alternative, considered a fair interpretation of Scripture, is that the **experience of a special infilling of the Holy Spirit for empowerment can occur multiple times** and is not limited to a single event. As believers encounter crucial moments in their spiritual lives, the Holy Spirit may provide a **fresh anointing** that imparts strength, guidance, boldness, or power to face a crisis or accomplish a specific mission. Scripture records several instances where individuals are **filled with the Spirit repeatedly**, demonstrating that such empowerment is **episodic and purpose-driven**, not necessarily a once-for-all experience. Some examples can be seen in the following passages: Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31; 9:17; 13:9; Judges 14:6; 14:19; 15:14; I Samuel 10:10; 11:6; Exodus 31:3; Numbers 11:25-26.

Gifting. The Spirit distributes spiritual gifts (see section 8 below) according to His sovereign will, providing the church with the diverse abilities needed for its growth and health. Through these gifts, He builds up the body of Christ and advances its ministry.

Assurance. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, giving believers confidence in their salvation and security in the Father's love. His inner testimony anchors the heart in the promises of the gospel.

Mission. The Spirit empowers the church to proclaim Christ to the nations, directing its witness and sustaining its labor. He sends, guides, and strengthens God's people as they carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Ezekiel 36:26–27; Joel 2:28–29; Isaiah 11:2; Psalm 143:10;
John 3:5–6; Romans 8:9–16; Galatians 5:22–23; Acts 1:8

> These three things God requires of all the Baptized: right faith in the heart, truth on the tongue, temperance in the body.
>
> — Gregory of Nazianzus

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

7.0 Consequences of the Doctrine

A right understanding of the Spirit brings deep stability and strength to the Christian life. He gives **confidence in salvation**, assuring believers of their standing in Christ; **power for holy living**, enabling obedience and transformation; and **unity in the church**, binding God's people together in love. He brings **clarity in worship**, directing hearts toward the glory of God; **boldness in mission**, empowering witness to Christ; and **hope in His renewing work**, sustaining believers as He restores what sin has broken. The Spirit is the divine presence who makes the Christian life possible, supplying everything needed for faith, holiness, endurance, and joy.

Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28–29; Psalm 51:11–12;
John 14:16–17; Romans 8:9–16; Galatians 5:22–23; Acts 1:8

> What good does it do me if Christ was born in Bethlehem once if he is not born again in my heart through faith?
>
> — Origen

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

8.0 Spiritual Gifts

The New Testament teaches that the Spirit equips the church through a rich diversity of spiritual gifts, given for the building up of the body and the advancement of Christ's mission. These gifts are described in several key passages: Romans 12:6–8, 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 1 Corinthians 12:27–31, Ephesians 4:7–13, and 1 Peter 4:10–11. Together, these texts present a unified picture of the Spirit distributing gifts according to His sovereign will, enabling every believer to contribute to the life and ministry of the church.

Return to Chapter 4 Index

8.1 Gifted Persons (Ephesians 4:7–13)

In Ephesians 4, Paul emphasizes that Christ gives certain **people** to the church as gifts—leaders whose ministries ***equip the saints***[17] for service and promote unity and maturity. These are sometimes called "office gifts" or "leadership gifts."

Apostles were foundational messengers commissioned directly by Christ, entrusted with establishing the church, bearing authoritative witness to the resurrection, and laying the doctrinal foundation of the New Testament era. After the New Testament era, the Apostle has been considered the "missionary" or "church planter" function.

Prophets served as Spirit-empowered spokesmen who delivered God's message to the church, providing exhortation, correction, and guidance in accordance with revealed truth. In the current church, the Prophet is not someone who predicts the future but one who proclaims from the pulpit God's message of "repent and believe" to the church and to the world. It is said that the Biblical prophet "forth-tells" rather than "fore-tells."

Evangelists were gifted individuals who were able to present the Gospel and bring unbelievers into the faith. In the New Testament, we must distinguish between believers who have a gift for evangelism and the **gifted person** called an **evangelist** in Ephesians 4:11. The Ephesian passage is not describing people who merely possess an ability; it is describing **leaders Christ gives to His church** whose primary ministry is the **equipping of the saints** (Eph 4:12). The evangelist in this sense both proclaims the gospel and **trains others** to do the same. Therefore, when describing the evangelist in Ephesians 4, the emphasis should lean toward the **equipping function**, because Paul's focus in the passage is on the four gifted leaders and their role in preparing the church for ministry.

Pastors and teachers—best understood as a unified role—shepherded local congregations through faithful instruction, spiritual care, and the ongoing ministry of the Word. This is the typical local pastor of a congregation. But note that the role is not just shepherding but also teaching.

[17] The term for "equip" in the Ephesians 4 passage is *katartismós* (**καταρτισμός** - *mend, restore, equip*). It comes from the verb *katartízō* (**καταρτίζω**), a term used in the Gospels for **mending** or **repairing** fishing nets (e.g., *Matt 4:21; Mark 1:19*). The underlying idea is to **restore something to proper condition** so it can function as intended. In Paul's usage, the "equipping" of the saints refers to this same kind of restorative preparation—**believers are repaired, fitted, and made fully ready** for the work of ministry, resulting in the strengthening of the whole body of Christ.



The **equipping nature** of these ***gifted persons*** is central to Paul's teaching. Their purpose is not to perform all the ministry of the church themselves but to **equip the saints for their individual work of ministry**. Properly understood, these gifted men focus their primary efforts on **building up believers within the local congregation**, training and strengthening them so that lay members can carry out their individual ministries. In this way, the leadership gifts of Ephesians 4 function to activate and support the **ministry gifts** described in the passages that follow, ensuring that the whole body grows and serves together.

These gifted persons, thus, serve the **church** by teaching, guiding, guarding doctrine, and equipping believers for ministry.

Numbers 11:25; Isaiah 11:2; Joel 2:28–29; Micah 3:8;
Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Ephesians 4:7–13; 1 Peter 4:10–11

> For as the Apostles themselves had received this sign first, so also the faithful went on receiving it, I mean, the gift of tongues;
>
> — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on First Corinthians*, Homily 29

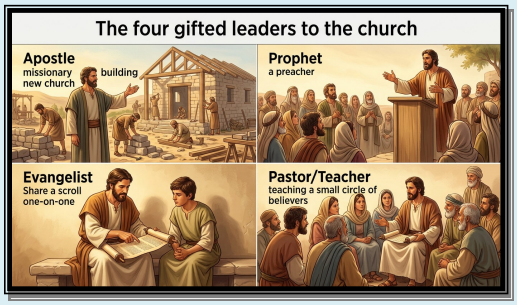
... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

8.2 Eusebius Speaks to Spiritual Gifts

Eusebius Audio	*CD04-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Speaks to Spiritual Gifts

This concept of spiritual gifts is often misunderstood. The Holy Spirit gives Persons and Ministries.



The Persons are people God calls into leadership for the purpose of "equipping" believers to perform their "ministries." In your time, people refer to some leaders as being "called into the ministry."

However, that is not quite true. The leaders are "called" -- Yes. But they are not "called into ministry." They are called into the leadership role of equipping those who ARE "called" into ministry.

Each believer is given a spiritual gift. That gift is to be used in ministry within the church; or outside the church reaching the unsaved.

Those gifted persons - the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastor/Teachers - are "called to equip;" not called to the "ministry." Their job is to equip those who ARE "called to ministry" by having been given the ministry gifts.

It's like your modern day NFL Football teams. The coaches are "called" - hired - to train the players who are "called" to play their positions - quarterback, running back, linebacker. The coaches equip and train the players. Their job is not to play the game but to make the team members better players.

In the church, the Holy Spirit gifts the coaches - the Apostles, Prophets, and so forth - and the coaches equip the rest of the church who are given ministry gifts. Those with the ministry gifts then exercise their gifts inside and outside the church to build up the Body of Christ and to reach the world for Christ.

So I encourage you to find your gifts. You might be a gifted person - a coach - or you might have ministry gifts. Whatever your gifts, the church needs you to use them to build up the body of Christ and reach the world for Him.



The four Gifted Persons are the Coaches of the team

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

8.3 Ministry Gifts to Individual Believers

Other passages list gifts given broadly to believers for the ongoing ministry of the church. These are sometimes also called "service gifts," "manifestation gifts," or "grace gifts."

Romans 12:6–8. In Romans 12, Paul describes a set of grace-gifts given to believers for the ordinary, ongoing ministry of the church. These include **prophecy**, **service**, **teaching**, **exhortation**, **giving**, **leadership**, and **mercy**, each functioning as a practical expression of the Spirit's work within the body.

1 Corinthians 12:4–11. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul highlights the Spirit's diverse manifestations for the common good. He lists the **word of wisdom**, **word of knowledge**, **faith**, **gifts of healings**, **working of miracles**, **prophecy**, **distinguishing of spirits**, **various kinds of tongues**, and **interpretation of tongues**, emphasizing that all these gifts come from the same Spirit who distributes them as He wills.

1 Corinthians 12:27–31. Later in the chapter, Paul provides another list that reflects the varied roles and functions within the church. These include **apostles**, **prophets**, **teachers**, **miracles**, **gifts of healings**, **helps**, **administration**, and **various kinds of tongues**, showing the breadth of ministries the Spirit empowers among God's people. Here he has mixed the gifted **people** with the ministry gifts.

1 Peter 4:10–11. Peter summarizes the gifts into two broad categories, reminding believers that each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others. He identifies **speaking gifts** and **serving gifts**, capturing the full range of Spirit-empowered ministry in simple, functional terms.

Together, these passages show that the Spirit equips the church with a wide range of abilities, roles, and ministries, all intended to glorify Christ and strengthen His people.

Numbers 11:25; Isaiah 11:2; Joel 2:28–29; Micah 3:8;
Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 1 Corinthians 12:27–31; 1 Peter 4:10–11

> Error, indeed is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outword form, to make it appear to be the inexperienced more true than truth itself.
>
> — Irenaeus

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

9.0 Special Issues and Debates

Throughout history, controversies have shaped the church's understanding of the Spirit. Below are only some of these controversies.

Montanism. Montanism arose in the second century as a movement that elevated ecstatic prophecy and spontaneous revelation above the settled teaching of Scripture and the apostolic tradition. Its misuse of prophecy—marked by uncontrolled utterances and claims of new, authoritative revelation—forced the early church to clarify the difference between genuine **Spirit-given prophecy** and disorderly, self-authenticating spiritual experiences.

Arianism. Arianism denied the full deity of the Spirit by first denying the full deity of the Son, treating both as exalted creatures rather than co-eternal divine persons. This view undermined the unity of the Godhead and prompted the church to affirm that the Spirit shares the same divine nature as the Father and the Son, fully worthy of worship and obedience.

Pneumatomachianism. The Pneumatomachians ("Spirit-fighters") explicitly claimed that the Holy Spirit was a created being, subordinate and inferior to the Father and the Son. Their teaching led to the church's clear confession at Constantinople (A.D. 381) that the Spirit is **"the Lord and giver of life"**, fully divine and eternally proceeding from the Father, and therefore to be glorified together with the other persons of the Trinity.

Filioque Controversy. The Filioque controversy centered on whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father **alone** (the Eastern position) or from the Father **and the Son** (the Western addition of *filioque*). This disagreement, rooted in differing theological emphases and ecclesial authority structures, contributed significantly to the East–West division and remains a defining distinction between the two traditions.

Charismatic Gifts. Debates over charismatic gifts—especially tongues, prophecy, and miracles—continue in the modern church, with some Christians affirming their ongoing validity and others arguing that such gifts ceased with the close of the apostolic era. The discussion typically focuses on the purpose of these gifts, the nature of biblical revelation, and the Spirit's role in empowering the church today, making it one of the most active areas of contemporary pneumatology.

Baptism of the Spirit. The question of Spirit baptism concerns both its timing and its meaning in Christian experience. While some traditions view it as a post-conversion empowerment for ministry, the majority position understands Spirit baptism as the believer's incorporation into the body of Christ at conversion, marking the beginning of new life and union with Christ.

Sanctification. Discussions of sanctification often revolve around whether the Spirit's work is primarily instantaneous or progressive. While Scripture affirms a decisive break with sin at conversion, it also teaches that the Spirit continually transforms believers over time, producing holiness, spiritual maturity, and Christlike character through an ongoing process of renewal. Some teach that entire sanctification is a distinct "second work of grace" beyond salvation while others teach that sanctification is a process that begins at conversion, continues during this life, and ends at glorification.

These issues are explored more fully in Chapter 11 on the battle-forged nature of Christian orthodoxy.

Joel 2:28–29; Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 63:10–11; Micah 3:8;
John 14:16–17; John 15:26; Acts 5:3–4; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11

> **A** belief that the Son of God is Son in name only, and not in nature, is not the faith of the Gospels and of the Apostles.
>
> — Hilary of Poitiers

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

10.0 Conclusion

Pneumatology reveals the Spirit as the divine Person who gives life, applies redemption, empowers believers, forms the church, and brings God's purposes to completion. To know the Spirit is to know God's presence; to walk in the Spirit is to live the Christian life; to be led by the Spirit is to participate in God's mission.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

11.0 Application

Because the Holy Spirit lives within every believer, He has also given every believer **at least one spiritual gift** to use in ministry in the Body. These gifts are not optional extras; they are part of God's design for how the body of Christ grows and serves. Your responsibility is to **discover** the gift or gifts the Spirit has entrusted to you and then **use them faithfully and fruitfully**. This may involve prayer, wise counsel, and a willingness to step into areas of service where God opens doors. As you do, you will find that the Spirit not only equips you but also gives joy and strength as you serve. The Christian life is not meant to be lived on the sidelines—the Spirit has gifted you for a purpose, and the church needs what He has placed in you.

Assignment for this week: Copy the list of ministry spiritual gifts from above. Then, ask one person in your church, who has been a Christian for at least several years, which spiritual gift he or she may see in your conversations and activities at church. One way to find your spiritual gift is to have other believers validate that gift by their observations of you in action. See if you can identify your spiritual gift through that conversation.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

12.0 Epilog by the Author: In the New Testament, the **church**—not the individual believer—is commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18), and even there the imperative is **plural**, describing the Spirit's shaping of the congregation's **corporate worship life**. By contrast, the individual believer is never instructed to "be filled with the Spirit." Instead, believers are called to walk by the Spirit**,** be led by the Spirit**,** live by the Spirit**,** put to death the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit**,** and be strengthened with power through the Spirit. These are personal, ongoing realities of Christian life, but none of them is framed as an individual command to seek a private "Spirit-filling." The only Spirit-filling command

in the NT (Eph 5:18) is directed to the **gathered church**, emphasizing that Spirit-formed worship and mutual submission are **corporate** experiences, not private mystical events.

Isaiah 63:10–11; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28–29; Psalm 143:10;
John 14:16–17; Romans 8:9–14; Galatians 5:16–18; Ephesians 5:18

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

12.1 Eusebius Encourages You To Find Your Spiritual Gift

Eusebius Audio	*CD04-Segment-8V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Encourages You To Find Your Spiritual Gift



As the church grew after our Lord's ascension, we learned that every disciple was called not only to believe, but to serve. The Holy Spirit did not leave any believer without a role in the life of the church. Each one received a gift, granted for the strengthening of the whole body."

In my own day, believers discovered their gifts in simple ways. They studied the Scriptures, they got involved in serving, and they sought the advise of older believers.

So I would encourage you to study the Bible verses in this chapter, find a way to step forward to serve — caring for the needy, teaching the young, praying with the suffering, tending to the needs of the congregation. In these acts of service, you will find a quiet confirmation that the Spirit is using you.

And finally, the church itself will recognize the Spirit's work in you. Older Christians will speak a word of encouragement. When Scripture, service, and the witness of fellow believers agree, a you may be confident that you have discovered the gift the Spirit has entrusted to you.

As you conclude this chapter, consider how the Spirit has gifted you, and how your service may contribute to the unity and growth of Christ's church.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

Nancy | CD04-Segment-9

13.0 The Revised Nicene Creed.

On the left in the table below is the original Nicene Creed approved at the Nicene Council in 325 A.D. On the right is the revised Nicene Creed approved at the First Council of Constantinople, held in 381 A.D., to answer the challenge to the church about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. The sections dealing with the Holy Spirit are shaded in the third section below.[18]

Original Nicene Creed A.D. 325	Revised Constantinople Nicene Creed A.D. 381
We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.	We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten, not made, of one substance (ὁμοούσιον, *homoousion*) with the Father; by whom all things were made, both in heaven and on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and was made man; He suffered, and the third day He rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.	And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (ὁμοούσιον, *homoousion*) with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; and suffered, and was buried, and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; from thence He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.
And in the Holy Spirit. [There is an added anathema against the Arians that was not officially part of the creed]	And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. In one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

... Return to Chapter 4 Index ...

[18] The texts of these two creeds are taken from ***The Creeds of Christendom, With a History and Critical Notes***, Vol 1, ***The History of Creeds***, Philip Schaff, ed, David S. Schaff, revised ed., Baker Books, 1931, pg 28-29.

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Francis Chan,** ***Forgotten God*** — A clear, accessible call to rediscover the Holy Spirit's presence and power in the Christian life.
- **J. I. Packer,** ***Keep in Step with the Spirit*** — A balanced, pastoral exploration of the Spirit's work in sanctification and Christian living.
- **Sinclair Ferguson,** ***Who Is the Holy Spirit?*** — A concise introduction to the person and ministry of the Spirit for everyday believers.
- **R. C. Sproul,** ***The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*** — A readable theological overview of the Spirit's identity, work, and role in redemption.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Basil the Great,** ***On the Holy Spirit*** — A foundational patristic defense of the Spirit's full divinity and role within the Trinity.
- **Sinclair Ferguson,** ***The Holy Spirit*** — A comprehensive theological study of the Spirit's person and work across Scripture and history.
- **Gordon Fee,** ***God's Empowering Presence*** — A major academic treatment of the Spirit's role in Pauline theology.
- **Michael Horton,** ***Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*** — A systematic and historical examination of the Spirit's work in creation, redemption, and the church.
- **John Owen,** ***The Holy Spirit*** — A classic Puritan study of the Spirit's ministry in illumination, regeneration, and sanctification.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of Christian writings from the first 1,500 years of church history. This includes the **Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers** sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: ***www.ccel.org/fathers***

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) — For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.



Depiction of a Monastic Classroom similar to one where Eusebius would have taught

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 5

Full Chapter Audio	*CD05Audio-Full (25 minutes)*

Trinity:
The Doctrine of the Triune Godhead

Trinity . . .
a word not in the Bible . . .
but truly Biblical!

"All are of one, by unity of substance; while the mystery of the economy is still guarded, which distributes the unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three Persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Tertullian on the Trinity (A.D. 200–220) -- *One of the earliest explicit statement on the Trinity*

And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon Him; and a voice came from the heavens: " You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Mark 1:10-11 [NASB]

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** Introduces the Topic of Trinity
2.0 Definition of the term Trinity
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary and Foundations
3.1 Old Testament Foundations
3.2 The Jewish Approach to the Old Testament Plurality
3.3 New Testament Revelation
4.0 Origin of the term "Trinity"
5.0 Historical Development
5.1 **Eusebius** Discusses the First Two Councils
6.0 Why the Trinity Matters
7.0 Practical Implications for Believers
8.0 Conclusion
9.0 Application
9.1 **Eusebius** Finds a Link in the Greek Term for Godhead

Nancy	CD05-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction.

People often notice that the word *Trinity* isn't found in the Bible. That's true — but the **reality** of the Trinity is unmistakably biblical. From Genesis to Revelation, God makes Himself known as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The doctrine simply gathers the Bible's teaching into one clear confession of who God is.

The doctrine of the Trinity did not originally emerge fully polished. It was shaped over centuries as the church confronted incorrect teachings that distorted the identity of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. Each controversy forced believers back into Scripture, chipping away errors the way a miner chips away rock to uncover a hidden gem. And just as a diamond in the rough does not sparkle until a skilled jeweler cuts and shapes it, the battles with false teaching refined the church's language and sharpened its understanding. What remained after all the battles was the **glittering diamond of the Trinity** — one God in three Persons — the clearest and most faithful expression of the God revealed in Scripture.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius Introduces the Topic of Trinity

Eusebius Audio	CD05-Segment-2V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Introduces the Topic of Trinity



In my own study of the sacred writings, I learned that the apostle Paul spoke of the fullness of the **Godhead** dwelling in Christ in the letter to the Colossians. The term for Godhead - *theotēs* (θεότης) - only occurs once in the entire Bible. But it is rich in meaning in literature outside the Bible.

Around the year 200, the Latin writer **Tertullian** gave the church a helpful word for expressing this mystery: **Trinity**. He did not invent a new doctrine, but simply named what the Scriptures already reveal—that the one divine essence is shared by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

If you wish to understand this teaching rightly, begin where the apostle left off: with the **Godhead** revealed in Christ. Follow that path, and you will see how the early church came to speak of the **Trinity** with clarity and reverence.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

2.0 Definition of the term "Trinity"

The doctrine of the **Trinity** teaches that the one true God eternally exists as **three distinct Persons** — **Father**, **Son**, and **Holy Spirit** — each fully and equally God, sharing the same divine essence. Christianity is not tritheism (three gods) or modalism (one God appearing in three forms). It is the confession that **God is one in essence and three in Persons**. This is the heart of historic Christian faith and the foundation of all orthodox theology.

In the previous three chapters we looked individually at the **Father**, the **Son**, and the **Holy Spirit**, seeing how Scripture presents each Person of the Godhead in His own identity and work. This chapter simply brings those truths **together**, viewing the three divine Persons as the one eternal God. The early church used the Latin word ***persona*** to describe each of the three — not meaning a "role" or "mask," but a **distinct identity** within the one divine essence. When Christians speak of the Trinity, we are confessing exactly this: one God, shared in essence, existing eternally as three distinct Persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — each fully and equally God.

Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 48:16; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 33:6;
Matthew 28:19; John 1:1–3; John 14:16–17; 2 Corinthians 13:14

> "No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the splendor of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Them than I am carried back to the One."
>
> *— Gregory of Nazianzus, Oration 40.41*

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary and Foundations

The doctrine of the Trinity does not appear in Scripture as a single, packaged statement. Instead, the Bible reveals God's triune identity gradually, through the unfolding story of redemption. The Old Testament establishes the foundation: God is one, yet His words, actions, and manifestations sometimes display a complexity within that oneness. The New Testament then brings this complexity into full light as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit act together in perfect unity. And as the early church sought to speak faithfully about what Scripture reveals, it adopted precise language to confess the one divine essence shared by three distinct Persons. This chapter follows that same movement—from Old Testament patterns, to Jewish interpretation, to New Testament clarity, to the church's faithful vocabulary for describing the God of the Bible.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament Foundations

While the Old Testament never presents a developed doctrine of the Trinity, it does contain **hints, patterns, and categories** that prepare the way for the fuller revelation to come. God sometimes speaks in the **plural** ("Let *us* make man"), the name used for the God of Israel -- ***Elohim*** -- is grammatically plural, and figures such as the **Angel of the LORD**, **Wisdom**, and the **Spirit of God** appear with divine authority. These passages do not give us the Trinity in full form, but they create the **biblical vocabulary** Christians later use to understand the unity and complexity of God's being.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

3.2 The Jewish Approach to the Old Testament Plurality

Traditional Judaism has always read these Old Testament passages through the lens of **strict monotheism**. Because the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4) declares, "The LORD is one," Jewish interpreters explain plural expressions as literary features — the **plural of majesty**, the **plural of deliberation**, or God addressing His **heavenly court** — rather than as evidence of multiple divine Persons. In this view, the Old Testament's plural language is fully compatible with the oneness of God. Christians agree that God is one, but Christians also see in these texts the **seeds** of the fuller revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that becomes unmistakable in the New Testament.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

3.3 New Testament Revelation

The New Testament brings the picture into full clarity. At Jesus' baptism, the **Father** speaks from heaven, the **Son** stands in the water, and the **Spirit** descends like a dove — three Persons acting together in perfect unity. Jesus commands His disciples to baptize "in the **name** [singular] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," placing all three on equal footing within the one divine identity. The apostles bless the church in the same triune pattern.

The Gospels show the Trinity in action, revealing Father, Son, and Holy Spirit working together within the story of redemption — at Jesus' baptism, in His transfiguration, and in His promises about the Spirit. The Epistles then take these lived moments and develop their full theological meaning. Paul blesses the church in a triune pattern, Peter speaks of the Father's foreknowledge, the Spirit's sanctifying work, and the Son's blood, and Jude closes with a threefold doxology.

The clearest example of this doctrinal development appears in Colossians 2:9, where the Apostle Paul writes that in Christ dwells **all the fullness of the Godhead** — using the rare and decisive term *theotēs* **(**θεότης**)** to express the complete, essential deity of the Son. This unique term is developed by the later patristic theologians, beginning with Tertullian in about 190 A.D., into the full understanding of the Trinity. In this way, the Gospels display the Trinity, and the Epistles explain it, giving the church the vocabulary to confess the one God who eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In short, **the Old Testament provides the categories, the New Testament provides the clarity**, and together they reveal the one God who exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To speak clearly about what Scripture reveals, the early church had to find the right words. Latin-speaking Christians used the term **persona** to describe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — not meaning a "role" or "mask," but a true, distinct Someone. Greek-speaking Christians used the word *hypostasis* (ὑπόστασις), which carried the same idea: a real, individual subsistence within the one divine being. By the fourth century, the church expressed this truth with two matching formulas, one in Greek (*mia ousia, treis hypostaseis* - μία οὐσία, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις - "one essence, three hypostases"), and one in Latin (*una substantia, tres personae* - "one substance, three persons"). These phrases say the same thing in two languages: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are **three distinct Persons who share one divine essence**. This is the church's faithful way of describing the God the Bible reveals.

Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 48:16; Psalm 33:6; Deuteronomy 6:4;
Matthew 3:16–17; John 14:16–17; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

> "...the very fact of being Unbegotten or Begotten, or Proceeding has given the name of Father to the First, of the Son to the Second, and of the Third... of the Holy Ghost that the distinction of the Three Persons may be preserved in the one nature and dignity of the Godhead... The Three are One in Godhead, and the One Three in properties."
>
> *— Gregory of Nazianzus, Oration 31.9*

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

4.0 The Origin of the term "Trinity"

The Trinity is not a puzzle to solve but a mystery (*mystērion,* μυστήριον) to confess. God is not like anything in creation, so no analogy captures Him perfectly. Yet the doctrine is not irrational; it simply recognizes that God is greater than our categories. The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Spirit; the Spirit is not the Father. Yet each is fully God, and there is only one God. The church's task has always been to hold these truths together without collapsing them into confusion or contradiction.

Paul gives the church its clearest statement about the inner reality of God when he writes, *"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the* ***Godhead*** *bodily"* (Col. 2:9). The word translated "Godhead" is the Greek term *theotēs* (θεότης)—and this is the only time it appears in the entire New Testament. Paul chooses this rare and powerful word to say that everything that makes God God—the full essence, nature, and reality of deity—is present in Jesus Christ in human form. Just a few verses earlier, Paul calls Christ the **"mystery of God"** (Col. 2:2–3), meaning that the identity of God, once hidden, is now revealed in Him.

For Paul, then, the "mystery of the Godhead" is not an abstract idea but a **Christological revelation**. The fullness of deity is not discovered through philosophical speculation or mystical experience; it is found in the **person** of Jesus. When we look at Jesus, we see the Godhead unveiled. This is why the early church insisted that any faithful understanding of the Trinity must begin with Christology: the Father is known through the Son, and the Spirit bears witness to the Son. In the Son the mystery becomes clear—the one God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Although *theotēs* (θεότης**)** does not appear in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, LXX), it does occur in other Greek writings from the broader Greco-Roman world of the same time period, always with the meaning of the **full divine nature** of a god. These uses confirm the meaning Paul employs in Colossians 2:9—**full, essential deity**, not merely divine qualities. For this reason, the term *theotēs* (θεότης**)**, and its use in Colossians 2:9, is as close as the actual text of the Bible comes to expressing the concept of **"Trinity"** in a single word.

In time, the early church took the biblical truth expressed in Paul's rare word *theotēs* (θεότης**)**—the full and complete Godhead dwelling in Jesus—and gave it precise theological language. Around **AD 190**, Tertullian, writing in Carthage, in the North African nation now known as Tunisia, picked up this very concept and expressed it in Latin using the term ***trinitas*** in his work *Adversus Praxean* (*Against Praxeas*). He was not inventing a new doctrine but giving clear vocabulary to what Scripture already revealed: the one divine essence fully shared by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this way, the biblical reality of the Godhead, express by the Apostle Paul with the word *theotēs* (θεότης**)**, found its enduring doctrinal expression by Tertullian in the word **Trinity**.

In theological debates in the early centuries, many of the theologians defended the concept of Trinity by reference to this term, *theotēs* (θεότης), in their arguments. For example, Gregory of Nyssa uses this term 40-50 times across his several existing works. Other patristic theologians who appeal to this term in their writings are Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, and Cyril of Jerusalem.

The Great Commission. One of the strongest and most enduring supports for the Trinity doctrine is something every Christian already knows by heart — the words Jesus gave us for baptism. In the Great Commission, Jesus tells His disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). This isn't a phrase the church invented later — it goes all the way back to the earliest Christian writings we have outside the Bible itself, like the Didache, a Christian training manual from the late first century. Within just a generation or two after that, church fathers like Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian were already quoting and defending this same formula. That means almost from the very beginning, the church was baptizing believers by naming Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together, in the same breath, as part of one act.

That's really the heart of the argument: the earliest Christians treated the Spirit and the Son as belonging together with the Father in worship — not as lesser add-ons, but as sharing fully in who God is. Centuries later, a church father named Basil of Caesarea made this exact point when defending the Holy Spirit's full deity: if the Spirit is named right alongside the Father and the Son every time someone is baptized, then the Spirit must belong within the identity of God, not outside it. Reformers like John Calvin picked up the same thread over a thousand years later. When defending the Trinity against those who denied it, Calvin pointed straight back to this verse, arguing that being baptized "into the name of" all three is the same as being baptized into the name of the one true God — a God who has fully shown Himself to us as Father, Son, and Spirit.

It's worth being honest about one detail, though: some Trinity defenders have pointed to the fact that Jesus said "name" (singular) rather than "names" (plural) as if this ***alone*** proves God is one being in three persons.[19] That's actually a weaker point than it sounds — "name" is used the same singular way

[19] One of the most adamant supporters of this view was **B. B. Warfield** in the early twentieth century. He argued that the **singular** use of *"name"* in Matthew 28:19, followed by the **three distinct identities** of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

elsewhere in Scripture for more than one person (such as when Jacob speaks of "the name" of both Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 48:16), so the singular word by itself doesn't settle the question. The real strength of Matthew 28:19 isn't a grammar trick. It's that from the very first generation of Christians, this verse was the church's actual practice — the words used, every time, whenever someone became a Christian — naming Father, Son, and Spirit together as one and the same act of devotion, generation after generation, right up to today.

Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 48:16;
John 1:1–14; John 14:9–11; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3

> "As if in this way also one were not All, in that All are of One, by unity (that is) of substance; while the mystery of the dispensation is still guarded, which distributes the Unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three Persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: three, however, not in Of these opinions let the reader choose the more devout, whether we are to think of the Only-begotten in a manner worthy of the Godhead (θεότης), or to call Him, as heresy prescribes, perishable and temporary.
>
> Basil the Great, *Against Eunomius (Book II)*

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

5.0 Historical Development

The early church wrestled deeply with how to express the biblical witness faithfully. At the **Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325)**, the church affirmed that the **Son** is *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος**)** — "of the same essence" — with the Father, rejecting Arianism's claim that the Son was a created being. At **Constantinople (A.D. 381)**, the church confessed the full deity of the **Holy Spirit**. These councils did not invent the Trinity; they clarified what Scripture already taught and protected the church from distortions that threatened the gospel itself. There is more detailed discussion on these and the other Councils in chapter 11 and in the appendix.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 48:16;
John 1:1–3; John 14:26; Colossians 1:15–17; 2 Corinthians 13:14

> "As if in this way also one were not All, in that All are of One, by unity (that is) of substance; while the mystery of the dispensation is still guarded, which distributes the Unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three Persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: three, however, not in condition, but in degree; not in substance, but in form; not in power, but in aspect..."
>
> Tertullian on the Trinity, *Adversus Praxean* 2 (A.D. 200–220) -- *One of the earliest explicit statement on the Trinity*

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

Spirit, provides strong grammatical support for the Trinitarian structure implied in the baptismal formula. Warfield maintained that the singular *"name"* functions as a unified divine designation encompassing the three Persons, thereby reinforcing classical Trinitarian interpretation. However, many contemporary Greek scholars take the opposite view.

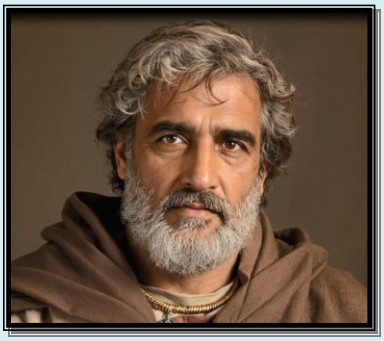
5.1 Eusebius Discusses the First Two Councils

Eusebius Audio	*CD05-Segment-4V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses the First Two Councls

Yes, my friend, if you can spend time learning about only two of the Seven Councils, these two -- Nicea in 325 and Constantinople in 381 -- should be the two.

To truly follow the reasoning and debates about the trinity, these two Councils are, as you say in your time, where the rubber meets the road! Digest them and you will have unearthed the Pearl of Great Price in theology!



> "We indeed confess that the Godhead is absolutely one and simple; and hence we assert that the Son and Spirit are one God with the Father. But we also hold that the Son is not the Father, and the Spirit is not the Son."
>
> — *John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I.13.2

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

Nancy	*CD05-Segment-5*

6.0 Why the Trinity Matters

The Trinity is not an abstract doctrine reserved for theologians; it is the framework of the Christian life. We pray to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. We are saved because the Father sent the Son, and the Spirit applies that salvation to our hearts. We worship because the triune God has drawn us into His own eternal fellowship of love. Every movement of the Christian life is shaped by this reality. To lose the Trinity is to lose Orthodoxy itself, for the gospel depends entirely on who God is—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God in three Persons. Wayne Grudem sums up this issue with the following statement.

"In one sense the doctrine of the Trinity is a mystery that we will never be able to understand fully. However, we can understand something of its truth by summarizing the teaching of Scripture in three statements:

1. God is three persons.
2. Each person is fully God.
3. There is one God.[20]

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 63:16; Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 48:16;
John 14:6; Romans 8:14–17; Ephesians 2:18; Jude 20–21

[20] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), pg. 231.

> "The doctrine of the Trinity is at the heart of Christian belief. It is one of the most essential doctrines of the Christian faith."
>
> — *Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology*, Chapter 14

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

7.0 Practical Implications for Believers

The Trinity shapes our faith in deeply practical ways. It teaches us that relationship lies at the heart of reality, because God Himself exists eternally as Father, Son, and Spirit. It grounds our assurance, for our salvation rests not on our efforts but on the united work of the triune God—the Father who planned it, the Son who accomplished it, and the Spirit who applies it. It forms our worship, directing us to honor each divine Person without dividing the Godhead. And it strengthens our unity as the church, for we reflect in our life together the beautiful unity-in-diversity of the triune God.

Many sincere Christians wrestle with whether a person must fully understand the Trinity in order to be "saved." Scripture itself gives a simpler and more gracious answer. Salvation is grounded in the confession of Jesus as Lord and belief in His resurrection (Rom. 10:9–10). A person may genuinely make that confession—trusting Jesus to the best of their understanding—without yet grasping the full Trinitarian shape of Christian doctrine. Someone coming from a background where the Trinity is not taught, such as Mormonism, may truly be born again while still holding incomplete or confused views about the nature of God. But when that same believer applies honest, careful scholarship to the biblical text, the trajectory of faith leads toward the same understanding the church eventually articulated at Nicaea. The Trinity is not the entrance requirement for salvation, but it is the destination of faithful, biblical discipleship.

A helpful way to see this is to ask a simple historical question: **On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended, was Peter a "Trinitarian"?** In the formal, Nicene sense, almost certainly not. Had you asked him in that moment whether God is "three in one," his immediate response would likely have been a firm "***NO, Heaven Forbid***!", followed by the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4, as any faithful Jew of his day would have done.

Yet as Peter reflected on the life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus—and as the Holy Spirit continued to illuminate the truth—his understanding deepened. Over time, he would have recognized that the language later used by Tertullian, including the term ***trinitas***, expressed with clarity what the apostles themselves had come to observe and believe: that the one God of Israel is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this sense, the doctrine of the Trinity is not a departure from Peter's faith but the mature expression of it.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 63:16; Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 48:16;
John 14:6; Romans 8:14–17; Acts 2:32–33; 2 Corinthians 13:14

"If, then, Godhead (θεότης) is a name derived from operation, as we say that the operation of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one, so we say that the Godhead is one."

— Gregory of Nyssa, On the Holy Trinity, ***380 A.D.)*** He uses the term **θεότης** - the same term used by the Apostle Paul in Colossians.

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

8.0 Conclusion

The doctrine of the Trinity is the church's faithful confession of the God revealed in Scripture — **one God in three Persons**, eternal, equal, and inseparable. This truth is not a burden but a gift. It invites us to know God as He truly is and to rejoice in the love shared eternally within the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To understand the Trinity is to stand at the center of Christian belief, worship, and life.

"because you are stones of a temple, prepared beforehand for the building of God the Father, hoisted up to the heights by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, using as a rope the Holy Spirit; your faith is what lifts you up, and love is the way that leads up to God."

— Written in 110 A.D. by *Ignatius, Epistle to the Ephesians 9.1*

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

9.0 Application

Set aside time this week to **pray intentionally to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit**, consciously acknowledging each Person of the Trinity in your prayer. This simple practice helps you move the doctrine from the page in the book into your daily walk, reminding you that the Father welcomes you, the Son intercedes for you, and the Spirit strengthens you as you pray.

Assignment for the week:
Part 1 - Share with someone in your family or church this concept of praying **to** the Father, **through** the Son, **by** the power of the Holy Spirit. Ask if they have ever thought about that concept.
Part 2 - Choose an English translation that you like and memorize Colossians 2:9. Here it is again in the NASB.

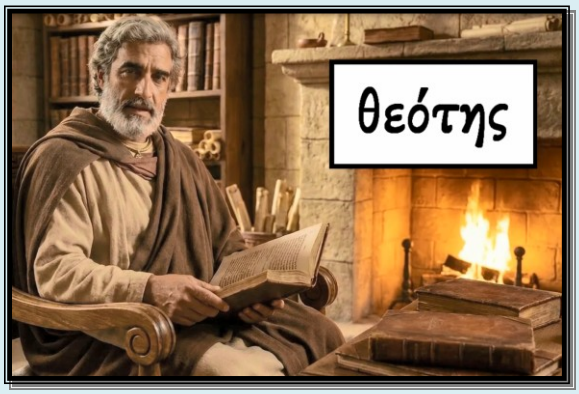
For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,
Col 2:9 [NASB]

... Return to Chapter 5 Index ...

9.1 Eusebius Finds a Link in the Greek Term for Godhead

Eusebius Audio	*CD05-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Finds a Link in the Greek Term for Godhead



You will notice that in this chapter we have spent a great deal of time on one Greek word in the Letter to the Colossians. That word is *theotēs* (θεότης), which is translated Godhead in your English translations. That word seems to best fit the doctrine of the Trinity, which means that there is a term that seems to reflect what the Latin teacher Tertullian meant when he introduced the Latin term Trinity in explaining the Godhead.

In my own century, two of the church's greatest theologians—Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa—recognized how this single verse in Colossians provides strong biblical support for the confession of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one divine essence.

And I am told that in your own time, well known teachers such as Karl Barth and J. I. Packer affirm the same truth: that Paul's use of *theotēs* (θεότης), offers a firm scriptural foundation for the doctrine of the Trinity. So as this chapter began with a saying, it may rightly close with the same saying as well:
Trinity— a word not found in the Bible— yet truly biblical.

But, there is a Greek word that reflects the same concept expressed by the Latin term Trinity.

. . . Return to Chapter 5 Index . . .



Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Lee Strobel,** ***The Case for Christ*** — A journalistic investigation into the historical reliability of Jesus and the New Testament.
- **Josh McDowell,** ***More Than a Carpenter*** — A concise, accessible defense of Jesus' identity and the trustworthiness of Scripture.
- **C. S. Lewis,** ***Mere Christianity*** — A classic, lay-friendly explanation of the core beliefs of the Christian faith.
- **J. I. Packer,** ***Knowing God*** — A devotional yet doctrinal exploration of the character and nature of God.
- **John Stott,** ***Basic Christianity*** — A clear introduction to the person of Christ and the essentials of Christian belief.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Athanasius,** ***On the Incarnation*** — A foundational patristic work explaining the necessity and meaning of the Incarnation.
- **Donald Macleod,** ***The Person of Christ*** — A rigorous theological study of Christ's person, natures, and mediatorial work.
- **Gerald O'Collins,** ***Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study*** — A comprehensive academic survey of Christology across Scripture and church history.
- **Richard Bauckham,** ***Jesus and the God of Israel*** — A scholarly defense of Jesus' inclusion in the divine identity of Israel's God.
- **N. T. Wright,** ***The Resurrection of the Son of God*** — A detailed historical and theological analysis of the resurrection accounts.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of Christian writings from the first 1,500 years of church history. This includes the **Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers** sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: ***www.ccel.org/fathers***

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) — For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 6

Full Chapter Audio	*CD06Audio-Full (23 minutes)*

Anthropology:
The Doctrine of Man

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."
Westminster Catechism, Question #1

> "So, God has made man, and desired that he should remain in incorruption; but men, having despised and rejected the contemplation of God, and devised and contrived evil for themselves . . . received the condemnation of death with which they had been threatened..."
>
> — *Athanasius, On the Incarnation* - ch 4

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God
He created him; male and female He created them.
Genesis 1:27 [NASB]

Return to Table of Contents

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** - The Tale of Two Conditions
2.0 Definition of Anthropology
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Man
3.1 Old Testament
3.2 New Testament
4.0 The Creation of Humanity
5.0 The Image of God (Imago Dei)
5.1 **Eusebius** Discusses εἰκών
6.0 The Purpose of Humanity
7.0 The Fall of Adam
8.0 The Effects of the Fall on Human Nature
9.0 Human Dignity After the Fall
10.0 Redemption and Restoration of Humanity
11.0 The Destiny of Humanity
12.0 Conclusion
13.0 Application
13.1 **Eusebius** Challenges You This Week
14.0 Epilog: The Value of an Image

Nancy | CD06-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction.

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." **So** begins the ***Westminster Shorter Catechism***. But even the greatest intentions can go awry! Humanity was created with a breathtaking purpose: to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. That single truth, expressed in the opening line of the ***Westminster Catechism***, gives meaning to every human life.

Paradise Lost. Yet the story of Scripture tells us that the world we inhabit is not the world as God first made it. It is a story of paradise lost—a creation designed for fellowship with God now marked by brokenness, confusion, and death.

Paradise Regained. But it is also the story of paradise regained, for the God who made us has never abandoned His purpose for humanity. The doctrine of anthropology matters because it explains who we are, what went wrong, and why the Gospel is God's great work of restoring His creation to His original intent.

To understand Christian doctrine, we must understand ourselves—and to understand ourselves, we must begin where the Bible begins: with humanity the way God intended us . . . and what happened.

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 3:22–24; Psalm 8:3–6; Isaiah 43:7;
John 1:14; Romans 5:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:3–5

> "The glory of God is a living man; and the life of man consists in beholding God."
>
> — Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.20.7

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius - The Tale of Two Conditions

Eusebius Audio	CD06-Segment-2V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius - The Tale of Two Conditions



In tracing the doctrine of humanity -- Anthropology -- one observes a drama not unlike a novel written in your times -- *The Tale of Two Cities*. Like that story, the Scriptures tell of *The Tale of Two Conditions*.

At the beginning stands man fashioned in the divine image -- εἰκών -- bearing the royal stamp of the Creator and dwelling in the harmony of paradise.

Yet soon that condition is lost and the old man -- (*palaios anthrōpos* - παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος -- emerges through disobedience, and the fellowship once enjoyed is broken. Exile replaces delight, and the image -- εἰκών -- though not destroyed, is veiled beneath corruption.

But the divine purpose is not thwarted. In the fullness of time, the Savior appears, restoring what Adam lost and forming within us the new man (*kainos anthrōpos* - καινὸς ἄνθρωπος) the new man renewed after the likeness of the true Image.

Thus the doctrine humanity is indeed a *Tale of Two Conditions*—paradise lost through the first man, and paradise regained through the One who brings life and restoration.

As you proceed through this chapter, watch carefully for the ***old man*** and behold with joy the ***new man*** created by Jesus.

Return to Chapter 6 Index

Nancy	CD06-Segment-3

2.0 Definition of Anthropology

In theology, anthropology is the study of humanity as God created us, designed us, and now redeems us in Christ. It asks what it means to be human in light of God's revelation—why we exist, what we were made for, how the image of God shapes our identity, and how the fall has bent that image awry. Rather than beginning with psychology, sociology, or biology, Christian anthropology begins with God Himself and sees human life as a gift, a calling, and a story: created for glory, distorted by sin, and restored through the grace of the One who is the true Image.

As the old saying goes, "know thyself," a maxim made famous by Socrates; but the truest knowledge of ourselves comes not from human reflection alone, but from knowing ourselves as the Artist Himself has described us.

Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 139:13–16; Ecclesiastes 12:13;
Isaiah 43:7; John 1:14; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:10

> "In what then does the greatness of man consist, according to the doctrine of the Church? Not in his likeness to the created world, but in his being in the image of the nature of the Creator."
>
> — Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Man

A sound doctrine of humanity begins with the key terms Scripture uses to describe our identity, condition, and purpose. Both Testaments provide a vocabulary that reveals who we are as God's creatures, how sin has damaged us, and how Christ restores what was lost. These words form the framework for understanding creation, fall, and renewal. By tracing this vocabulary, we gain a clearer picture of humanity made in God's image, marred by sin, and renewed through union with Christ.

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament

The Old Testament uses several foundational terms to describe humanity and our God-given identity. The most basic is *'ādām* **(**אָדָם**)**, a word that means both "man" and "humanity," reminding us that Scripture speaks of the human race as a unified whole descended from a single source. *'ādām* is also the name of the first man created: Adam. The name Adam is related to the word for ground, soil, or dust. He is called Adam because he was formed from the dust of the earth then activated by the breath[21] of God when God breathed into him the breath of life.

Closely related is *nephesh* **(**נֶפֶשׁ**)**, often translated "soul," but more accurately referring to the living, breathing person—a whole human being animated by God's breath. The term *tselem* **(**צֶלֶם**)**, "image," and *demuth* **(**דְּמוּת**)**, "likeness," describe humanity's unique status as God's royal representatives, bearing a resemblance that reflects both the person's existence and the person's vocation or role. Together, these words paint a picture of human beings as embodied creatures formed from the earth, enlivened by God, and commissioned to reflect His character and rule His world.

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

[21] The term used in Genesis 2:7 is ***nishmat ḥayyim*** ("breath of life"), not ***rûaḥ*** ("spirit, wind"), the word often associated with the Spirit of God. The verse describes God's life-giving breath that animates the man, not the personal action of the Holy Spirit as expressed elsewhere in Scripture.

3.2 New Testament

The New Testament builds on this vocabulary with terms that deepen and clarify humanity's purpose in Christ. The word *eikōn* (εἰκών)—"image"—is central, used to describe both humanity's original design and Christ Himself as the perfect Image of God.[22] Through Him, believers are renewed into the likeness they were meant to bear. Paul uses *palaios anthrōpos* (παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος) "old man," to express the human condition in its fallen state before the born again experience in conversion. He then uses *kainos anthrōpos* **(**καινὸς ἄνθρωπος**)**, "new man," to describe the restored humanity created in Christ, and *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) to emphasize the Spirit's role in renewing the inner person. The term *doxa* **(**δόξα**)**—"glory"—captures humanity's ultimate purpose: to reflect God's splendor and participate in His life. These words together reveal the biblical portrait of humanity: created in God's image, marred by sin, and renewed through union with the true Image, Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 8:3–6; Ecclesiastes 7:29;
Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Ephesians 4:22–24; Colossians 3:10

> "This is he who was made in the image and likeness of God. But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal, shall be an imperfect being, possessing indeed the image of God in his formation, but not receiving the similitude through the Spirit."
>
> — Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, Ch. 6.1.

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

4.0 The Creation of Humanity

Humanity stands at the pinnacle of God's creative work, fashioned last not as an afterthought but as the crown of the Creator's design. Formed from the dust of the ground yet animated by the very breath of God, human beings uniquely unite the earthly and the divine. God made us male and female, equal in dignity, worth, and purpose, each bearing His image and entrusted with His world.

From the beginning, humanity was placed in a covenant relationship with its Maker—a bond of love, trust, and obedience that defined our identity and vocation. To understand who we are is to remember how we were made: shaped by God's hands, filled with God's breath, and called into fellowship with God Himself.

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 8:3–6; Malachi 2:10;
Matthew 19:4–6; Acts 17:24–26; 1 Corinthians 11:7; Ephesians 2:10

[22] The term ***eikōn* (εἰκών)**—"image"—is central to the debates of the ***Seventh Ecumenical Council***, which addressed whether sacred "images" should be used in Christian worship. You will encounter this term again in the discussion of that Council in chapter 11 and in the appendix. Many Protestants and Catholics are surprised to learn how relevant the issue remains today, since the "icons" present in modern churches include **crosses** (with or without the body of Jesus) and common **pictures of Jesus** that hang in foyers, classrooms, and sanctuaries. These contemporary practices show that the ancient debate over *eikōn* still shapes Christian worship.

> "You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."
>
> — Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

5.0 The Image of God (Imago Dei)

The image of God speaks to what humanity *is* and what humanity is *for*—creatures endowed with rationality, relational capacity, moral discernment, and the calling to exercise wise dominion over His creation. Scripture presents men and women as God's royal representatives on earth, reflecting His character and stewarding His world as vice-regents of the true King. Even after the fall, this image remains—retained yet distorted, shining yet shadowed, still present but no longer whole.

The early church leaders and teachers, especially Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa, spoke of a distinction between the "image" and the "likeness": the ***image*** as the enduring stamp of God upon human nature, and the ***likeness*** as the moral and spiritual resemblance that was wounded by sin and restored through grace. To speak of the image of God, then, is to speak of humanity's dignity, our brokenness, and the divine intention to renew us into the likeness of Christ.

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:3–6; Ecclesiastes 7:29;
Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

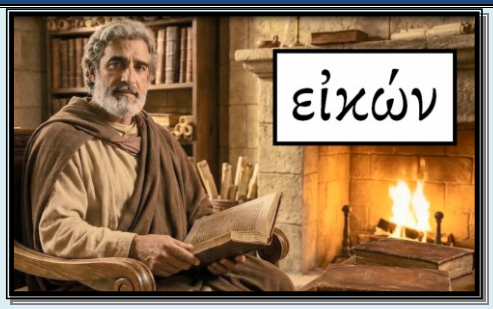


Theotokos Icon, Panagia, Orthodox Prayer Icon
Mother of God, Our Lady Blessed Virgin Mary - Etsy

5.1 Eusebius Discusses εἰκών

Eusebius Audio	*CD06-Segment-4V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Discusses εἰκών



In some of my books, I discuss the Imago Dei. But that is the Latin word and my books were in Greek. The word *eikōn* (εἰκών) is the Greek term the Scriptures use for **"**image**."** It's the word behind the phrase *"image of God"* in the New Testament. If you've ever tapped one of those little pictures on a smartphone screen, you already know what an *eikon* (εἰκών) is—an *icon*, a small picture that represents something larger and more important.

In Scripture, *eikōn* (εἰκών) works the same way. It means a visible representation of something you cannot fully see. When Scripture says humanity is made as God's *eikōn* (εἰκών), it means we are designed to represent God in the world. It means we are meant to reflect His character—His goodness, justice, love, and wisdom. And it means we are created for relationship with Him and with one another.

The New Testament goes even further: it calls Jesus the true *eikōn* (εἰκών) of God—the perfect and complete representation of the Father. That means Christ shows us both what God is like and what humanity was meant to be.

So when Paul says believers are being renewed into the εικών of Christ, he means that salvation is not just forgiveness—it is restoration. The broken image is being repaired. The "old man" is being replaced by the "new man." And the likeness of Christ is being formed in us again.

> "The intelligent creature was made holy, and for this purpose, viz., to be happy in the enjoyment of God."
>
> — Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* 1

. . . Return to Chapter 6 Index . . .

Nancy	*CD06-Segment-5*

6.0 The Purpose of Humanity

Humanity's vocation is nothing less than to know God, love God, and reflect His character in the world He made. From the beginning, our dominion was never a license to exploit but a call to steward creation as those who bear the King's image. We were fashioned for communion with God Himself—echoing Augustine's confession that the human heart is restless until it rests in Him—and our identity is rooted in the relational life of the Triune God who made us. To be human is to live out this divine calling: receiving God's love, mirroring His goodness, and carrying His presence into the world as His image-bearers.

Deuteronomy 6:5; Psalm 16:11; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 43:7;
Matthew 22:37–39; John 15:8–10; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 2:10

> "Since man is said to be the image of God by reason of his intellectual nature, he is the most perfectly like God according to that in which he can best imitate God in his intellectual nature."
>
> — Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.93, a.4

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

7.0 The Fall of Adam

The story of the fall in Genesis chapter three unfolds as a tragic turning point in humanity's history, a moment when the goodness of creation is pierced by the lure of autonomy. The serpent's temptation invited the first humans to mistrust God's word, to exalt themselves, and to seize wisdom on their own terms. In a single act, the desire to be "like God" bent the human heart away from its Maker. The consequences were immediate and devastating: innocence gave way to shame, fellowship to alienation, and life to the certainty of death. Yet the impact did not end with Adam and Eve alone.

As Paul teaches in **Romans 5**, all humanity was implicated in Adam's transgression, drawn into the long shadow of his disobedience. The fall is not merely an ancient story—it is the explanation of the world we inhabit and the brokenness we carry within ourselves.

Genesis 3:1–7; Genesis 3:8–19; Psalm 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29;
John 8:34; Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Ephesians 2:1–3

> "By dignity I mean free-will, whereby he not only excels all other earthly creatures, but has dominion over them."
>
> — Bernard of Clairvaux *On Loving God* - Ch II

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

8.0 The Effects of the Fall on Human Nature

Human sin brought not only guilt but a deep corruption that reaches into every part of our nature, bending our desires, clouding our intellect, and weakening our will. The original righteousness with which humanity once stood before God was lost, leaving the image of God still present yet marred—recognizable, but no longer whole. In this wounded condition, people cannot restore themselves or repair what has gone awry by their own strength. This is referred to as the "Fallen Nature." It is also called "**original sin**." Only divine grace can heal what sin has distorted, renew what has been darkened, and restore the image to its true likeness in Christ.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul develops this doctrine by using the terms, **"old man"**—*palaios anthrōpos* (παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος)—and the **"new man"**—*kainos anthrōpos* (καινὸς ἄνθρωπος). This

fallen condition, expressed through the contrast between the "old man" and the "new man" represents humanity as it exists under the power of sin: corrupted in desire, darkened in understanding, and enslaved to patterns that oppose God. By contrast, the new man signifies the renewed human nature brought forth through union with Christ, in whom the divine image is restored and re-formed. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, believers "put off" the old man with its practices and "put on" the new man, created according to God's likeness in true righteousness and holiness.

Paul's language underscores that the healing of human nature is not self-generated but is the direct result of Christ's redemptive work and the Spirit's transforming power. Yet this renewal does not bypass human volition. Paul frames the believer's participation in terms of **imperatives**—commands to "put off" the *palaios anthrōpos* (παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος) and to "put on" the *kainos anthrōpos* (καινὸς ἄνθρωπος). A command presupposes the capacity to respond, whether in obedience or disobedience; therefore, while union with Christ provides the power and possibility of laying aside the old man, the believer must still engage the will in active cooperation with grace. Sanctification is neither autonomous human effort nor passive divine takeover, but a Spirit-enabled obedience in which the believer freely aligns his volition with the renewing work God has begun. This cooperation is sometimes referred to as **" Spirit-empowered but volitionally enacted."**[23]

Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; John 3:19–20;
Romans 3:23; Romans 7:18; Ephesians 4:22–24

> "He who is slave to sin is free to sin. But thereafter he will not be free to do right unless he is delivered from the bondage of sin."
>
> — *Augustine, Enchiridion*, Ch. 9, §30

Return to Chapter 6 Index

9.0 Human Dignity After the Fall

Human beings possess an enduring dignity because we bear the **imago Dei**, a worth that no failure, wound, or sin can erase. This truth forms the bedrock of Christian ethics, shaping how we pursue justice, defend the vulnerable, and affirm the value of every human life from conception to death.

The early church teachers and leaders consistently taught that the image of God remains the foundation upon which redemption itself is built: though marred by sin, the image endures, and it is precisely this surviving imprint that Christ restores, heals, and brings to its intended glory. Thus, all human interaction in society is to be guided by this fact: the human life is valuable because it carries the imago Dei.

Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:3–6; Isaiah 43:1–4; Malachi 2:10;
Luke 15:20–24; Romans 8:29–30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:4–10

[23] Gordon D. Fee emphasizes that Paul's ethical imperatives assume both divine empowerment and human volitional response: "The Spirit empowers the believer for obedience, but the believer must choose to walk in the Spirit." *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), pg 807.

> "He re-established the similitude after a sure manner, by assimilating man to the invisible Father through means of the visible Word."
>
> — *Irenaeus, Against Heresies* 5.16.2

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

10.0 Redemption and the Restoration of Humanity

Christ is the true Image of God, the One in whom the fullness of humanity and the fullness of deity meet without confusion or division. In Him we see not only what God is like, but what humanity was meant to be. As **Colossians 1:15** declares, He is "the image of the invisible God," and in taking on our flesh (John 1:14) He restores the very nature that sin had wounded. The early church, especially **Athanasius**, taught that the Incarnation is the healing of human nature itself—what Christ assumes, He redeems—is the way he expressed that.

Through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the image begins to be renewed within us, and sanctification becomes the restoration of our likeness to Christ. In Him, the true Image, humanity finds both its model and its destiny.

Isaiah 53:4–6; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Psalm 8:4–5; Daniel 7:13–14;
John 1:14; Romans 8:29–30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 1:15–20

> "Therefore He assumed a human body, in order that in it death might once for all be destroyed, and that men might be renewed according to the Image."
>
> — *Athanasius, On the Incarnation* 13

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

11.0 The Destiny of Humanity

Glorification is the final restoration of the image of God in humanity, the moment when the work begun in regeneration and shaped through sanctification reaches its perfect completion. In the resurrection, our bodies will be raised imperishable and transformed, fulfilling God's original purpose for embodied human life and revealing what redeemed humanity was always meant to become.

This consummation ushers us into our eternal vocation—unbroken communion with God, joyful worship in His presence, and everlasting participation in the life of the Triune God who made us, redeemed us, and brings His image to fulfillment.

Daniel 12:2–3; Isaiah 25:8–9; Psalm 16:11; Job 19:25–27;
John 11:25–26; Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 15:51–53; Revelation 21:3–4

> "The man that was manifested at the first creation of the world, and he that shall be after the consummation of all, are alike: they equally bear in themselves the Divine image... Our whole nature, then, extending from the first to the last, is, so to say, one image of Him Who is."
>
> — Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man, Ch XVI*

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

12.0 Conclusion

Anthropology tells the great story of humanity—created by God with purpose and dignity, fallen through sin into corruption and exile, and restored through the redeeming work of Christ. Our identity is grounded not in shifting cultural narratives but in God's original design: image-bearers made for communion, now marred yet pursued and renewed by grace.

Because of this, the doctrine of man becomes essential for understanding salvation, ethics, and the whole Christian life; it explains who we are, what has gone wrong, and how God is making all things new in Christ. Christian ethics—the philosophical foundation guiding how people behave and relate to each other—has its foundation in this doctrine of anthropology.

Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 8:3–6; Isaiah 53:4–6; Ezekiel 36:26–27;
John 1:14; Romans 5:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5

> "We, who have heard by the Scriptures that self-determining choice and refusal have been given by the Lord to men, rest in the infallible criterion of faith, manifesting a willing spirit."
>
> — Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Book II, Ch. 4

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

13.0 Application

The doctrine of humanity reminds us that we were created in the image of God with dignity, purpose, and responsibility. We are not accidents of nature or products of chance—we are image-bearers called to reflect God's character in how we think, speak, work, and relate to others. Understanding who we are before God should lead us to humility, gratitude, and intentional living. It also calls us to examine the places where sin has distorted God's design and to seek His grace to grow into the people He created us to be.

Assignment for the Week: Decide to be an "image-bearer" of God this week. The *Boys Scouts organization* has a motto that every scout is to follow. The motto is "do a good turn daily." So a Scout is to do a good deed to help someone every day as a way of developing that scout's character. This

week, we want you to follow this motto and do one "good deed" every day for a person with the intention of becoming an "image-bearer" of the character of God. It might be as small as holding the door open for a handicapped person or as large as paying for a tank full of gas for a stranded traveler. Write down what you did each day and at the end of a week reflect on those actions.

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

13.1 Eusebius Challenges You This Week

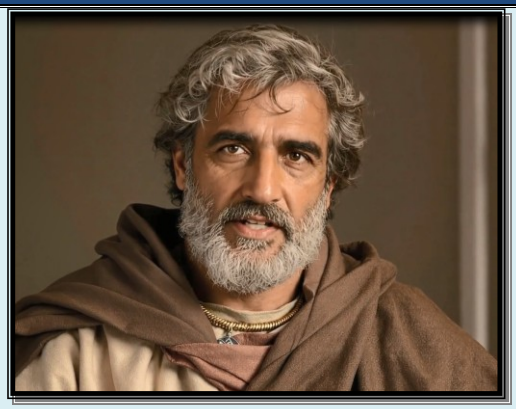
Eusebius Audio	*CD06-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Challenges You This Week

An image-bearer. Think of it! You, as part of humanity, are supposed to be the image-bearer -- the *eikōn* (εἰκών) -- of God.

That is both a privilege and a responsibility. As you do the assignment given above, think of it as a privilege. But also remember it is a responsibility.

So ask God this week to make you an accurate εἰκών, truly showing the world what God intended when he created Adam and through him humanity.



... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...



14.0 Epilog: The Value of an Image

I still carry a photograph of my wife that she gave me when we first began dating—her senior high school portrait— tucked into the front of my wallet as the very first item in the photo holder. Through the years, store clerks would often comment on how beautiful she was when I pulled out my credit card to pay. That little picture traveled with me through decades of life, marriage, professional activity, and ordinary days.

After about thirty-five years of marriage, I lost my wallet. I remember the sinking feeling that followed. I wasn't concerned about the money, the credit cards, or even my driver's license. All of those could be replaced. What grieved me was the thought that I had lost that photograph—the one with her handwriting on the back, the one she had given me when our story first began. I felt genuinely heartsick.

But a boy in our neighborhood found the wallet, and with his mother's help, brought it back to me. I was relieved beyond words. I thanked him and gave him a small reward, grateful not for the wallet, but for the return of that irreplaceable picture.

The photograph itself—paper and ink—has no intrinsic value. Yet it remains priceless to me (and I still carry it today, fifty-eight years later) because of **who it represents**. It is the image of the one I love and have shared my life with. Its worth is entirely in its representation.

That is similar to the **imago Dei**.

Every human being carries the image of God—the One I love and worship. Our value is not found in our physical composition, our abilities, or our social standing, but in the divine identity impressed upon us. This is why the doctrine of anthropology ascribes immeasurable worth to every human life. We are treasured not because of what we are made of, but because of **Whose image we bear**.

... Return to Chapter 6 Index ...

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Mere Christianity** — C. S. Lewis A clear, accessible exploration of human nature, morality, and the Christian vision of what we were made to be.
- **The Screwtape Letters** — C. S. Lewis A creative look at temptation, sin, and spiritual formation that helps readers understand the human condition.
- **The Purpose Driven Life** — Rick Warren A simple introduction to identity, purpose, and the meaning of human life from a Christian perspective.
- **Desiring God** — John Piper A readable call to understand humanity's deepest longing: joy in God.
- **Knowing God** — J. I. Packer A devotional yet thoughtful guide to who God is and what it means to be His people.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **On the Incarnation** — Athanasius A patristic classic on the restoration of human nature through the Word made flesh.
- **Confessions** — Augustine A profound exploration of the restless human heart, sin, grace, and the search for God.
- **The City of God** — Augustine A sweeping theological vision of humanity, history, sin, and redemption.
- **Theological Anthropology** — Marc Cortez A modern scholarly treatment of the doctrine of humanity in dialogue with Scripture and tradition.
- **The Human Condition** — Reinhold Niebuhr A penetrating analysis of human dignity and human sinfulness in the modern world.
- **Reordered Love, Reordered Lives** — David K. Naugle A philosophical and theological study of the human heart, desire, and the restoration of the image.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.
Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: ***https://www.ccel.org/fathers***

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 7

Full Chapter Audio	*CD07Audio-Full (19 minutes)*

Hamartiology:
The Doctrine of Sin

Sin is crouching at the door

"Most folks admit the world is full of sin; they just never suspect any of it is theirs."

Source unknown

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned . . .
Rom 5:12 [NASB]

Return to Table of Contents

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** Tells "The Rest of the Story"
2.0 Definition of Hamartiology
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Sin
3.1 Old Testament Vocabulary
3.2 New Testament Vocabulary
3.3 **Eusebius** on ἁμαρτία
4.0 The Nature of Sin
4.1 Sin as a Power
4.2 Sin as Corruption
4.3 Sin as Alienation
5.0 The Universality of Sin
5.1 Original Sin
5.2 Personal Sin
6.0 The Consequences of Sin
7.0 The Remedy for Sin
8.0 Accountability
9.0 Conclusion
10.0 Application
11.0 **Eusebius** Introduces Soteriology

Nancy | CD07-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction

Hamartiology—the doctrine of sin—stands at the center of Christian theology because it explains both the human condition and the ***necessity*** of redemption. Every major doctrine intersects with it: anthropology, soteriology, Christology, and eschatology. Without a clear understanding of sin, the biblical narrative loses coherence, the cross loses meaning, and the Christian life loses direction. This chapter surveys the biblical vocabulary of sin, the nature and effects of sin, the universality of human fallenness, and the theological implications that follow.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius Tells "The Rest of the Story"

Eusebius Audio | CD07-Segment-2V | Eusebius Video

Eusebius Tells "The Rest of the Story"



As I have traveled through the provinces of the Roman empire I have notice many road signs. I understand that you have such messages in your own land today. When you journey across the great country, America, you sometimes see a sign that reads, "**Jesus Saves**." I understand that some respond with a jest, saying, "I already save at Bank of America." Yet even in your humor, the sign speaks a truth that cannot be dismissed.

But that road sign is only the **second half** of the story. Without the first half, the second half cannot be appreciated. It's like opening a scroll of a mystery story and reading only the final lines and ignoring everything that came before. The solution to the mystery cannot be appreciated without seeing the rest of the story.

So what is the rest of the story? It is ***hamartia*** **(**ἁμαρτία**)**. This chapter sets that before you. There is a need to be saved, and that need arises from *hamartia* **(**ἁμαρτία**)** —both the universal condition that all humanity shares and the individual transgressions each person commits. One is inherited; the other is chosen. One belongs to the whole race; the other belongs to . . . YOU!

As you move through this chapter, look carefully for both kinds of *hamartia* **(**ἁμαρτία**)** . When you understand them, you will appreciate why the road sign speaks truth. "Jesus Saves" is not a slogan but the answer to the deepest need of the human soul. In this case, the rest of the story . . . is what comes first.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

2.0 Definition of Hamartiology

Hamartiology is the branch of Christian theology that studies the origin, nature, extent, and consequences of sin. The term derives from the Greek word *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία)**,** meaning "sin," combined with *logia* (-λογία)**,** meaning "study" or "doctrine." In systematic theology, hamartiology examines both **inherited sin** and **personal sin**, the moral and relational effects of sin on humanity, and the biblical framework for understanding human fallenness. As Millard Erickson notes, hamartiology is concerned with "the reality, universality, and seriousness of sin as presented in Scripture,"[24] making it foundational for understanding salvation, grace, and the work of Christ.

Genesis 3:1–7; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9;
Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; James 1:14–15

> "My sin was all the more incurable because I did not think myself a sinner."
>
> — Augustine, *Confessions* 5.10

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of Sin

Understanding the biblical doctrine of sin begins with the vocabulary Scripture uses to describe it. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament employ carefully chosen terms that reveal sin's nature, depth, and consequences. These words are not interchangeable; each carries its own nuance, tracing sin as failure, distortion, rebellion, trespass, and lawlessness. By examining the key Hebrew terms used in the Old Testament and their Greek counterparts—both in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX), and in the New Testament—we gain a clearer picture of how the Bible portrays humanity's condition before God. The following sections introduce the foundational vocabulary that shapes the biblical doctrine of hamartiology.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament Vocabulary

The Old Testament uses several key terms to describe sin, each adding depth and nuance to the biblical portrait of human rebellion. *ḥaṭṭā'āh* (חַטָּאָה**)** refers to "sin" as missing the mark, a failure to meet God's moral or covenantal standard, and in the Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint (LXX) it is most often translated with *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία)**,** the same word that becomes the dominant New Testament term for sin. The term *āvon* (עָוֹן) describes "iniquity," the inner crookedness

[24] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 235.

or moral distortion of the human heart, and is commonly rendered by *anomia* (ἀνομία) in the LXX, emphasizing lawlessness and disorder. Then *peša'* (פֶּשַׁע) denotes open rebellion or covenant breach, and the LXX frequently translates it with *paraptōma* (παράπτωμα) or at times *asebeia* (ἀσέβεια), highlighting ungodliness and defiance. Together these translation choices show that the biblical understanding of sin—across both Testaments—is not a simple mistake but a complex reality involving failure, distortion, and willful rebellion against God.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

3.2 New Testament Vocabulary

The New Testament uses several key words to describe the nature of sin, each highlighting a different aspect of humanity's failure before God. The most common term is *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία), meaning "to miss the mark," which shows that sin is not merely falling short of human potential but failing to meet the standard of God's holy character. Another word, *paraptōma* (παράπτωμα), describes a "false step" or "trespass," emphasizing that sin is not only missing the target but also stepping off the right path into territory where we do not belong. A third term, *anomia* (ἀνομία), portrays sin as "lawlessness," a deliberate posture of rebellion against God's authority. As John writes, "Sin is lawlessness," reminding us that the heart of sin is not ignorance but defiance.

Together, these terms portray sin as ***failure, corruption***, and ***revolt***.

Genesis 3:1–7; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9;
Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; James 1:14–15

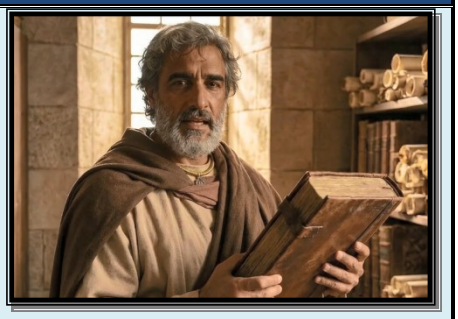
> "All of us, who have descended from impure seed, are born infected with the contagion of sin."
>
> — John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 2, Chapter 1, Section 5

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

3.3 Eusebius on ἁμαρτία

Eusebius Audio	CD07-Segment-4V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius on ἁμαρτία



500 years before the birth of Jesus there was a great conflict near Athens, in Greece. We refer to it as the Persian Wars. Herodotus tells the story about the mighty fleet of Xerxes making a fatal mistake that he calls a hamartia. We can understand what a hamartia is by looking at this story.

The Persians pressed into the narrow straits of Salamis with very large and powerful ships but their large size caused a problem. Their ships jammed together, unable to maneuver, and the smaller Greek vessels struck with precision. The Greeks, with their smaller boats, won the battle because of the hamartia of the Persians. A vast empire humbled by a single catastrophic error in judgment -- a hamartia.

Scripture uses this same term to describe the human catastrophe; hamartia is not merely a strategic blunder but a spiritual one, a turning of the heart that leads to separation from God. Just as the Persians' hamartia brought defeat, so humanity's hamartia brings spiritual ruin.

This classic story helps us see the Biblical truth more clearly: sin is not a small mistake but a decisive blunder that changes the outcome of the whole battle of life.

So when you see the word "sin" in a Bible verse, remember the battle where the Greeks defeated the Persians because the Persians committed a ***hamartia***!

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

Nancy	CD07-Segment-5

4.0 The Nature of Sin

The Bible presents sin as far more than isolated wrong actions; it is a comprehensive condition that affects every dimension of human life. Scripture describes sin as a **power** that dominates, a **corruption** that distorts the image of God, and an **alienation** that fractures our relationship with God, others, and ourselves. These three perspectives—***power, corruption, and alienation***—form a unified portrait of humanity's fallen condition and reveal why salvation must address ***not only what we do, but what we are apart from grace.***

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

4.1 Sin as a Power

Paul often describes sin as a dominating force—something that "reigns" (Romans 6:12) and enslaves. In this sense, sin -- *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία) -- is not merely an act but a tyrant. Humans are not neutral agents who occasionally do wrong; they are subjects under a hostile power apart from grace. In one sense, it is like an addiction that requires satisfaction.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

4.2 Sin as Corruption

Sin distorts the image of God -- *tselem Elohim* (צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים) -- in humanity. The mind becomes darkened, desires become disordered, and relationships become fractured. This corruption is pervasive, touching every aspect of human life, though it does not erase human dignity.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

4.3 Sin as Alienation

Sin produces alienation from God, from others, and even from oneself. In Genesis 3, the first instinct after sin is hiding—an instinctive withdrawal from God's presence. Alienation is not merely emotional; it is relational and spiritual.

Romans 6:12; Romans 6:16; Genesis 1:26–27; Romans 1:21;
Genesis 3:8–10; Isaiah 59:2; Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:1

> "Sin is universal in extent and intensive in its effects; no one escapes its presence or its power."
>
> — Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (2013), p. 577

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

5.0 The Universality of Sin

Romans 3:23 summarizes the biblical witness: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The universality of *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία) is not a statistical observation but a theological truth rooted in the solidarity of the human race.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

5.1 Original Sin

Christian tradition uses the term "original sin" to describe the inherited condition of fallenness. Humans do not bear guilt for Adam's specific act, but they inherit a corrupted nature and a world already bent away from God.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

5.2 Personal Sin

While humans inherit a sinful condition, they also commit actual sins—acts of disobedience, neglect, and rebellion. Personal sin flows naturally from the fallen nature but remains fully accountable. Sin can also be result of omission as well as commission. James indicates that knowing what is right to do and not doing it is actually considered a sin.

Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5; Genesis 3:1–7;
Ephesians 2:1; Isaiah 53:6; 1 John 1:8; James 1:14–15

> "Sin is a wound; repentance is the medicine that heals the soul."
>
> — John Chrysostom, *On Repentance and Almsgiving*

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

6.0 The Consequences of Sin

Sin produces consequences that reach far beyond isolated actions, touching every dimension of human existence. At the deepest level, it brings **spiritual death**—a separation from God, the very source of life, which makes redemption essential long before physical death arrives. Sin also creates **moral disorder**, twisting human desires in what Augustine called *ordo amoris*, a disordered love in which we pursue what should be avoided and neglect what should be cherished. Its effects spill outward into **social breakdown**, fracturing relationships and producing violence, injustice, exploitation, and oppression—problems that are ultimately theological, not merely societal. And the reach of sin extends even to creation itself, producing a **cosmic impact**, as Romans chapter eight portrays, the entire created order groaning under the weight of human rebellion. Together these consequences reveal that sin is not a small or private matter but a reality that distorts every level of life.

Genesis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 1:21–24; Jeremiah 17:9;
Micah 6:8; Isaiah 59:2; Romans 8:20–22; Colossians 1:21

> "Therefore, because we have been entangled in this kind of tyranny and have been enslaved by death through evil passions which assault us like enemies and executioners, it is good that we pray for God's Kingdom to come upon us."
>
> — Gregory of Nyssa, On the Lord's Prayer

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

7.0 The Remedy for Sin

Redemption begins with **divine initiative**, for Scripture consistently portrays God—not humanity—as the One who moves first. We do not climb out of *hamartia;* God descends to rescue. That rescue reaches its decisive moment at the **cross**, where Christ bears sin, breaks its power, and opens the way to reconciliation through a rich array of biblical images—sacrifice, ransom, and victory. Yet salvation is more than forgiveness; it includes regeneration and sanctification, the Spirit's ongoing work of renewing the heart, reordering desires, and empowering obedience. Through this lifelong process, the Spirit restores the image of God so that believers increasingly reflect the character of the One who redeemed them.

John 6:44; Romans 5:8; Romans 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17;
Titus 3:5; Galatians 5:16; Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24

> "Now an action is imputed to an agent, when it is in his power, so that he has dominion over it... Hence it follows that good or evil, in voluntary actions alone, renders them worthy of praise or blame."
>
> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I–II, Q. 21, Art. 2

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

8.0 Accountability

Although humanity inherits a fallen nature from Adam, Scripture does not teach that individuals are condemned **merely** because of Adam's sin. The inherited condition of fallenness inevitably produces conscious, deliberate acts or omissions—our own sin and trespasses and it is these personal sins that bring moral accountability before God. Until a person reaches a point of genuine awareness of right and wrong, Scripture indicates that God does not hold them accountable for sins committed in ignorance.

Moses teaches that "the person who does anything with a high hand… shall bear his guilt," but the one who sins unintentionally is treated differently (Numbers 15:27–30). Paul likewise affirms that "sin is not counted where there is no law" (Romans 5:13), indicating that moral accountability presupposes moral awareness. Thus, while the sinful nature is inherited, **condemnation is tied to personal, conscious transgression**, not to Adam's guilt alone. Then there is James 4:17 that points directly to awareness before accountability. This verse is one of the clearest biblical statements that **moral accountability requires moral awareness**.

... Return to Chapter 7 Index ...

9.0 Conclusion

Hamartiology is not an abstract doctrine but a lens through which the entire Christian story becomes intelligible. It explains the human condition, reveals the depth of divine grace, and clarifies the purpose of the Christian life. To understand sin is to understand why redemption is necessary, why the cross is central, and why the Christian hope is ultimately a hope for restoration. In the end, hamartiology is not a doctrine of despair but a doorway to the good news that God has acted decisively to heal what sin has broken.

Numbers 15:27–30; Romans 5:13; James 4:17; Ezekiel 18:20;
Luke 12:47–48; Romans 2:12; John 9:41; 1 Timothy 1:13

> "Since those who were created to serve the Lord were being held fast by the captivity of the enemy, He will redeem their souls by His precious blood. Therefore, no one of those who hope in Him will be found in sin."
>
> — Basil the Great, Homily on Psalm 33

Return to Chapter 7 Index

10.0 Application

Understanding the doctrine of sin should lead to more than agreement—it should lead to **honest self-examination**. Scripture teaches that sin is not just a mistake but a deep distortion of the heart that affects our desires, relationships, and fellowship with God. Because of this, every believer must take sin seriously, confess it quickly, and turn from it deliberately. The goal is not guilt for its own sake but a renewed dependence on Christ, who alone breaks sin's power. As you grow in your awareness of sin's reality, let it drive you toward humility, repentance, and a deeper gratitude for the grace that meets you every day.

Assignment for the Week: Choose one of the passages below. Read it carefully then look up a commentary and read through the section in the commentary where it discusses the passage you selected. Below are links to three good websites that provide access to commentaries. Finally, write a paragraph or two about what you learned about the verse.

Matthew 5:27–28; Luke 5:31–32; John 8:34; Romans 3:23

> ."As for me, as long as I look at myself, my eye is filled with bitterness. But if I look up and fix my eyes on the aid of divine mercy, this happy vision of God soon tempers the bitter vision of myself."
>
> — Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, Sermon 74

Return to Chapter 7 Index

11.0 Eusebius Introduces Soteriology

Eusebius Audio	CD07-Segment-6V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Introduces Soteriology



As you come to the end of this chapter, allow me to speak to you plainly. What you have read is heavy, and I know it. Hamartiology is not pleasant to study, for it forces us to look at the truth about ourselves. Our nature is bent, and our actions reveal the bend. The Apostle Paul called this condition the "old man," and I have seen its effects in every age I have recorded.

Kingdoms fall, families break, and hearts grow cold—not because of politics or circumstance, but because of ***hamartia*** at work within us.

Yet I remind you of what I said at the beginning: the message "**Jesus Saves**" only makes sense when you understand ***the need to be saved***. Without the first half of the story, the second half is only a slogan. Now you have seen the first half. You have seen the wound, the darkness, the separation. It is unpleasant, yes, but it is necessary. No physician can heal what the patient refuses to acknowledge.

And now we turn to the mystery that answers this dilemma. The next chapter concerns **Soteriology**—a learned word, but a simple truth. It is the study of salvation, the story of how God Himself stepped into history to mend what hamartia has broken. You have faced the problem; now you will see the solution. I look forward to showing you how the grace of God overcomes the old man and brings forth a new one. The bad news prepares you for the good, and the good is greater than you imagine.

Return to Chapter 7 Index



Tetelestai - It Is Finished

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **The Pursuit of Holiness** — Jerry Bridges A clear, practical introduction to the nature of sin and the believer's call to holiness. Bridges explains sin's subtlety and the need for disciplined obedience.
- **The Screwtape Letters** — C. S. Lewis A creative exploration of temptation and spiritual warfare. While not a systematic treatment of sin, it vividly illustrates how sin operates in daily life.
- **Knowing God** — J. I. Packer Contains several chapters that explain God's holiness, human sinfulness, and the need for atonement in a way accessible to general readers.
- **The Holiness of God** — R. C. Sproul A compelling introduction to God's holiness and why sin is so serious. Sproul's treatment of Isaiah 6 is especially helpful.
- **Mere Christianity** — C. S. Lewis Offers a clear explanation of the moral law, human fallenness, and the logic of Christian redemption.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **The Nature of Sin** — G. C. Berkouwer A rigorous theological study of sin's essence, effects, and relationship to human freedom and responsibility.
- **Hamartiology in the New Testament** — Colin Gunton (various essays) Explores sin as relational rupture and examines key Greek terms such as ἁμαρτία (*hamartia*), ἀνομία (*anomia*), and παράπτωμα (*paraptōma*).
- **The Doctrine of Sin** — I. Howard Marshall (in *New Bible Dictionary* and other works) A concise but scholarly overview of biblical terminology and theological development.
- **Paul and the Power of Sin** — James D. G. Dunn A detailed study of Paul's understanding of sin as a dominating power rather than merely individual acts.
- **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)** — Gerhard Kittel, ed. Essential for in-depth study of Greek terms such as ἁμαρτία, ἀνομία, ἀσέβεια (*asebeia*), and παράπτωμα. Provides historical, linguistic, and theological analysis.
- **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)** — Harris, Archer, Waltke Authoritative entries on Hebrew terms such as חַטָּאָה (*ḥaṭṭā'āh*), עָוֹן (*'āvon*), and פֶּשַׁע (*peša'*), including LXX equivalents.
- **Sin: A History** — Gary A. Anderson A scholarly but readable exploration of how Jewish and Christian traditions have understood sin, especially the metaphors of debt and burden.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.
Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: ***https://www.ccel.org/fathers***

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.



Jesus' death on the Cross paid the debt caused by *hamartia*

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 8

Full Chapter Audio	*CD08Audio-Full (41 minutes)*

Soteriology:
The Doctrine of Salvation

According to His mercy He saved us

"For He had mercy on us, and in His compassion saved us, having beheld in us much error and perdition, even when we had no hope of salvation, save that which came from Him"

Second Clement 1.7, Apostolic Fathers, A.D. 100 (?)

For by Grace you have been saved, through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9 [NASB]

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** With a Puzzle about 3:35 and 3:16
2.0 The Doctrine of Salvation
3.0 The Definition of Soteriology
4.0 Salvation Vocabulary
4.1 Old Testament Words
4.2 New Testament Words
4.3 Grace in the Old and New Testaments
4.4 **Eusebius** On The Grammar of Ephesians 2:8
5.0 The Need for Salvation
6.0 The Source of Salvation: The Triune God
6.1 The Father's Saving Purpose
6.2 The Son's Saving Work
6.3 The Spirit's Saving Application
7.0 The Person and Work of Jesus in Salvation
7.1 The Crucial Concept
7.2 **Eusebius** On the Crucial Concept
8.0 The Application of Salvation
9.0 The Completion of Salvation
9.1 Death and the Intermediate State
9.2 Resurrection and Glorification
9.3 Eternal Communion with God
10.0 Conclusion
10.1 **Eusebius** On the Diagnostic Questions
10.2 **Eusebius** Closing Comment

Nancy	CD08-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction.

Salvation is the one doctrine in this book that cannot be misunderstood without eternal consequences. All other truth—creation, sin, Scripture, Christ, the church, the Christian life—can be studied, admired, and even mastered, but if the doctrine of salvation is missed, all the rest is in vain. A person may grasp the Trinity with precision, articulate Christology with brilliance, and explain anthropology with insight, yet remain forever separated from God if they do not truly understand and embrace the salvation He offers in Christ. All the doctrines that precede or follow this doctrine are important, but this one is ***essential***; to disregard it is to choose an eternity apart from God. Unfortunately, many "theologians" have missed this point in their own lives!

This chapter, therefore, stands at the center of the Christian faith, for **getting salvation wrong is to lose everything**. As the rich young ruler in the Gospels asked Jesus, we too must ask, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" [Mark 10:17]

Isaiah 45:22; Ezekiel 18:4; Joel 2:32; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:18;
Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9–10; 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9

> "You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."
>
> Augustine, *Confessions* I.1, c. A.D. 397–400

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius With a Puzzle about 3:15 and 3:16

Eusebius Audio	CD08-Segment-2V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius With a Puzzle about 3:15 and 3:16



Let me start this chapter with a little puzzle for you. In the Scriptures, two verses—*3:15* and *3:16*—stand at the heart of the story of salvation. In my own time we had no such chapter and verse divisions, yet using your system, these two numbers reveal a mystery worth pondering. 3:15 comes before 3:16.

When Adam and Eve fell, the Lord spoke the earliest promise of redemption in *3:15*: 'I will put enmity between you and the woman… he shall bruise your head.'

This was the first provision of a Savior, declared immediately, without delay or hesitation.

Much later, the fullness of that promise appears in *3:16*: 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son…' What was whispered at the dawn of human history is proclaimed openly in the gospel.

So as you study this chapter on salvation, remember the puzzle: the plan begins in *3:15* -- that is Genesis 3:15 -- and reaches its glorious fulfillment in 3:16 -- that is John 3:16. One promise. . . one purpose . . . one Savior."

3:15 comes before 3:16.

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

Nancy | *CD08-Segment-3*

2.0 The Doctrine of Salvation

Soteriology begins with the breathtaking truth that God Himself has acted to rescue, renew, and restore a humanity shattered by sin. Salvation is not an abstract doctrine or a theological accessory—it is the ***divine answer to the deepest problem explored in hamartiology***, the previous chapter, and it is the only remedy for guilt, corruption, and death. At the center of this saving work stands Jesus, the Source and Substance of all grace, the One in whom God's redeeming purpose is revealed and accomplished. The early church understood this with unmistakable clarity, which is why they spoke so urgently and so beautifully about the life that God offers in His Son. Their voices still call us to see that salvation is the heart of the Christian faith, the doctrine upon which every other truth ultimately rests.

The one unforgettable truth in soteriology is that it is God who takes the initiative. As Francis Thompson memorably described in his famous 1893 poem, God is the "**Hound of Heaven**," pursuing the fleeing sinner with a love that refuses to let go.

Isaiah 59:16; Ezekiel 34:11–12; Isaiah 53:4–6; Hosea 11:8–9;
Luke 19:10; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4–5; Titus 3:4–7

> "He himself is therefore sin as we ourselves are righteousness—not our own but God's, not in ourselves but in him. Just as he was sin—not his own but ours, rooted not in himself but in us—so he showed forth through the likeness of sinful flesh, in which he was crucified, that since sin was not in him he could then, so to say, die to sin by dying in the flesh, which was "the likeness of sin."
>
> Augustine, *Enchiridion* 13.41–42**,421-423 A.D.**

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

3.0 The Definition of Soteriology

Soteriology is the study of how God saves, a doctrine that begins with the rich biblical term ***soteria*** **(**σωτηρία**)**, meaning *salvation*, *deliverance*, and *rescue*. From this foundation, the scope of salvation unfolds into the full sweep of God's redeeming work—**redemption**, **reconciliation**, **renewal**, and ultimately **glorification**, the restoration of humanity to the glory for which it was created. At every point, salvation is **God's initiative**, rooted in His character, His mercy, His justice, and His unwavering purpose to redeem a people for Himself. Thus **soteriology** explores not only what God saves us *from*, but what He saves us *to*, revealing the heart of the Christian faith and the center of all doctrine.

Exodus 14:13; Isaiah 52:10; Ezekiel 36:25–27; Daniel 12:3;
Luke 1:68–69; Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17–18; Romans 8:29–30

> "...be it agreed between us that man was made for happiness, which cannot be attained in this life, and that no being can ever arrive at happiness, save by freedom from sin, and that no man passes this life without sin... Therefore, in order that man may attain happiness, remission of sin is necessary."
>
> Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo* I.10, c. A.D. 1098

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

4.0 Salvation Vocabulary

When the Bible talks about salvation, it uses a rich family of words that help us see just how wide and deep God's saving work really is.

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

4.1 Old Testament Words

In the Old Testament, the vocabulary of salvation begins with *yasha* (יָשַׁע "to save, deliver") and *yeshuah* (יְשׁוּעָה "salvation")—the very word behind the name *Joshua*, which echoes forward into the name "Jesus." Then you meet terms like *ga'al* (גָּאַל "to redeem") and the go'el (גֹּאֵל "kinsman-redeemer"), the family protector who steps in to rescue a relative in need, as Boaz does in the Book of Ruth. Other key words such as *padah* (פָּדָה "to ransom"), *kaphar* (כָּפַר "to atone, to cover"), *shalom* (שָׁלוֹם "peace, wholeness"), and *raphah* (רָפָא "to heal") round out the picture. Together they show that God's salvation is far more than escape from danger—it is the restoration of life, peace, healing, and relationship with Him.

The capstone terminology in the Old Testament for God's savings grace is, *ḥesed* (חֶסֶד) which describes God's covenant love—His faithful, loyal mercy that moves Him to rescue, forgive, and remain steadfast toward His people. This is the equivalent of the New Testament word for grace -- *charis* (χάρις) which expresses that same saving initiative as divine grace, God's unearned favor shown most fully in Christ. While *ḥesed* emphasizes God's covenant commitment and steadfast love, *charis* highlights the free and undeserved nature of that love. Together they reveal one continuous truth: salvation is always rooted in God's gracious character—His faithful mercy in the OT and His redeeming grace in the NT—now fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

4.2 New Testament Words

By the time you reach the New Testament, the vocabulary expands and sharpens. The central word is *sōtēria* (σωτηρία "salvation, deliverance"), paired with the verb *sōzō* (σῴζω "to save, rescue, heal"). Jesus is called *sōtēr* (σωτήρ "Savior") because He accomplishes everything these words describe. Other terms fill in the details: *lytroō* (λυτρόω, "to redeem, ransom") and *apolytrosis* (ἀπολύτρωσις "redemption, release") speak of liberation; *katallassō* (καταλλάσσω, "to reconcile") describes restored relationship; *dikaioō* (δικαιόω, "to justify, declare righteous") explains God's legal verdict of acceptance; *hagiasmos* (ἁγιασμός, "sanctification, holiness") points to the ongoing transformation of the believer; and *zōē* (ζωή, "life, eternal life") reminds us that the goal of salvation is nothing less than sharing in God's own life.

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

4.3 Grace in the Old and New Testaments.

The capstone terminology in the Old Testament for God's savings grace is, *ḥesed* (חֶסֶד) which describes God's covenant love—His faithful, loyal mercy that moves Him to rescue, forgive, and remain steadfast toward His people. This is the equivalent of the New Testament word for grace -- *charis* (χάρις) -- which expresses that same saving initiative as divine grace, God's unearned favor shown most fully in Christ. While *ḥesed* emphasizes God's covenant commitment and steadfast love, *charis* in the New Testament highlights the free and undeserved nature of that love, forgiveness and redemption. Together they reveal one continuous truth: salvation is always rooted in God's gracious character—His faithful mercy in the Old Testament and His redeeming grace in the New Testament—now fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The concept of salvation by grace through faith is best encapsulated with Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by Grace you have been saved, through faith;
and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;
not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Together, these Old and New Testament terms weave a single story: God rescuing His people, restoring what was broken, and bringing them into the fullness of life He always intended.

Exodus 6:6; Isaiah 12:2; Ruth 4:14; Psalm 103:3;
Luke 1:47; John 3:17; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 5:10

> "The death of the Lord our God should not be a cause of shame for us; rather, it should be our greatest hope, our greatest glory. For in taking upon Himself the death that He found in us, He has most faithfully promised to give us life in Himself."
>
> Augustine, *Sermon 233* (On the Resurrection), early 5th century

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

4.4 Eusebius On The Grammar of Ephesians 2:8

Eusebius Audio	CD08-Segment-4V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On The Grammar of Ephesians 2:8



In Ephesians 2:8, the apostle uses two Greek words that carry a great truth. He writes *este sesōsmenoi* (*ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι*).

The first word, *este (ἐστε)*, simply means 'you are.' It speaks of your present condition—your current standing before God. It does not point to something uncertain or future, but to what is really true of you now if you have indeed trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord,

The second word, *sesōsmenoi* (*σεσῳσμένοι*), describes how you came to be in that condition. It points to a saving act God has already accomplished in your personal past, an act completed and whose results continue into this very moment in your life.

Put together, the apostle is saying something like this: *'You are now in the condition of having been brought into the condition of being saved, . . . and that state continues even today in your life.'*

This is the wonder of the gospel. Salvation is not a hope you must achieve, nor a work you must finish. It is a gift God has already completed in you as you trust Jesus, and a reality He continues to uphold in your life today.

… Return to Chapter 8 Index …

Nancy	CD08-Segment-5

5.0 The Need for Salvation

On May 18, 1980, the volcano of Mount St. Helens in Oregon had a massive eruption. For weeks in advance, authorities had been warning resident on or near the mountain to evacuate. One man, Harry R. Truman, lived at Spirit Lake on the mountain. He insisted that the mountain would not harm him. He simply would not abandon his home in spite of the repeated warnings and sign. When the mountain did explode, Harry was still there, ignoring the danger signs. No one has seen or heard from Harry since. He ignored the warnings and suffered the consequences.

Most people don't wake up thinking they need to be saved from anything. They either do not see the warnings or ignore them when they do. Along with Harry R. Truman, they refuse to understand the dangers. There is a familiar phrase often seen in signs along the highway that says, **"Jesus saves."** More than one person has shrugged and said, "I already save at Bank of America," proving the point that if you don't think you're in danger, the offer of rescue sounds irrelevant.

That's why there is a principle in personal evangelism training that says—"***you have to lose a person before you can save them***"—which actually captures a deep biblical truth. Unless the reality of sin is understood, salvation feels unnecessary. This is the connection between **hamartiology** and **soteriology**:

without seeing the weight of guilt, corruption, and inability, the good news of rescue, redemption, and restoration has no context. ***Only when the problem is grasped does the solution become meaningful.***

At the end of World War II, Europe lay in ruins—cities flattened, economies shattered, and entire nations unable to rebuild themselves. Into that devastation stepped the United States with the **Marshall Plan**, a massive, intentional act of rescue. America, the victor in the war, didn't stand back and say, "Please, Europe—you can do it. Rescue yourself." Instead, it took the initiative, poured in resources, rebuilt infrastructure, and quite literally **saved Europe from itself**, lifting it from ruin into prosperity.

That picture gives us a small window into the far greater story of salvation. Humanity, as described in **anthropology** and **hamartiology**, is not merely damaged but spiritually devastated—guilty, corrupted, and unable to rebuild or restore itself. No amount of moral effort or religious determination can reverse the destruction sin has caused. And just as Europe could not rise from the rubble ***without outside intervention***, so the sinner cannot rise from spiritual ruin without divine help. That is why God took the initiative. In Jesus Christ—the true victor—God stepped into our wreckage, not to advise us from a distance but to rescue, rebuild, and restore. Soteriology begins right there: not with human effort, but with God's decisive action to bring the lost sinner out of ruin and into the riches of spiritual life.

Proverbs 14:12; Isaiah 55:6–7; Ezekiel 33:4–5; Psalm 40:2;
John 3:19–20; Romans 3:23–24; Ephesians 2:1–5; Titus 3:5

> "What could result from the contemplation of compassion so marvelous and so undeserved, favor so free and so well attested, kindness so unexpected, clemency so unconquerable, grace so amazing except that the soul should withdraw from all sinful affections, reject all that is inconsistent with God's love, and yield herself wholly to heavenly things?"
>
> **Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God* (*De Diligendo Deo*)**, chapter 3, **c. 1126**

… Return to Chapter 8 Index …

6.0 The Source of Salvation: The Triune God

Salvation required an **all-hands-on-deck** response from God Himself. The problem of sin was too deep for a partial solution, so the entire Trinity is involved in the work of redemption. **The Father** planned it, **the Son** accomplished it, and **the Spirit** applies it. Seeing salvation from these three angles helps us understand its source and sets the stage for the sections that follow.

Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 2:7–8; Isaiah 61:1; Ezekiel 36:27;
John 6:38–39; Ephesians 1:7; Titus 3:5–6; 1 Peter 1:2

> "Lord thus has redeemed us through His own blood, giving His soul for our souls, and His flesh for our flesh, . . . attaching man to God by His own incarnation, and bestowing upon us at His coming immortality durably and truly, by means of communion with God . . ."
>
> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* V.1.1, c. A.D. 180

… Return to Chapter 8 Index …

6.1 The Father's Saving Purpose

The Father's role in salvation begins long before the cross and reaches far beyond the moment of conversion. Scripture teaches that salvation rests on the **eternal decree** of God—the settled purpose formed in His own wisdom before the foundation of the world. That decree is not cold or mechanical; its source is **love as the fountain of redemption**. The Father's saving plan flows out of His desire to bring sinners into His family, which is why **adoption** stands as the goal toward which redemption moves. In this sense, the **Father's role in salvation** is both initiating and relational: He purposes salvation, He sends the Son to accomplish it, and He welcomes redeemed people as His own children.

Isaiah 46:10; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 11:1; Malachi 3:17;
John 17:24; Romans 8:29–30; Galatians 4:4–5; Ephesians 1:4–5

> "He took our nature, that by renewing it He might restore it to its original state."
>
> Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* II.13, c. A.D. 380

Return to Chapter 8 Index

6.2 The Son's Saving Work

The **work of Christ** begins with the miracle of the **incarnation**, where the eternal Son took on true humanity in order to heal it from the inside out. In becoming man, the Son entered our condition not as a spectator but as a participant, restoring in Himself what sin had ruined in us. His life was marked by perfect **obedience**, His death accomplished full **atonement**, and His resurrection broke the **power of death**. Each stage of His earthly mission contributes to the single, unified work of redemption. His final word on the cross was *tetelestai* (τετέλεσται), "it is finished, it is completed, paid in full" John 19:30), the declaration that His saving work was fully accomplished.

Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:4–5; Daniel 7:13–14; Psalm 16:10;
John 1:14; Philippians 2:6–8; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 10:12–14

> "He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves."
>
> John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Corinthians* 5.15, c. A.D. 390

Return to Chapter 8 Index

6.3 The Spirit's Saving Application

The **role of the Holy Spirit** is in the miracle of **regeneration**—the new birth that awakens the sinner to spiritual life. What was once dead becomes alive, not by human effort but by the Spirit's sovereign work. This new life immediately brings the believer into **union with Christ**, the spiritual bond in which all the benefits of salvation are received. Through this union, the believer shares in Christ's righteousness, His life, and His victory.

From that point forward, the Spirit carries out the lifelong work of **sanctification**, shaping the believer into Christ's likeness and empowering obedience. This ongoing transformation is also the ground of **perseverance**, for the same Spirit who gives life also sustains it. In every stage—from new birth to final glorification—the Holy Spirit is the active agent who applies, maintains, and completes the saving work of God in the believer.

Ezekiel 36:26–27; Joel 2:28–29; Isaiah 32:15–17; Psalm 51:10–12;
John 3:5–6; Romans 8:9–11; Galatians 5:22–25; Philippians 1:6

> "The order of divine grace is such that it goes before our merits; it is not given because we have done good works, but that we may be able to do them."
>
> Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs* 20.2, c. A.D. 1135

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

7.0 The Person and Work of Jesus in Salvation

Christ stands at the center of Christian anthropology and salvation because He is **the true Image of God**. Scripture declares that He is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15) and that in Him "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). What humanity lost through sin is restored through **union with Christ**, for He embodies perfectly what we were created to be. In Christ we see not only God revealed, but humanity renewed. The restoration of the image is not achieved by human effort but by being joined to the One who is Himself the Image. Through this union, believers begin to reflect the likeness that was marred in the fall and renewed in redemption.

This restoration becomes possible through the incarnation and atoning work of Christ. Athanasius famously said, *"What is not assumed is not healed,"* meaning that Christ took on the fullness of human nature so that He might heal it from within. The incarnation is therefore not merely a theological concept but the beginning of salvation itself—the moment when God entered our condition to restore what sin had broken. From there, Christ's saving work unfolds through His obedience, His atoning death, and His victorious resurrection. The cross stands as sacrifice**,** victory**,** and substitution, addressing guilt, breaking the power of evil, and bearing the judgment we deserved. His resurrection is the vindication of His work and the dawn of new creation, guaranteeing that those united to Him share in His life. In this way, the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection form one seamless work of redemption, revealing Christ as the healer of human nature and the restorer of God's image in His people.

Genesis 1:26–27; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 53:11; Psalm 16:10; John 1:14;
Romans 5:18–19; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14–17

> "The death of Christ is of such value that it suffices to pay for the sins of the whole world."
>
> Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* II.18, c. A.D. 1098

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

7.1 The Crucial Concept.

The center of the Christian gospel is not a set of ideas, virtues, or spiritual insights but a **historical saving event**—the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and His bodily resurrection on the third day. Everything in Scripture moves toward this moment, and everything in Christian faith flows from it. In the cross, God deals decisively with sin; in the resurrection, He inaugurates new creation and guarantees the believer's future life. No other religion rests its hope on a **historical act** in which God Himself enters human history, dies as a substitute, and rises in victory. This is the **unique, non-negotiable heart of Christianity**, the ***event*** by which God saves individuals and the foundation upon which every other doctrine stands. As the Apostle Paul says in First Corinthians 15:14, ". . . if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain." [NASB]

That ***event*** is personally applied to each individual as they respond to the message by a confession of faith: "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart *a person* believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." Romans 10:9-10 [NASB]

Isaiah 53:5–6; Psalm 22:16–18; Jonah 2:6; Hosea 6:2;
John 19:30; Acts 2:24; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

> "Faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing; it is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly."
>
> Martin Luther, *Preface to Romans*, A.D. 1522

Return to Chapter 8 Index

7.2 Eusebius On the Crucial Concept

Eusebius Audio	*CD08-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Crucial Concept



As a historian, I deal in counting time and placing historical events into a real chronology. In my day, we related the time of an event to the reign of a king or emperor.

But I have learned that a few generations after my time, the world began to number its years based on a far greater moment — the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Consider this, beloved: whenever a man writes the date on a letter, a decree, or even a household record, he is—whether he knows it or not—bearing witness to a **real event in history**. The birth of Jesus is no myth; it is the moment when the eternal Word became a man. His death upon the cross is no legend; it was seen by crowds and recorded by witnesses. His resurrection is no hidden tale; it is the triumph that changed the course of the world.

And so even the calendar itself proclaims what the church has always confessed: our faith rests on acts of God accomplished in time. It is a genuine **historical event**. The birth, death, and resurrection of the God-Man are the fixed points from which history is measured. Time counts from Him, because salvation comes from Him.

So **the event in history is the crucial concept**. As the Apostle said, If Christ is not raised, your faith is in vain, and you are still dead in your sins.

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

Nancy	*CD08-Segment-7*

8.0 The Application of Salvation

Salvation is such a rich and multi-layered work of God that the Bible describes it using several different expressions. Each term highlights a different angle of the same saving reality. It is like a diamond reflecting and sparkling differently from different angles but still the same jewel. Words like calling**,** regeneration**,** conversion**,** justification**,** adoption**,** and sanctification are not separate salvations but different ways of explaining what God does in bringing a sinner from death to life. These expressions help us see the fullness of God's work—how He calls, gives life, turns the heart, declares righteousness, welcomes into His family, and shapes the believer into Christ's likeness.

Calling. Salvation begins with God's **calling**. Through the external call of the gospel, the message of Christ is proclaimed to the ears. Through the internal call of the Spirit, that same message reaches the heart. The outward invitation and the inward awakening work together so that a sinner not only hears the truth but is drawn to embrace it. Remember the expression "***The Hound of Heaven***?"

Regeneration. In response to that call, the Spirit brings about **regeneration**—the new birth. Jesus referred to this as being "born again" or "born anew." This is the moment when spiritual life begins, when the heart is awakened, and when the image of God starts to be renewed within. Regeneration is not self-improvement; it is God giving life where there was none.

Conversion. Regeneration produces conversion, the turning of the heart toward God in repentance and faith. Even these responses are gifts of grace, not human achievements. Conversion is the sinner's first conscious step toward Christ, enabled entirely by the Spirit's work within.

Justification. Through faith, the believer receives justification—God's declaration that the sinner is righteous in His sight because Christ's righteousness has been imputed to them. Justification brings peace with God, ending the hostility caused by sin and establishing a new standing before Him.

Adoption. Justification leads into adoption, where God gives the believer a new identity as His child. No longer strangers or enemies, believers are welcomed into the family of God, with all the privileges, security, and affection that come with belonging to Him.

Sanctification. From that point forward, the Spirit carries out sanctification—the process of being renewed in the likeness of Christ. This work restores what sin distorted and shapes the believer's character, desires, and actions to reflect the Savior they now follow.

Perseverance. Perseverance lives in the tension between two truths that Scripture places side by side and never apologizes for: the believer's security in Christ and the warnings against falling away. On the one hand, the New Testament speaks with deep confidence about God's preserving grace—that those who are in Christ are held by His power, kept by His promise, and sealed by His Spirit (e.g. John 10:28). On the other hand, those same Scriptures issue sober warnings about the danger of turning from Christ, drifting from the faith, or committing the kind of deliberate rejection the Bible calls apostasy. These warnings are not hypothetical; they are real calls to remain faithful, to continue in the grace we have received, and to take seriously the possibility of **"**falling from grace**"** (e.g. Galatians 5:3)

The tension is intentional. The Bible never resolves it by collapsing one truth into the other. It does not say, "You are secure, therefore perseverance doesn't matter," nor does it say, "Perseverance is required, therefore security is uncertain." Instead, it holds both truths together: God keeps His people, and His people must keep to Christ. Throughout Protestant history, major divisions have formed when one side of this tension dominates—some traditions emphasizing eternal security so strongly that the warnings seem empty, others stressing the warnings so heavily that assurance becomes fragile. But Scripture maintains both. True **perseverance** is the lived expression of God's preserving grace, and the warnings against apostasy are one of the very means God uses to keep His people faithful to Christ.

> **Note on Repentance.** Repentance in Scripture is the word *metanoia* (μετάνοια), which literally means a change of mind. When the Holy Spirit works through the calling of the gospel, He brings a deep realization of the attitudes, choices, and behaviors that reveal our need for salvation. Repentance is the sinner's response to that awakening—a genuine change of mind and attitude toward sin and toward God. It ***may*** be accompanied by an emotional response, even sorrow, bitterness, and regret, but that emotion itself is not what saves. Rather, those emotions simply evidence that the heart has understood the seriousness of sin and the necessity of turning to Christ. True repentance is not about working harder or feeling worse; it is the Spirit-enabled shift in the heart that turns a person toward faith in Jesus.

Isaiah 55:6–7; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Joel 2:32; Psalm 51:10–12;
John 6:44; Titus 3:5; Romans 5:1; Philippians 1:6

> "Christ's righteousness alone can bear the sight of God, because it alone is perfect."
>
> John Calvin, *Institutes* III.11.23, A.D. 1559

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

9.0 The Completion of Salvation

Salvation is already complete in the finished work of Jesus on the cross (*tetelestai, τετέλεσται)*. Nothing can be added to what Christ has accomplished; the believer's acceptance before God rests entirely on His completed redemption. Yet the experience of salvation unfolds progressively in the life of every Christian. What Christ finished once for all is applied, deepened, and lived out over time (and eternity) through the Spirit's ongoing work.

Isaiah 53:11; Psalm 130:7–8; Jeremiah 31:33–34; Ezekiel 36:27;
John 19:30; Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Philippians 2:12–13

> "Faith is a work of God in us, which changes us and gives us new birth from God."
>
> Martin Luther, *Preface to Romans*, A.D. 1522

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

9.1 Death and the Intermediate State

For the believer, death is not the end but the doorway into life beyond death. Scripture teaches that those who die in Christ enter immediately into His presence—not in a final resurrected state yet, but in what theologians call the intermediate state. This is a conscious, joyful, and peaceful existence with the Lord while we await the resurrection of the body at Christ's return. The body rests, but the believer is fully alive with Christ, experiencing the comfort, security, and nearness of the Savior who has already conquered death on their behalf.

Psalm 73:23–26; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2–3; Ecclesiastes 12:7;
Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:6–8; Philippians 1:23; Revelation 14:13

> "The Son of God died; this must needs be believed because it is absurd."
>
> *— Tertullian, On the Flesh of Christ* 5

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

9.2 Resurrection and Glorification

In the end, God brings His saving work to its full completion through glorification. This is the final restoration of the image, when every trace of sin is removed and the believer reflects Christ perfectly. At the resurrection, God gives His people a resurrection body—incorruptible, immortal, and fully aligned with His original purpose for humanity. What began in calling, regeneration, and sanctification reaches its perfect fulfillment as the believer is transformed body and soul, entering the fullness of life God intended from the beginning.

Isaiah 25:8; Daniel 12:2–3; Job 19:25–26; Psalm 17:15;
John 6:40; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:52–53; Philippians 3:20–21

> "Grace means God moving heaven and earth to save sinners who could not lift a finger to save themselves."
>
> J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*, A.D. 1973

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

9.3 Eternal Communion with God

In the end, God brings His people into the fullness of new creation, the eternal home of redeemed humanity. There, believers enter unhindered worship, joyful fellowship, and full participation in the divine life—not becoming divine, but sharing in the life God freely gives through Christ. The new creation is the restored world where righteousness dwells, where God's people live in His presence, and where the story of salvation reaches its glorious completion.

Isaiah 65:17–19; Isaiah 66:22–23; Psalm 16:11; Ezekiel 37:26–28;
John 14:2–3; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:3–4; Revelation 22:3–5

> "God does not give us the grace to save ourselves with his aid. He declares us righteous the moment we give up our own claims to righteousness and… recognize the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness as our own."
>
> Michael Horton, *Putting Amazing Back into Grace*, A.D. 1994

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

10.0 Conclusion

Salvation is God's work from beginning to end, a seamless act of divine grace in which the Father plans, the Son accomplishes, and the Spirit applies. Through Christ, the true Image, God brings about the restoration of the image that sin had marred, renewing humanity according to His original design. The goal of this saving work is not merely rescue from judgment but entrance into eternal life—a life of communion with the Triune God in worship, fellowship, and joy. In this way, soteriology reveals the

full sweep of God's redeeming purpose: to reclaim His people, restore His image, and draw them into His own life forever.

Isaiah 46:10; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Psalm 73:23–26; Daniel 12:3;
John 17:3; Romans 8:29–30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Revelation 21:3

> "The resurrection is the decisive event demonstrating that God's kingdom really has been launched on earth."
>
> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, A.D. 2008

Assurance of salvation rests on two complementary foundations: what the believer **knows** and what the believer **experiences**. On the intellectual side, Scripture gives clear promises that those who trust in Christ are forgiven, accepted, and secure. Understanding these promises—what God has said, what Christ has accomplished, and what the gospel guarantees—forms the basis of **intellectual assurance**. The believer learns to rest not on shifting feelings or emotions but on the unchanging truth of God's Word.

Yet Scripture also recognizes an **experiential** dimension. When the truths of the gospel settle into the heart, they produce a quiet, steady confidence—an **emotional assurance** that flows from understanding. This is where the witness of the Spirit happens. Paul teaches that the **Holy Spirit bears witness** with our spirit that we are children of God, confirming inwardly what Scripture declares outwardly.[25]

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, described his conversion by saying that his heart was "strangely warmed," but that moment makes the most sense when you know what came before it. Years earlier, while crossing the Atlantic returning from his missionary activities in the new American colonies, Wesley found himself in the middle of a violent storm. The ship groaned, waves crashed over the deck, and the crew fully expected the vessel to break apart. Wesley, already an ordained Anglican priest, was terrified. But on board with him was a small group of **Moravian believers**, and while the storm raged, they calmly sang hymns, prayed, and showed no fear of death. Their peace shook Wesley. He later admitted that they possessed something he did not—an inner assurance, a settled confidence in Christ that held firm even when the sea threatened to swallow them.

Years later, on Aldersgate Street in London, as he listened to Martin Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans being read, Wesley finally understood the gospel he had long preached but never fully trusted. In that moment, he said his heart was "strangely warmed"—not a mystical detour from doctrine, but the emotional fruit of finally believing that Christ had saved ***him***. The storm at sea showed him his lack of assurance; Aldersgate showed him the Savior who gives it.

---

[25] One of the most fascinating **textual variants** in the New Testament appears in **Romans 5:1**. (See the discussion on textual variants in chapter 1, section 7.2.) Some manuscripts read, *"we have peace with God,"* while others read, *"let us have peace with God."* The difference is one letter in one word: a **short o** versus a **long o** (ἔχομεν / ἔχωμεν**).** The evidence is so evenly balanced that many scholars decline to choose decisively between the two. Yet both ideas are biblically true. The reading *"we have peace"* affirms the believer's new reality: the hostility between God and the individual trusting Jesus has ended, and reconciliation is complete. But the reading *"let us have peace"* speaks to the believer's inner emotional peace—an invitation to experience the deep assurance and calm confidence that Christ gives, the **peace that surpasses all understanding**. So while scholars may continue to debate which wording Paul originally penned, we can rest securely in the fact that **both** readings express genuine truths taught throughout Scripture.

Together, these elements -- the ***understanding*** of God's promises and the ***inner witness*** of the Holy Spirit -- form a full-orbed doctrine of assurance. The mind is anchored by God's promises, the heart is steadied by the Spirit's witness, and the believer learns that assurance is not presumption but the natural result of trusting a faithful Savior.

D. James Kennedy, the renowned pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, developed two **diagnostic questions** that bring this entire section into sharp focus. I invite you, the reader, to ***ask yourself*** these questions.

First: *"Do you know for sure that if you were to die tonight, you would go to heaven?"*

Before reading further . . . pause and jot down your answer to that question.

Second: *"If you were to die and stand before God, and He were to ask you, 'Why should I let you into My heaven?' what would you say?"*

Now pause again and write your answer for that question.

These two questions summarize the heart of the Gospel of salvation. The first question speaks to **emotional assurance**—the settled confidence that grows from understanding the gospel and sensing the Spirit's witness within. The second question addresses **intellectual assurance**—the clarity that comes from knowing the biblical promises and grounding your hope in Christ alone.

When both questions can be answered biblically, the believer stands on solid ground, assured both in heart and in mind.

So how did ***you*** answer these two questions?

The first question could be answered either "Yes" or "No". There is no "maybe." If you cannot say "yes" then the answer is "no".

The second question also has only two possible answers. It is either "Jesus" or your own efforts in some manner. In other words, either a ***works*** oriented answer or a ***Jesus*** answer.

There are four possible combinations:

1) **Yes; Works**. If these were your answers, you are ***presuming*** that you are "good enough" and that is ***presumption***, relying on your own efforts, which will ***not*** gain you salvation.

2) **No; Works**. These answers indicate that you do not comprehend the Gospel. You need to revisit the content above and join John Wesley in coming to trust in Jesus ***alone*** for salvation.

3) **No; Jesus**. Here the trust is correct, but the assurance is missing. You need to review the above content and understand what God has promised and that he can be trusted to keep His word. You are trusting correctly but need the assurance that trust in Jesus is ***sufficient***.

4) **Yes: Jesus**. This is the Biblical response. You have both the emotional assurance that Jesus has saved you AND the intellectual understanding that salvation is totally and unconditionally based on Jesus and what He has already done for you.

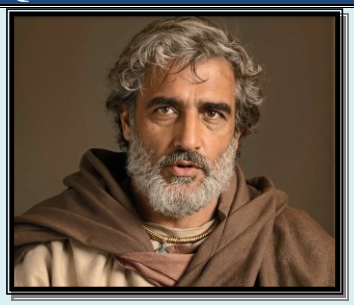
I trust that after reading through this chapter, you can truly answer those two questions with a **Yes** and **Jesus** alone!

... ... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

10.1 Eusebius On the Diagnostic Questions

Eusebius Audio	*CD08-Segment-8V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Diagnostic Questions



Those are penetrating questions for sure. I remember when a friend posed similar questions to me over dinner one night. They really made me stop and think.

I had my preconceptions about what would happen when I died, but a friend showed me how the correct answers were based on Jesus and what he did. When I responded and placed my trust in Jesus, it radically changed my life. I would encourage you to do the same if you have not already done so.

If you do, I will see you in heaven when you get there, and we can discuss all those raucous debates we had in the council at Nicaea in 325 AD. See you then.

Nancy	*CD08-Segment-9*

Your assignment for this week: Take a large piece of paper and, with a felt marking pen or other pen that makes large dark letters, copy Dr. Kennedy's two diagnostic questions. Tape the paper to your bathroom mirror and each morning this week as you go through your morning routine, read the questions again. See if you can have them memorized by the end of the week so you can use them when you have a chance to witness and share the Good News of this chapter with someone.

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...

10.2 Eusebius Closing Comment

Eusebius Audio	*CD07-Segment-2V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius Closing Comment



I remember a day from my childhood as though it were carved into stone. An elder in our community placed a small wooden figure into my hands — simple, rough, shaped with care. To anyone else it was nothing. But to me, it felt as though he had given me the world.

I was so excited that I ran through the narrow streets, breathless with excitement, stopping every passerby to show them what I had received. I could not contain it. The joy pressed outward, demanding to be shared.

When the heart receives a gift of great worth, silence becomes impossible. So it is with salvation. The gift of eternal life is far greater than any treasure placed in a child's hands — and it awakens a joy that longs to be spoken.

Now that you understand the story of soteriology — salvation — remember that the gift you have received is meant to be shared. Just as a child cannot hide the excitement of a treasured gift, so a believer should feel a natural desire to tell others about the grace God has given.

You now also have a tool to help you do that. These diagnostic questions can help you open conversations and share the gospel with clarity, confidence, and joy. Take the time to learn them. Practice on friends and family. And, as the Apostle Peter said, always be prepared to share the reason for the hope within you.

... Return to Chapter 8 Index ...



Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- ***The Biggest Story* — Kevin DeYoung** A beautifully illustrated overview of the Bible's story, helping young readers see how God rescues His people and restores His world. A gentle introduction to **salvation** as God's plan from beginning to end.
- ***The Garden, the Curtain, and the Cross* — Carl Laferton** A simple, engaging explanation of why Jesus came, how sin separates us, and how Christ brings us back to God. Perfect for building early understanding of the gospel.
- ***Who Is Jesus?* — Greg Gilbert** A clear and friendly introduction to who Jesus is, why He matters, and how He saves. Ideal for teens and adults wanting a straightforward explanation of Christ and salvation.
- ***The Ology* — Marty Machowski** A kid-friendly systematic theology that explains big truths—creation, sin, salvation, and new creation—in simple language with strong biblical grounding.
- ***Evangelism Explosion* — D. James Kennedy** A practical, easy-to-grasp guide to sharing the gospel using the two diagnostic questions. Excellent for teens and adults who want to understand how salvation works and how to communicate it clearly and confidently.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- ***On the Incarnation* — Athanasius** A classic work explaining why the Word became flesh and how the incarnation restores human nature. Essential for understanding **restoration of the image**.
- ***Institutes of the Christian Religion* — John Calvin** A foundational theological work exploring calling, regeneration, faith, justification, adoption, and sanctification with depth and clarity.
- ***Redemption Accomplished and Applied* — John Murray** A precise and influential treatment of the order of salvation, distinguishing Christ's finished work from the Spirit's application of that work.
- ***The Cross of Christ* — John Stott** A comprehensive study of the atonement—sacrifice, substitution, victory, and reconciliation—written with scholarly depth and pastoral clarity.
- ***The Christian Faith* — Michael Horton**

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.
Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: ***https://www.ccel.org/fathers***

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.



The actual Bema Seat of Judgment in the Ancient city of Corinth - near where the Apostle Paul probably preached

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 9
Ecclesiology:
The Doctrine of the Church

Full Chapter Audio	*CD03Audio-Full (44 minutes)*

Enter the Ark or Swim Strong

"Nothing so provokes God's anger as the division of the Church. Yea, though we have achieved ten thousand glorious acts, yet shall we, if we cut to pieces the fullness of the Church, suffer punishment no less sore than they who mangled His body."

— John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Ephesians*, Homily 11

"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock
I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."
Matt. 16:18 [NASB]

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** on Two Arks and a Strong Swimmer
2.0 Definition of Ecclesiology
3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of the Church
3.1 Old Testament
3.2 New Testament
4.0 The Nature of the Church
4.1 The Church as an Organism
4.2 The Church as an Organization
4.3 **Eusebius** on the Council of Nicea
5.0 Government of the Church
5.1 Leadership Offices in the New Testament
5.2 Reasons for Different Church Organizations
5.2.1 Doctrinal Differences
5.2.2 Church Government
5.2.3 Worship Style
6.0 The Sacraments of the Church
6.1 Baptism
6.2 Eucharist
6.2.1 Eucharistic Mystery
6.2.2 Transubstantiation
6.2.3 Consubstantiation
6.2.4 Memorial View
7.0 The Mission of the Church

7.1 **Eusebius** Explains the Great Commission
8.0 Conclusion
9.0 Application
10.0 Epilog: Persecution in the Early Church and the Donatist Controversy
10.1 **Eusebius** on Church Persecutions

Nancy *CD09-Segment-1*

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide a history of the Christian church, nor to trace the development of its institutions across the centuries. Instead, our focus is the biblical doctrine of the church—what the Old and New Testaments teach about the people of God, their identity, their mission, and their life together. Scripture, not tradition, is our primary source. There will be one brief side trip into early church history to explain how the church responded to persecution during the first three centuries and how that struggle shaped later debates such as the **Donatist** controversy. Beyond that limited context, this chapter remains firmly anchored in the theological witness of the Bible itself, seeking to understand the church as God has revealed it in His Word.

Exodus 19:5–6; Isaiah 43:20–21; Psalm 100:3; Ezekiel 34:30–31;
Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Peter 2:9–10

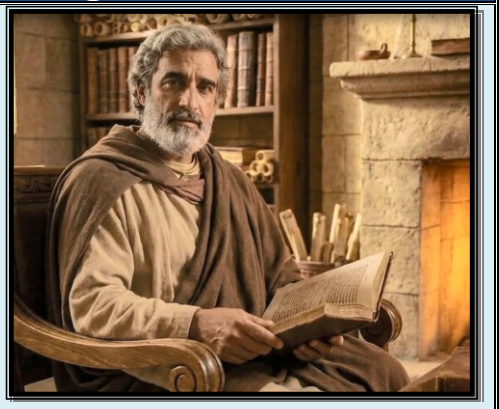
> "For here is a hospital, not a courtroom; not the demand for punishment of sins, but there is the forgiveness of sins."
>
> — John Chrysostom, *De Paenitentia* (Homilies/Sermons On Repentance), Homily 3

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius on Two Arks and a Strong Swimmer

Eusebius Audio	*CD09-Segment-2V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius on Two Arks and a Strong Swimmer



In the generation after me, a wise theologian arose by the name of **Augustine**. In his writings, he compared the church to **Noah's ark**, saying that you must be in the ark if you expect to be saved.

Now, I both agree and disagree with Augustine as there are two "arks."

The **first ark** is the **universal church** — the great company of all believers united to Christ. In that sense, Augustine is exactly right. If you are in Christ, you are in the ark.

But the **second ark** is the **organized, local church** — the gathered community where believers worship, fellowship, learn, and serve. In that sense, Augustine's statement needs a little refining. A person may truly belong to Christ and yet not be active in a local congregation. He would not be "in the ark" organization.

But he would need to be an **awfully strong swimmer** to survive long outside it. As you read this chapter, watch for both kinds of ark:

- the **organism** you entered the moment you trusted Jesus as your Savior, and
- the **organization** where you worship, grow, and serve as a maturing disciple.

First, make sure you are safely inside the **first ark**. Then, find your place in the **second ark** where you can grow and serve.

Otherwise… just be sure you're a **strong swimmer**.

… Return to Chapter 9 Index …

Nancy	*CD09-Segment-3*

2.0 Definition of ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is the study of the church—its identity, its nature, its mission, and its place within the redemptive purposes of God. The term comes from the Greek word *ekklēsia* (ἐκκλησία), meaning "assembly" or "gathering," a word used throughout the New Testament to describe the community of believers called together by God through the gospel.

Ecclesiology, therefore, is not a study of church history or denominational development, but a theological examination of what Scripture teaches about the people of God. It asks how the Old and New Testaments describe the assembly of God's people, how they are to live and worship, how they are led, and how they participate in God's mission in the world. In this chapter, ecclesiology refers specifically to the **biblical doctrine of the church**, derived from the witness of Scripture rather than later traditions or historical developments.

Exodus 19:5–6; Deuteronomy 7:6; Psalm 74:2; Isaiah 43:20–21;
Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 4:11–13; 1 Peter 2:9–10

> "God commanded Noah to make an Ark, in which he and his family — that is, his wife, his sons and his sons' wives — were to be saved from the devastation of the Flood, . . . Without doubt this is a symbol of the City of God on pilgrimage in this world: that is, of the Church which is saved through the wood upon which hung 'the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.'"
>
> Augustine — *De Civitate Dei* (*The City of God against the Pagans*), Book XV, chapter 26.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

3.0 Biblical Vocabulary of the Church

Both the Old and New Testaments have specific terminology referring to the gathering of God's people. The Old Testament refers to the congregation and the assembly of the twelve tribes of Israel. The New Testament focuses on the spiritual gathering of those who are the "called ones" as the body of Christ.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

3.1 Old Testament

The Old Testament does not use the word “church” in the New Testament sense, but it does employ several key terms that describe the gathered people of God. These terms form the conceptual background for the New Testament’s use of *ekklēsia* (ἐκκλησία - assembly, church).
The Old Testament describes the people of God using terms that lay the foundation for the New Testament idea of the church. The most common is ***qāhāl*** (קָהָל — assembly), the “assembly” of Israel gathered before the Lord, a word that emphasizes God calling His people together for worship and covenant life. This is the term used when Moses called all twelve tribes together to hear the reading of the law in Deuteronomy 9:10. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament the term used is the Greek term ***synagōgē*** (συναγωγή) which comes across in the New Testament as the local assembly place for Jewish worship and teaching.

Closely related is *ēdāh* (עֵדָה — congregation), the “congregation,” highlighting the community of God’s people as a unified body belonging to Him. A third expression, *bêt-YHWH* (בֵּית־יְהוָה — “house of the LORD”) the “house of the LORD,” reflects God’s presence dwelling among His people and anticipates the New Testament description of believers as the temple of the Holy Spirit. Together, these terms portray Israel not merely as individuals but as a gathered, covenant community, preparing the way for the New Testament’s use of *ekklēsia* to describe the church.

In the Old Testament, the **tabernacle**—the *mishkan*, the place where God dwelt among His people—is translated in the Septuagint with the Greek term *skēnē*, meaning “tent” or “dwelling.” When John writes that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (*eskēnōsen*, John 1:14), he deliberately uses the same

tabernacle language to show that Jesus "tented" among us with that same language. The Old Testament *skēnē* pointed to a temporary structure; the New Testament reveals its fulfillment in the incarnate Son, who brings God's presence to His people in a permanent and personal way.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

3.2 New Testament

The New Testament uses several key terms to describe the church, the most important being *ekklēsia* (ἐκκλησία – assembly, church), the community of believers called together by God through the gospel. This word, used for both local congregations and the universal body of Christ, emphasizes that the church is a gathered people, not a building or institution. Early Christians could even be described with the older Jewish term *synagōgē* (συναγωγή – assembly), as in James 2:2, showing continuity with Israel's worshiping community while also marking the church as the people gathered in Christ's name.

Alongside these assembly terms, the New Testament uses several images to describe the church's identity and life together. Paul speaks of believers as the *sōma* (σῶμα – body) of Christ, highlighting unity and diversity within one spiritual organism under Christ's headship. The church is also called the *oikos theou* (οἶκος θεοῦ – household of God), a family formed by adoption through Christ, and the *naos theou* (ναὸς θεοῦ – temple of God), the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. These expressions draw directly from Old Testament imagery and show that God's presence now resides among His people in a new and living way.

The New Testament further describes the church using relational and covenantal language. Believers are the *laos theou* (λαὸς θεοῦ – people of God), fulfilling the Old Testament promise of a redeemed people belonging to the Lord. They are called *hagioi* (ἅγιοι – saints, holy ones), set apart for God, and addressed as *adelphoi* (ἀδελφοί – brothers and sisters), emphasizing the family bond created by the gospel. Pastoral imagery also appears, with the church described as the *poimnion* (ποίμνιον – flock) under the care of Christ and His appointed shepherds. Together, these terms present a rich biblical picture of the church as a community called, formed, and indwelt by God, living as His family, His temple, His people, and His gathered assembly in the world.

Deuteronomy 9:10; Numbers 20:1; Psalm 23:6; Ezekiel 34:30–31;
Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Peter 2:9–10

> ***"He cannot have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother."***
>
> — Cyprian of Carthage, *On the Unity of the Church* 6

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

4.0 The Nature of the Church

The nature of the church must be understood from **two complementary perspectives**. First, Scripture speaks of the church as a spiritual reality—the one body of Christ made up of all believers from the moment of their conversion. This universal church is what the Nicene Creed calls the **"holy catholic church,"** referring not to a denomination but to the whole people of God across all ages and places.[26] Second, the New Testament also describes the church as a visible, local community of believers who gather together in specific homes, cities, and regions. These local assemblies form the organizational expression of the church in the world, whether meeting in a single house or spread across many homes within a city such as Ephesus or Corinth.

Isaiah 43:20–21; Ezekiel 34:30–31; Psalm 22:27; Micah 4:1–2;
Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:46–47; Ephesians 4:4–6; 1 Corinthians 1:2

> "...where 'the temple of God is built from living stones,' which is 'the Church of the living God,' and where true Israel exists, in Christ Jesus our Lord."
>
> — Origen, *Homilies on Joshua* Homily 26

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

4.1 The Church as an Organism

The New Testament first presents the church as a living **organism**, the *sōma Christou* (σῶμα Χριστοῦ – body of Christ), formed and animated by the Holy Spirit. Every believer is joined to this body at the moment of conversion, united to Christ and to one another in a spiritual union that transcends geography, culture, and time. This body is not an institution but a living reality, composed of all who have been redeemed and indwelt by the Spirit. Its unity is grounded in Christ's headship, its diversity expressed through the Spirit's distribution of gifts, and its life sustained by the presence of God among His people. In this sense, the church is the one, universal people of God—an organic fellowship of believers who share a common life in Christ.
This is the sense in which Christ is referred to as the "Head of the Church" and the church is called the "body of Christ."

Psalm 22:27; Ezekiel 34:30–31; Isaiah 43:20–21; Micah 4:1–2;
Romans 12:4–5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–13; Ephesians 4:15–16; Colossians 1:18

> "For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace; but the Spirit is truth."
>
> Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* (*Adversus Haereses*), Book III, chapter 24, section 1.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

[26] The term "catholic" (lower case) comes from the Greek word *katholikē* (καθολική), meaning "according to the whole" or "universal," a term early Christians used to describe the worldwide unity of the Church.

4.2 The Church as an Organization

Alongside this spiritual organism, the New Testament also speaks of the church as a visible **organization**, expressed in concrete gatherings of believers in specific places. Early Christians met in homes, forming assemblies such as “the church in their house,” while also being identified collectively as “the church in Ephesus,” “the church in Corinth,” or “the churches of Galatia.” These expressions show that the church in a given city or region could consist of multiple house gatherings, yet still be regarded as one community of believers in that location.

This organizational aspect included recognized leadership, shared worship, mutual care, and the practice of ordinances within identifiable congregations. Thus the New Testament church existed both as the universal body of Christ and as local, structured assemblies where believers gathered, served, and lived out their shared faith.

Exodus 12:3; Psalm 133:1; Isaiah 56:7; Micah 4:1–2;
Acts 2:46–47; Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Titus 1:5

> "Do not hold aloof from the Church; for nothing is stronger than the Church. The Church is your hope, your salvation, your refuge. It is higher than the heaven, it is wider than the earth. It never waxes old, but is always in full vigour."
>
> — John Chrysostom, *Homily II on Eutropius*

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

4.3 Eusebius On the Council of Nicea

Eusebius Audio	CD09-Segment-4V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Council of Nicea



One of the greatest experiences of my life was attending the **Great Council of Nicaea** in A.D. 325. History books call it a gathering of bishops and theologians summoned by Emperor Constantine. But I was there. I saw it. And it was far more than just a meeting.

The atmosphere was unforgettable. More than **three hundred bishops** arrived from every corner of the empire — many scarred from persecution, limping from old injuries, or missing eyes and hands lost for confessing Christ. Their greetings felt like reunions of soldiers who had survived the same battlefield.

The Council sounded alive: murmured prayers, rustling parchment, sharp exchanges, and long stretches of heavy silence. Conversations spilled into courtyards and corridors. Some spoke with deep concern, others with fierce conviction. You could feel the weight of the moment even without knowing every detail of the debate.

What struck me most was the mixture of tension and brotherhood. These men wrestled honestly, prayed earnestly, and longed for unity that was real, not forced. When agreement finally came, the room seemed to exhale — and brothers who had argued now embraced.

This was the church, both organism and organization . . . in action . . . in unity . . . and in mission. It was an unforgettable experience.

Return to Chapter 9 Index

Nancy	CD09-Segment-5

5.0 Government of the Church

The New Testament presents the church as both a spiritual organism and a visible organization, and this dual nature leads naturally into the question of church structure and government. It is important to recognize at the outset that Christians differ in how they interpret certain leadership titles and roles — for example, whether women may serve as pastors/teachers**,** or whether the terms *presbyteros* **(**πρεσβύτερος – elder) and *episkopos* **(**ἐπίσκοπος – overseer) refer to the same office or to distinct roles**.**

What is striking, however, is that Jesus Himself did not leave behind a detailed organizational blueprint in the Gospels. He appointed apostles and promised the Spirit's guidance, but He did not prescribe a fixed, universal church structure. From this silence we should infer that He intended a measure of flexibility**,** allowing the church in different times and places to organize itself around the unchanging truths of the gospel while adapting its leadership patterns to local needs and personal preferences.

Exodus 18:21–22; Numbers 11:16–17; Isaiah 52:7; Micah 4:1–2;
Matthew 16:18–19; Acts 14:23; Ephesians 4:11–12; Titus 1:5

> "Christ is the head of all believers, who are His body."
>
> Ulrich Zwingli, *Sixty-Seven Articles* (1523), Article VII — not *On the Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God* (1522).

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

5.1 Leadership Offices in the New Testament

Within this framework of flexibility, the New Testament identifies several leadership roles given for the health and direction of the church. At the forefront are the gifted persons of Ephesians 4:11 — *apostoloi* (ἀπόστολοι – apostles), *prophētai* (προφῆται – prophets), *euangelistai* (εὐαγγελισταί – evangelists), and *poimenes kai didaskaloi* (ποιμένες καὶ διδάσκαλοι – pastor-teachers). These individuals were given by Christ to equip the saints and to establish and strengthen the church. Their ministry focuses on the proclamation of the Word, the guarding of doctrine, and the ***equipping*** of believers for service. For more details on these gifted persons, refer back to chapter 4.

Alongside these equipping roles, the Pauline letters and other New Testament writings mention additional offices that served the organizational life of the church. The terms *presbyteroi* (πρεσβύτεροι – elders) and *episkopoi* (ἐπίσκοποι – overseers, bishops) appear in close connection, often describing the same group of leaders responsible for teaching, shepherding, and spiritual oversight. The office of *diakonoi* (διάκονοι – deacons) emerges as well, providing practical service and support to the congregation. These roles functioned within identifiable local assemblies — the church in a home, the church in a city, or the churches of a region — demonstrating that while the universal church is one body, its leadership is exercised in concrete, local expressions.

You should note that there is a difference between the "administrative" leadership structure of the church "organization" and the "spiritual" leadership of the church "organism." This chapter addresses the administrative leadership of the organization. For a more detailed analysis of spiritual leadership of the church organism -- the Gifted Leaders and Spiritual Gifts -- go back and review chapter 4, section 8.

Exodus 18:21; Numbers 11:16–17; Isaiah 52:7; Micah 4:1–2;
Acts 14:23; Ephesians 4:11–12; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9

> "We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true Word of God, and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men."
>
> — Bullinger, *Second Helvetic Confession*, I

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

5.2 Reasons for Different Church Organizations

The wide variety of church organizations found today reflects both the **strengths and weaknesses** of the Christian community. On the positive side, the New Testament's lack of a rigid, universal blueprint for church government has allowed believers in different cultures and eras to structure their congregations in ways that best serve their mission and context. Jesus did not prescribe a detailed organizational chart in the Gospels; instead, He entrusted leadership to the apostles and promised the Spirit's guidance. This intentional silence suggests that He designed the church to have flexibility**,** allowing faithful Christians to develop structures that fit their needs while remaining anchored to the gospel.

Exodus 18:21–22; Numbers 11:16–17; Isaiah 56:7; Micah 4:1–2;
Matthew 16:18–19; John 16:13; Acts 14:23; Ephesians 4:11–12

> We do not concede to the Papists that they are the church, for they are not . . . Thank God, a seven year old child knows what the church is, namely, holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their shepherd."
>
> Martin Luther, *Smalcald Articles* (*Die Schmalkaldischen Artikel*), 1537, Part III, Article XII, "Of the Church."

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

5.2.1 Doctrinal Differences.

The diversity of church organizations on secondary doctrinal issues reflects the reality that imperfect people interpret Scripture differently, especially on secondary matters not addressed in the Nicene Creed or the core doctrines of orthodoxy. Many divisions arose from doctrinal disputes or a preferred emphasis on these secondary issues — questions about things like spiritual gifts, baptism, women in leadership, or the relationship between grace and human responsibility.

Deuteronomy 29:29; Proverbs 27:17; Isaiah 55:8–9; Micah 4:2;
Romans 14:1–5; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Galatians 3:27–28; Ephesians 4:7–13

> "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."
>
> The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Article XIX, "Of the Church" —

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

5.2.2 Church Government.

Other organizations emerged from differing convictions about governmental structure, whether a top-down model such as Roman Catholic or Episcopal systems where a pope or bishop determines how to govern and who should be the leaders of a local church, or bottom-up models such as Southern

Baptist, Congregationalists, and many independent churches, where the local congregation selects its own leaders and sometimes affiliates with other local churches but still maintains their autonomy.

Exodus 18:21–22; Numbers 11:16–17; Proverbs 11:14; Micah 4:1–2;
Acts 14:23; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 14:40; Titus 1:5

> "The Church is the world's hope. As Christ is the hope of the Church, so the Church is the hope of the world. The saints become, under Christ, the world's saviours."
>
> C. H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1860s)

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

5.2.3 Worship Style.

Finally, other organizations reflect worship-style preferences, ranging from the high liturgical traditions of Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Orthodox churches to the free and expressive worship found in many evangelical and independent congregations where enthusiastic singing often replaces the formal liturgy.

Taken together, these factors explain why the Christian world contains so many different church organizations. Doctrinal disagreements reveal human limitations and weaknesses, while structural and worship differences reflect the freedom Christ left to His people. The result is a global church that is diverse in form yet united around the essential truths of the gospel. Each individual believer should find a local church home in whatever tradition, worship style, and governmental structure fits them personally, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Except for the doctrinal issues, there is no "right or wrong" -- just a difference in preference. Each believer should find the church where he or she can grow best and find a meaningful and fruitful ministry.

Psalm 95:1–2; Psalm 100:1–2; Isaiah 56:7; Micah 4:1–2;
John 4:23–24; Acts 2:46–47; Colossians 3:16–17; Ephesians 5:18–19

> “On the day called Sunday, all gather together… the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read.”
>
> Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 67

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.0 The Sacraments of the Church

Christians throughout history have recognized certain practices as **sacred acts** given by Christ to His church. These are commonly called **sacraments** in liturgical traditions and **ordinances** in many evangelical churches. As with other areas of church life, there is disagreement about how many such practices should be recognized. The Roman Catholic Church identifies **seven sacraments**—baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, anointing of the sick, holy orders, and matrimony—each understood

as a means by which God conveys grace. Other traditions acknowledge only **two**, and some add a third such as footwashing, based on Jesus' example in John 13. Yet when we look specifically at the practices instituted directly by Jesus in the Gospels, two stand out clearly: baptism and the Eucharist (the Lord's Supper). These are the central acts Christ gave to His church as visible expressions of the gospel.

Exodus 24:8; Isaiah 52:7; Jeremiah 31:31–33; Micah 4:1–2;
Matthew 28:19; Matthew 26:26–28; Acts 2:41–42; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

> "The spouse of Christ [the church] cannot be defiled; she is uncorrupted and chaste. She knows one home, with chaste modesty she guards the sanctity of one couch. She keeps us for God; she assigns the children whom she has created to the kingdom."
>
> Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Church* 6

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.1 Baptism

Baptism is the outward sign of a believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. It marks the beginning of the Christian life and publicly declares one's faith in Christ. While all Christians agree on its basic significance, there is disagreement about the **mode** of baptism. Some hold that baptism must be administered by **immersion**, noting that the New Testament provides examples where immersion was clearly used. Others practice **pouring** or **sprinkling**, arguing that the New Testament does not explicitly command a single mode and that the symbolism of cleansing can be expressed in multiple ways. The evidence suggests that immersion was practiced in the early church, but the text does not speak with absolute clarity, leaving room for differing convictions among believers.

A further issue regarding baptism concerns who should be baptized. Many Christian traditions practice infant baptism, believing that baptism brings the child into the covenant community and, in some cases, they believe it conveys saving grace. In Roman Catholic and some Lutheran and Anglican traditions, infant baptism is understood to bring justification, applying the benefits of Christ's work to the child in a manner parallel to the later confession of faith described in Romans 10:9–10. Other Christians, however, hold that baptism in the New Testament is consistently connected to personal faith, and therefore reserve baptism for those who have consciously trusted in Christ after reaching the age of accountability. These churches often practice baby dedication instead, in which parents publicly commit to raising their child in the faith while recognizing that salvation comes only through ***personal*** belief in Christ. The New Testament does not explicitly describe infant baptism, and while household baptisms are mentioned, the text does not specify the ages of those included. As with the mode of baptism, believers have reached different conclusions based on their understanding of Scripture, tradition, and the nature of the church.

Some Christian traditions teach that baptism is a **spiritual event** in which God actively works in the believer at the moment of baptism—often described as the infilling or empowering of the Holy Spirit at the moment of baptism. Other traditions hold that baptism is simply an outward expression, or confession, of an inner conversion that has already occurred, serving as a public testimony rather than

the moment of spiritual transformation. Both views are historically attested and accurately reflect differences in Christian theology while still holding to the Nicene orthodoxy in the major doctrines.

Ezekiel 36:25–27; Isaiah 52:7; Jeremiah 31:31–33; Micah 4:1–2;
Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38–41; Romans 6:3–4; 1 Corinthians 12:13

> "In baptism we are buried with Christ, that we may also rise with Him."
>
> Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit* 15

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.2 Eucharist.

The Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, is the second ordinance instituted by Jesus, given as a memorial of His sacrificial death and a proclamation of the new covenant in His blood. Here too Christians differ in their understanding of what takes place in the Supper. There are four competing interpretations.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.2.1 Eucharistic Mystery

This view, held by the Eastern Orthodox churches, goes back to the first few centuries of the church. It holds that the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ. It does not define how this change occurs, leaving the manner of transformation to the Holy Spirit and the mystery of God. The key is that it "happens" but how and when is left a mystery.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.2.2 Transubstantiation.

In transubstantiation, held by the Roman Catholic Church, the bread and wine actually become the actual body and blood of Christ, when the priest blesses the elements, while retaining their outward appearance. This differs from 5.2.1 by defining how the change occurs (using philosophical references) and by requiring specific liturgical actions, especially the priest's words of consecration, as the moment in which the transformation takes place.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.2.3 Consubstantiation.

In consubstantiation, associated with Lutheran theology, Christ is truly present "in, with, and under" the elements, though the bread and wine themselves remain unchanged. The actual liturgy in the Lutheran service is very similar to the Roman Catholic. It is in the underlying *theology* of what happens at the

altar, not the outward shape of the service, that marks the real difference between Consubstantiation and transubstantiation.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

6.2.4 Memorial View.

In the memorial view, held by most evangelical and independent churches, the elements are symbols that remind believers of Christ's sacrifice and call them to renewed faith and obedience. Nothing actually happens either physically or spiritually, to the bread and wine elements.

Whichever tradition a believer finds himself in, participation in the sacraments or ordinances is a meaningful and essential part of Christian worship. Whether one comes from a background that recognizes two, three, or seven sacred practices, these acts serve as visible expressions of the gospel and reminders of God's grace toward His people. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in particular, were given by Christ Himself and have been practiced by the church from its earliest days. While Christians may differ on the number, mode, or theological interpretation of these practices, all agree that they belong to the life of the gathered church and should be a regular part of public worship. Through them, believers remember Christ's work, proclaim His death, and renew their commitment to follow Him together as His people.

Exodus 24:8; Isaiah 53:4–5; Jeremiah 31:31–33; Psalm 116:13;
Matthew 26:26–28; Luke 22:19–20; John 6:53–56; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

> "From Eucharist and prayer they hold aloof, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father in His loving-kindness raised from the dead."
>
> Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Smyrnaeans*, chapter 6:2–7:1

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

7.0 The Mission of the Church

The mission of the church flows out of its identity as the people of God, redeemed by Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Before the church is *sent*, it is first *formed*—and Scripture makes clear that this formation is a corporate reality. In Ephesians 5:18, the only place in the New Testament where there is a command to "be filled with the Spirit," the command is addressed to the **gathered worshiping church**. Spirit-filling is to be a congregational reality in which the church, assembled under the Word, is shaped, empowered, and directed by the Spirit of God. From this Spirit-formed worship flows the church's mission: proclaiming the gospel, making disciples, and bearing witness to Christ in the world.

The mission of the church is grounded in the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18–20, where the risen Lord gives a single, central command: **"make disciples."** In the Greek text, this command *mathēteusate* — (μαθητεύσατε - make a disciple)—is the only imperative or command in the passage. The other verbs

are participles, explaining *how* disciple-making happens. The phrase often translated "go" is actually *poreuthentes* (πορευθέντες - literally after having gone out**).** The force of the grammar ***assumes*** movement; it does not command it. The two key participles that carry the weight of the mission are *baptizontes* (βαπτίζοντες – baptizing**)** and *didaskontes* (διδάσκοντες – teaching**)**. These are the ***means*** by which disciples are made: baptizing (the act associated with conversion and public identification with Christ) and teaching (the lifelong process of forming obedient followers who keep all that Jesus commanded). The Great Commission therefore contains both the **initial** and the **ongoing** dimensions of disciple-making.

Isaiah 2:2–3; Isaiah 43:20–21; Micah 4:1–2; Psalm 22:27;
Matthew 28:18–20; John 16:13; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 5:18–19

"The church, though scattered throughout the whole world, proclaims the truth everywhere."

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* I.10.2

Return to Chapter 9 Index

7.1 Eusebius Explains the Great Commission

Eusebius Audio | *CD09-Segment-6V* | Eusebius Video

Eusebius Explains the Great Commission



I must beg your patience for a brief grammar lesson, though I assure you it is important.

The Great Commission is often misunderstood because people do not see the original Greek language structure. There is **one imperative** - a command. And there are three participles that give the **methods** to fulfill that command.

The only command in the Great Commission is to ***"make disciples."*** The other three verbs are participles.

The first participle means "after having gone out" or "as you go." It ***assumes*** movement; it does not command it.

The two other participles, *baptizing* and *teaching*, explain **how disciples are made**. So the heart of our Lord's commission is not a command to travel. It is a design of how to make disciples.

- **First**, you must go to people not just assume they will come to your church meetings.
- **Second** you baptize them when they respond and trust Jesus as their personal Savior.
- **Third**, you provide life-long instruction teaching all that Jesus said so they can obey Him.

So remember, the command is to make followers of Jesus. The rest of the Great Commission gives you a blueprint of how to do that.

Return to Chapter 9 Index

Nancy | CD09-Segment-7

The mission of the church therefore begins with this two-fold pattern: bringing people to faith in Christ and forming them into obedient disciple**s**. Worship remains the church's inward posture—where the gathered people of God are renewed, instructed, and empowered—but mission is the church's outward calling. The New Testament command to the gathered church is to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) and it is in this Spirit-formed worship that believers are equipped for the outward work of disciple-making. From this center, the church proclaims the gospel, baptizes new believers into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaches them to obey everything Jesus commanded. Evangelism, discipleship, service, and witness all flow from this Great-Commission mandate and are sustained by the Spirit's work among the gathered people of God.

The mission is both **corporate and individual**, both **gathered and scattered**. When the church gathers, it is filled by the Spirit, shaped by the Word, strengthened through fellowship, and nourished through the sacraments—preparing it to obey Christ's command to make disciples of all nations. When the church scatters, it carries that Spirit-formed life into homes, workplaces, neighborhoods, and nations, living out the character of Christ so that the world may see the transforming power of the gospel. The Great Commission is not a human strategy but a divine calling, entrusted to a community empowered by the Spirit and commissioned by Christ to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 2:2–3; Isaiah 43:20–21; Micah 4:1–2; Psalm 22:27;
Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 5:18–19; Colossians 3:16–17

> Because God has made us for Himself, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him.
>
> Augustine, *Confessions*, Book I, chapter 1, section 1

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

8.0 Conclusion

The biblical doctrine of the church presents a unified picture of God's people as both a **spiritual organism** and a **visible organization**, rooted in the Old Testament assembly and fulfilled in the New Testament *ekklēsia*. Scripture describes the church as the body of Christ, the household of God, the temple of the Spirit, and the gathered assembly of believers called together by the gospel. This dual identity—universal and local, spiritual and structural—shapes everything the church is and does. While Jesus did not prescribe a rigid organizational blueprint, He did provide gifted leaders, Spirit-empowered worship, and clear commands that guide the church's life together. The variety of church structures, traditions, and worship styles across Christian history reflects both the flexibility Christ intended and the limitations of human interpretation, yet the essential unity of the church remains grounded in the gospel and the shared confession of the faith once delivered to the saints.

Within this framework, the church practices the sacraments Christ instituted, gathers for worship to be filled with the Spirit, and carries out the mission He entrusted to His people. Baptism and the Lord's Supper serve as visible expressions of the gospel, uniting believers across traditions even where interpretations differ.

The Great Commission provides the church's outward calling—to make disciples by baptizing and teaching—while Spirit-formed worship provides its inward strength. As the church gathers, it is renewed, instructed, and empowered; as it scatters, it bears witness to Christ in the world. In every age and every place, the church remains the people of God, redeemed by Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, and sent into the world to proclaim the gospel and live out the life of the kingdom until the Lord returns.

Isaiah 43:20–21, Micah 4:1–2, Psalm 22:27, Jeremiah 31:31–33,
Matthew 28:18–20, Acts 2:42–47, Ephesians 2:19–22

> "St. Paul consoles his hearers by saying 'renew yourselves' from day to day. This is what we do with houses: we keep constantly repairing them as they wear old. You should do the same thing to yourself. Have you sinned today? Have you made your soul old? Do not despair, do not despond, but renew your soul by repentance, and tears, and Confession, and by doing good things. And never cease doing this."
>
> John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Statues*

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

9.0 Application

Understanding the doctrine of the church is only the beginning; the real question is how this truth shapes daily life. Every believer is called to live as an active member of Christ's body—gathering faithfully with a local church, participating in worship, following godly leadership, practicing the sacraments, and engaging in the mission Christ entrusted to His people. This means choosing a church where Scripture is taught, where the gospel is central, and where you can grow, serve, and be accountable to other believers. It means allowing the Spirit to form you through corporate worship and then carrying that Spirit-shaped life into your home, workplace, and community.

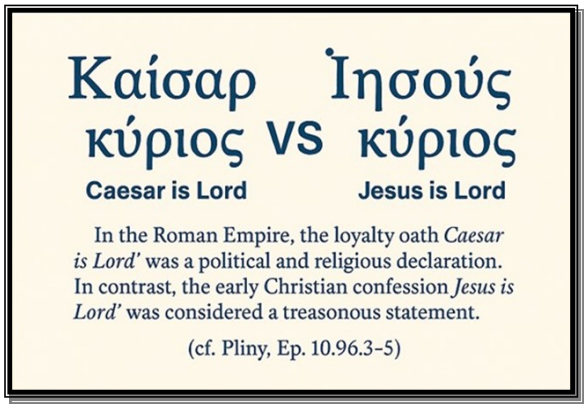
Above all, it means embracing your role in the Great Commission—helping others follow Jesus by sharing the gospel, encouraging fellow believers, and living out the character of Christ in everyday relationships. The doctrine of the church becomes real when you commit yourself to the life, worship, and mission of the people of God.

Assignment for this week: Identify the three elements that distinguish your home church based on the three elements of 1) Doctrinal distinctions; 2) Church government/organization structure; and 3) Worship style. Write down these three distinctives and why they are a good "fit" for you personally. If you do not yet have a home church, identify the features in each category that you think might "fit" you and then look for a church that would provide those for you.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...

10.0 Epilog: Persecution in the Early Church and the Donatist Controversy

During the first three centuries, the church lived under recurring waves of persecution, beginning with Nero in A.D. 64, which many believe took the life of the Apostles Paul and Peter in Rome, and ending with the Diocletian persecution in A.D. 303-311, which ended when Constantine became Emperor. Christians were often accused of disloyalty to Rome because they refused to worship the emperor or participate in pagan sacrifices. Some persecutions were local and brief; others were empire-wide and severe. Yet in every generation, believers understood suffering as part of their confession of Christ. Their courage strengthened the church and shaped its identity. The early Christians learned that following Jesus meant trusting Him even when obedience carried a cost.



The martyrs became the church's heroes. Their stories were copied, read aloud, and treasured as examples of faithfulness. One of the earliest and most beloved accounts is the **Martyrdom of Polycarp**, written soon after his death around A.D. 155. Polycarp, an elderly bishop, refused to curse Christ even when threatened with death. His calmness astonished the Roman officials. When ordered to deny Jesus, he replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong." He was then burned at the stake for his confession. His peaceful courage became a model for generations of believers.[27]

Not all stories were so serene. The story is told of Origen, as a young man in about A.D. 200, was so eager to be martyred that he tried to run out and surrender to the soldiers in the streets of Alexandria, Egypt. His mother famously hid his clothes so he could not leave the house, preventing him from offering himself prematurely. These stories reveal how deeply early Christians believed that suffering for Christ was a privilege, not a tragedy. Origin eventually died in 254 A.D. from injuries sustained during the Decian persecution (250-251 A.D.). So he eventually ***did*** get his wish.

But persecution also created pastoral challenges. Not every believer stood firm. Some surrendered their Scriptures, offered incense to the emperor, or verbally denied Christ to save their lives. These were called the ***lapsi***—those who had "lapsed" under pressure. When peace returned, the church had to decide how to treat those who had failed. Could they be restored? Should they be excluded? The church wrestled with these questions, seeking to balance the seriousness of apostasy with the gospel's promise of forgiveness. The tension between honoring the martyrs and restoring the repentant became one of the defining issues of early Christian life during the period of persecutions.

This struggle eventually shaped the **Donatist controversy** in North Africa. The Donatists insisted that clergy who had lapsed under persecution were permanently disqualified from ministry and that any sacrament performed by such clergy was invalid. The wider church rejected this view, teaching that the effectiveness of the sacraments rests not on the personal perfection of the minister but on the

[27] The story of Polycarp's martyrdom can be found in *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, one of the writings included in the **Apostolic Fathers**. A reliable public-domain edition is available at the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL): https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01/anf01.iv.iii.html

faithfulness of Christ, who works through His church. Augustine became the leading voice against the Donatists, defending the unity of the church and the grace of God toward repentant believers. The controversy reminds us that persecution did more than test individuals—it forced the church to clarify its understanding of forgiveness, unity, and the nature of Christ's work through His people.

It is often confusing to Protestants why the Donatist controversy mattered, because Protestants emphasize the "priesthood of all believers."[28] But in the 4th–5th-century church, divine authority was understood to reside within the church itself and to be passed down through the ordained clergy. Jesus' words to Peter in Matthew 16:18 were seen as the foundation of this authority, transmitted through a continuous line of ordination. Therefore, if a priest had denied his faith during persecution and later returned, he was considered an illegitimate priest who could not pass on the church's authority to others. Any clergy ordained by him—and **any subsequent clergy ordained by *them***—were likewise viewed as invalid. This ***succession*** issue, not the original individuals, is what kept the Donatist controversy alive into Augustine's lifetime.

> A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love.
>
> St. Basil

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...



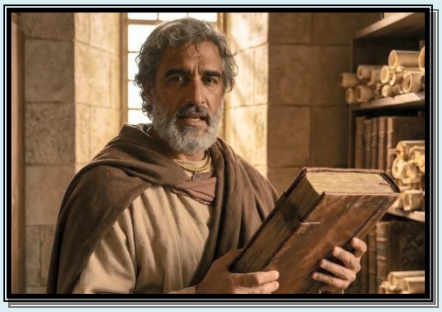
Biblical Israel: First Century Tombs and Burial - CBN Israel

[28] The "priesthood of all believers" is the Reformation teaching that every Christian has direct access to God through Christ and shares in a spiritual priesthood, without needing a special class of mediating clergy.

10.1 Eusebius on Church Persecutions

Eusebius Audio	*CD09-Segment-8V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius on Church Persecutions



In my books, I recorded many accounts of the trials the church had to endure. From the earliest days, believers have faced threats, imprisonments, and death for the name of Christ. I gathered these stories not merely to preserve them, but because they reveal how the Lord strengthened His people in every generation. I saw with my own eyes the courage of the martyrs and the steadfastness of those who refused to deny the faith, even under the fiercest pressure.

Yet I also witnessed the sorrowful reality that not all stood firm. Some surrendered the sacred Scriptures, others offered sacrifice to the idols, and still others faltered in fear. These events left deep wounds within the church, and I understood that such wounds would not simply vanish when peace returned.

In my writings, I noted that the controversies arising in my own day—especially the disputes in North Africa—were the lingering consequences of these earlier trials. The accusations against clergy who had handed over the Scriptures during the Great Persecution, the debates over whether such men could continue to serve, and the divisions that followed were all born from the suffering the church had endured.

I learned that persecution tests the hearts of believers, but it also tests the unity of the church. The lessons forged in suffering must be met with grace, wisdom, and a commitment to the peace Christ gives. Even the disputes that after my time grew into what you now call the **Donatist** controversy were, in truth, the aftershocks of the long and painful history I recorded.

I understand that even in ***your*** day, severe persecution of Christians still happens in some parts of the world. You must always remember to pray for and support your brothers and sisters who must endure persecution for their faith in Jesus.

... Return to Chapter 9 Index ...



1st-Century Crucifixion Evidence
Yehohanan ben Hagkol (Jerusalem, c. AD 30–70)

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- *The Church: The Body of Christ* by John Stott — A clear and concise overview of the church's identity and mission from a respected evangelical voice.
- *The Living Church* by John Stott — A practical exploration of what a healthy, biblical church looks like in everyday life.
- *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever — A modern, accessible treatment of essential church practices rooted in Scripture.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem (chapters on the church) — A balanced evangelical treatment of the church's nature, government, and ordinances.
- *Ecclesiology* by Gregg R. Allison — A thorough and well-organized study of the doctrine of the church within a broader systematic framework.
- *The Church* by Edmund Clowney — A thoughtful theological reflection on the church's identity and calling.

Historical and Broader Perspectives

- *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* by Robert Louis Wilken — Offers insight into how the early church understood itself and its mission.
- *The Story of Christianity* (Vol. 1) by Justo González — Provides historical context for the development of church structures and practices.
- *The Didache* (early Christian document) — A brief window into the worship, leadership, and sacraments of the earliest Christian communities. **Highly Recommended**! Available at this link: *https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Didache_(Lightfoot_translation)*

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history. *Ante-Nicene*, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: *https://www.ccel.org/fathers*

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.



Capernaum - Synagogue and House of Peter

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 10

Full Chapter Audio	*CD10Audio-Full (28 minutes)*

Eschatology:
The Doctrine of Last Things

The End without end

"There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end. For what other end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which there is no end?"

— St. Augustine, *City of God*, Book XXII, Chapter 30

And it shall be in the last [*eschatos*] days,' God says, 'That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, And your young men will see visions, And your old men will have dreams;
Acts 2:17 [NASB] Peter quoting Joel 2:28.

Return to Table of Contents

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** On Already / Not Yet
2.0 The Doctrine of Last Things
3.0 Definition of Eschatology
4.0 Eschatology Vocabulary
4.1 Old Testament Words
4.2 New Testament Words
4.3 **Eusebius** - The Real Meaning of Parousia
5.0 The Doctrine Developed
5.1 The Present "Last Days" and the Already / Not Yet
5.2 The Return of Christ
5.3 The Tribulation and Rapture of Believers
5.4 **Eusebius** - We *Always* Thought We Were in the Tribulation!
5.5 The Resurrection of the Dead
5.6 The Final Judgment
5.7 **Eusebius** on the Two Judgments
5.8 The Eternal State: Heaven and Hell
5.9 The Millennium and the Reign of Christ
5.10 The New Heavens and the New Earth
6.0 The Hope of the Christian Life
7.0 Conclusion
8.0 Personal Application
8.1 **Eusebius** On the Pre-Trib Question

Nancy | CD10-Segment-1

1.0 Introduction.

According to the New Testament, we are already living in the **"last days"**—a period that began with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at **Pentecost** (*Acts 2:16–17*; *Hebrews 1:1–2*; *1 Peter 1:20*). This means that eschatology is not merely the study of distant future events but the study of God's final stage of redemptive history, a stage that has already begun and will reach its completion at the return of Christ and the events described in the Book of Revelation. In simple terms, eschatology explains where history is headed**,** how God brings His saving work to its climax**,** and what the future holds for God's people and God's world.

Joel 2:28–32, Isaiah 2:2–4, Daniel 2:44, Daniel 12:1–2,
Acts 2:16–17, Hebrews 1:1–2, 1 Peter 1:20, Revelation 1:1–3

> "Neither the substance nor the essence of the creation is annihilated... but the fashion of the world passes away."
>
> — Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, ch. 36

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

1.1 Eusebius On Already / Not Yet

Eusebius Audio | CD10-Segment-2V | Eusebius Video

Eusebius On Already / Not Yet



When most people in your day hear the word eschatology, they think only of future events—a timetable, a countdown, or the "end of the world." But in the Scriptures, eschatology is far more than a future expectation. It is an **already / not yet** reality.

In my own time, we understood this clearly. The "latter days" began with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the entire church age is part of those latter days. In other words, you are already living within biblical eschatology.

Some parts of eschatology have already happened—Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God has arrived. Other parts are unfolding now, as the gospel advances and the church grows in every nation. And still other parts remain in the future, awaiting the return of Christ and the renewal of all things.

As you read this chapter, watch how this theme develops. Notice what has already taken place, what you are experiencing in the present, and what lies ahead. When you see eschatology through this "**already / not yet**" lens, the whole story of God's plan becomes clearer and far more meaningful.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

Nancy | *CD10-Segment-3*

2.0 The Doctrine of Last Things

Eschatology is the doctrine that explains how God brings His redemptive plan to its final completion. It deals with the great realities that stand at the end of history: the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, the eternal destinies of humanity, and the renewal of creation. But eschatology is not limited to future events. Because the New Testament teaches that the "last days" began with the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, eschatology also includes the present age in which the church lives, serves, suffers, and hopes. In simple terms, eschatology tells us where history is going**,** what God has promised, and how the story of Scripture reaches its God-ordained climax in the triumph of Christ and the restoration of all things.

Isaiah 65:17, Daniel 12:2–3, Joel 2:28–32, Isaiah 2:2–4,
Acts 2:16–17, Hebrews 1:1–2, 1 Peter 1:20, Revelation 21:1–5

> "[when]...the evil of our nature... has been expelled, and when there has been a restoration of those who are now lying in Sin to their primal state, a harmony of thanksgiving will arise from all creation."
>
> Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

3.0 Definition of Eschatology

In simple terms, Eschatology is defined as the branch of Christian theology that studies the Biblical statements associated with the consummation of God's redemptive plan, including the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, the eternal destinies of humanity, and the renewal of creation. It concerns both the present age and the future events through which God brings history to its divinely appointed climax.

Isaiah 65:17, Daniel 12:2–3, Isaiah 66:22–24, Joel 3:14–17,
Matthew 24:30–31, John 5:28–29, 1 Corinthians 15:51–52, Revelation 20:11–15

> "The resurrection of the dead is Christian men's confidence. By believing it we are what we claim to be."
>
> Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* Ch 1.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

4.0 Eschatology Vocabulary

In New Testament time, there was much attention given in Jewish circles to the "End Times." Many of the Old Testament's eschatological terms also appeared in the wider Jewish writings of the period, such as those contained in the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran, where they carried similar meanings about the latter days and God's future intervention. John the Baptist came with the announcement to "prepare the way of the Lord" which attracted much attention because the culture was expecting that eschatological event.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

4.1 Old Testament Words

The Old Testament speaks about the future using several key terms that shape Israel's expectation of God's final work in history. The most common expression is *'aḥarīt hayyāmim* (אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים, *latter days*), a phrase used by the prophets to describe God's climactic intervention in the world. Another important term is *yōm YHWH* (יוֹם יְהוָה , *day of the LORD*), referring to a decisive moment of divine judgment and salvation. The prophets also speak of *qēṣ* (קֵץ , *end*), pointing to the completion of God's purposes, and *ge'ullāh* (גְּאֻלָּה , *redemption*), the act by which God delivers His people and restores them. Together, these terms form the Old Testament's vocabulary of hope, judgment, restoration, and the ultimate fulfillment of God's covenant promises.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

4.2 New Testament Words

The New Testament develops its teaching on the future with a set of key terms that describe both the present "last days" and the events still to come. A central expression is *eschatos* (ἔσχατος, *last*), which gives us the word *eschatology* and frames the entire age inaugurated by Christ's **first** coming. The return of Jesus is described as *parousia* (παρουσία, *coming/arrival*), a term used for the visible, appearance of royalty. The final judgment is often associated with *hēmera kyriou* (ἡμέρα κυρίου, *day of the Lord*), echoing the Old Testament but applied directly to Christ. Paul speaks of the consummation of all things with *synteleia tou aiōnos* (συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, *end of the age*), and the hope of believers is summarized in *anastasis* (ἀνάστασις, *resurrection*) and *zōē aiōnios* (ζωὴ αἰώνιος, *eternal life*). Together, these terms form the New Testament's vocabulary for the present age of fulfillment and the future completion of God's redemptive work.

Isaiah 2:2–4, Joel 2:28–32, Daniel 12:1–2, Malachi 4:1–2,
Matthew 24:30–31, 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17, 1 Corinthians 15:51–52, Revelation 20:11–15

"We shall therefore rise again, our souls being once more united with our bodies, now made incorruptible and having put off corruption... [the righteous] will shine forth as the sun with the angels into life eternal, with our Lord Jesus Christ, ever seeing Him and being in His sight and deriving unceasing joy from Him."

John of Damascus, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 4.27.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

4.3 Eusebius - The Real Meaning of Parousia

Eusebius Audio | *CD10-Segment-4V* | Eusebius Video

Eusebius - The Real Meaning of Parousia



In your day, when Christians hear the word *parousia,* meaning the return of Jesus, they think only of Christ's future return. But in my world—the world of the Roman Empire—the word had a very familiar meaning. The Greek term *parousia* (**παρουσία)** was used in everyday life to describe either the ***arrival*** of a ruler or the ***presence*** of that ruler once he had come.

As an example, in a papyrus found in Egypt, citizens wrote about the ***parousia* of the emperor Hadrian**, describing how towns prepared for his visit—repairing roads, decorating buildings, and organizing public celebrations. His parousia meant both his official arrival and his honored presence among the people.

This is why the apostles chose the word ***parousia*** to describe the return of Christ. His coming is not hidden or private, but the royal arrival of the true King.

Just as cities prepared for the emperor's parousia, so the church prepares for the Lord's parousia. And just as citizens went out to meet the emperor and escort him back into the city, so believers will go out to meet Christ and accompany Him in glory.

So when you read about the parousia of Jesus in Scripture, remember this: it is the public, royal arrival—and abiding presence—of Jesus the King. In my day, we knew exactly what that meant.

And I encourage you, in your day, to live with the same readiness for His parousia.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

Nancy | *CD10-Segment-5*

5.0 The Doctrine Developed

In this chapter, the major themes of eschatology are presented below to show how Scripture unfolds the future in a clear, sequential pattern. This structure allows each topic—such as the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, the millennial reign, and the new creation—to be treated as

part of a single, coherent movement in God's redemptive plan. By presenting these sub-topics together, the chapter mirrors the unified approach found in the major systematic theologies and helps the reader see how each element contributes to the overall biblical picture of the last days and the consummation of all things.

Isaiah 65:17–19, Daniel 12:2–3, Isaiah 2:2–4, Joel 3:14–17,
Matthew 24:30–31, John 5:28–29, 1 Corinthians 15:51–52, Revelation 21:1–5

> the soul will have complete dominion over the body...
> because it will be immutably subject to God
>
> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book IV

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.1 The Present "Last Days" and the Already/Not Yet

The New Testament teaches that the "last days" began with the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit, meaning we live in a time when God's future promises have already begun but are not yet complete. This **already/not yet** tension explains why believers experience both the power of the Spirit and the reality of suffering. The kingdom has been inaugurated but not consummated; Christ reigns now, yet the world still awaits His visible return. This framework shapes every part of Christian hope and provides the theological backdrop for the events still to come.

Isaiah 2:2–4, Joel 2:28–32, Daniel 7:13–14, Habakkuk 2:14,
Acts 2:16–17, Hebrews 1:1–2, Romans 8:18–23, 1 Corinthians 15:23–26

> "Neither the substance nor the essence of the creation is annihilated... but the fashion of the world passes away."
>
> — Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, ch. 36

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.2 The Return of Christ

The central event of biblical eschatology is the **return of Jesus Christ**, described in the New Testament as visible, bodily, sudden, and glorious. Christ returns not merely to appear but to reign, judge, resurrect, and renew. His coming is called the *parousia* (παρουσία, *coming/arrival*), a royal term signaling the arrival of a king. Scripture emphasizes both the certainty of His return and the impossibility of predicting its timing. The church lives in watchful hope, confident that history is moving toward this climactic moment.

Isaiah 40:10, Daniel 7:13–14, Zechariah 14:4–5, Malachi 3:1–2,
Matthew 24:30–31, Acts 1:10–11, 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17, Revelation 19:11–16

"For the dead shall arise, and those that shall be found alive in that day... shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye. And all the faithful shall be taken up to meet Christ in the air; that thenceforth they may enter with him into heaven, there to live forever."

— Heinrich Bullinger, *Second Helvetic Confession*, Chapter 11 (Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom* translation)

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.3 The Tribulation and Rapture of Believers

Many Christians, especially within premillennial framework, explained below, speak of a coming **tribulation**, a period of intense suffering and opposition to God's people before the final consummation. Closely connected to this is the question of the **rapture**—the catching up of believers to be with Christ. The term **rapture** refers to the moment when believers are "caught up" to meet Christ, drawn from Paul's use of the Greek verb *harpazō* (ἁρπάζω, to seize/snatch up) in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, where the church is gathered to the Lord at His coming. The main issue is whether the believer will experience this great tribulation. Many movies have depicted this issue in very dramatic ways.

- **Pre-tribulation rapture:** Pre-tribulationists teach that Christ will secretly (or at least suddenly) rapture believers **before** a future seven-year tribulation. The church is taken to be with Christ, while judgment and distress fall on the earth, followed by Christ's visible return and millennial reign at the end of the tribulation period.
- **Mid-tribulation rapture:** Mid-tribulationists hold that the church will go through the first half of the tribulation but will be raptured **midway through**, before the most intense outpouring of wrath in the latter half, and then return with Christ at His visible coming.
- **Post-tribulation rapture:** Post-tribulationists believe that the church will endure the **entire tribulation**, and that the rapture and the visible return of Christ are essentially one event: believers are caught up to meet Christ as He comes in glory and then immediately accompany Him in His public return and reign.

All three positions affirm the **visible, bodily return of Christ** and the final gathering of His people, but they differ on the timing and relationship between the tribulation, the rapture, and the millennium.

Daniel 12:1, Joel 2:30–31, Zechariah 14:1–5, Isaiah 26:20–21,
Matthew 24:21–31, John 14:1–3, 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17, Revelation 7:13–14

"He intended to bring them to perfect excellency and beauty in his image, and in holiness ... and to advance them to a glorious degree of honor ... The work which tends to this, God began immediately after the fall, and carries on through all ages, and will have perfected at the end of the world."

Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.4 Eusebius - We *Always* Thought We Were in the Tribulation!

Eusebius Audio | *CD10-Segment-6V* | Eusebius Video

Eusebius - We *Always* Thought We Were in the Tribulation!



In the first 300 years of the church, there was almost always some form of persecution against the church, either in a local region or throughout the entire Roman Empire.

During those years believers endured imprisonment, torture, burning, crucifixion, being thrown to wild beasts, and many other horrors. So when *we* read in Scripture about the "Tribulation," we believed it was happening ***now***. We did not imagine a distant future period of suffering, as many in ***your*** day do. We were living through tribulation in our own present experience.

And I understand that even in *your* time many Christians—especially in what you call "third-world" nations—still suffer persecution and violence for their faith.

So while the tribulation described in Scripture may yet be future for you, remember to pray for and support your brothers and sisters who face their own tribulation, whether now or in the days to come.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

Nancy | *CD10-Segment-7*

5.5 The Resurrection of the Dead

At Christ's return, God will raise the dead in a **bodily resurrection**, patterned after the resurrection of Jesus Himself. Believers receive glorified bodies suited for eternal life in the renewed creation, while unbelievers are raised for judgment. The resurrection is not a spiritual metaphor but a physical transformation in which mortality is swallowed up by life. This event marks the transition from the present age to the age to come.

Job 19:25–27, Daniel 12:2, Isaiah 26:19, Ezekiel 37:12–14,
John 5:28–29, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 15:51–53, Revelation 20:12–13

> "The Kingdom of God involves two great moments: fulfillment within history (already), and consummation at the end of history (not yet)."
>
> George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.6 The Final Judgment

Scripture describes not one general judgment scene but two distinct judgments, separated in time and differing in subject and purpose.

The Bema Seat. After Christ's return, *believers* appear before Him at the *bēma* (βῆμα), the "judgment seat" of 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10. This is not a judgment unto condemnation — "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1) — but an evaluation of works, done in light of grace already secured. Each believer's life is tested, as by fire, to reveal what endures and what does not (1 Corinthians 3:11–15); the outcome is loss of reward, never loss of salvation.

The Great White Throne. After the millennial kingdom, *unbelievers* stand before the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11–15). Here the dead are "judged... according to what they had done," and "anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." Unlike the *bema* seat, this judgment is unto condemnation — the righteous consequence of a life lived in rejection of God.

Scripture also points to a future judgment of angels (1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6), though its precise timing and relationship to these two judgments is not spelled out.

Together, these judgments reveal the holiness of God, the seriousness of human responsibility, and the moral order of the universe He governs.

Ecclesiastes 12:14, Daniel 7:9–10, Malachi 3:16–18, Isaiah 66:15–16,
Matthew 25:31–34, John 5:22–29, Romans 14:10–12, Revelation 20:11–15

> "Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present."
>
> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.7 Eusebius On the Two Judgments

Eusebius Audio	CD10-Segment-8V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Two Judgments



People in my church were often confused about the two judgments in the last days. I presume the same confusion probably still exists in your day. Let me pause to give you a brief explanation.

Scripture itself uses two different scenes to describe these events, separated in time and differing in purpose.

The first judgment will be the *Bēma* Seat judgment of Christ. In the apostolic writings, believers appear before Christ at the *bēma* (βῆμα), which is the "judgment seat" mentioned in second Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10. This term refers to a raised platform used for official review or public decisions.

A physical bēma still stands in the ruins of **ancient Corinth**, the very city where Paul wrote about this event. For Christians, this judgment is not condemnation but an **evaluation**—a testing of each believer's works, "as by fire," to reveal what endures and what does not. Salvation is already secure; the outcome is loss of reward, not loss of life.

The second judgment is the Great White Throne judgment. This is the judgment in Revelation 20:11–15, after the millennial kingdom. Here the unbelieving dead stand before the **Great White Throne**, and "anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." This judgment is unto condemnation—the righteous consequence of rejecting God's grace.

Together, these scenes display the holiness of God, the seriousness of human responsibility, and the moral order by which He governs His creation.

So if you are trusting Jesus as your Savior, you will experience the *Bema* Seat judgment where your works, after receiving eternal life, will be evaluated. In Ephesians 2:8-9 we read, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast."

But did you know that verse 10 follows verse 9? "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." So the Bema Seat judgment will evaluate your good works performed after you are saved by grace.

As a believer in Jesus, you will not experience the last judgment before the Great White Throne as that is for those who rejected Jesus. So you can breath a sigh of relief on that point. Just keep in mind that statement in verse 10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

I pray that your good works will be worthy when you stand before the *Bema* Seat.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

Nancy | CD10-Segment-9

5.8 The Eternal State: Heaven and Hell

The final judgment leads to the eternal state, where the destinies of all people are fixed forever. Between physical death and the bodily resurrection, every person enters what theologians calls the intermediate state, in which believers experience conscious fellowship with Christ while unbelievers experience conscious separation from Him. As the Apostle Paul said, "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8)

At the resurrection and judgment, these temporary conditions give way to their permanent fulfillment: believers enter an unbroken fellowship with God, joyful worship, meaningful activity, and life in a renewed creation, while unbelievers enter eternal punishment, a conscious and irreversible separation from God. Scripture presents these realities with clarity and gravity, calling all people to repentance and faith.

Psalm 16:10–11, Daniel 12:2, Isaiah 66:22–24, Ecclesiastes 12:7,
Luke 16:22–26, John 14:2–3, 2 Corinthians 5:6–8, Revelation 21:1–8

> "He alone has made solid progress in the Gospel who has acquired the habit of meditating continually on a blessed resurrection."
>
> — Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book III, ch. 25, §1

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.9 The Millennium and the Reign of Christ

Christians throughout history have held different views of the **millennium**, the thousand-year reign mentioned in Revelation 20.

1. **Amillennialism** teaches that Christ is reigning now from heaven during the symbolic "thousand years," and that He will return bodily, once, at the end of history to raise the dead, judge all people, and usher in the new creation.

   So, in this view, the millennium is ***NOW!***

2. **Postmillennialism** expects the gospel to bring widespread transformation to the world through the ordinary means of grace, resulting in a long era of righteousness and peace; Christ will return bodily at the end of this millennial age to raise the dead, judge all people, and usher in the new creation. This view lost favor during the 20th Century when WW I and WW II destroyed the thought that humanity was becoming morally better.

   So, in this view, the millennium ***MAY BE NOW!***

3. **Premillennialism** teaches that Christ will return visibly and bodily *before* a future earthly reign, and that His return itself initiates the millennial kingdom described in Revelation 20.

   So, in this view, the millennium is ***NOT YET NOW!***

Despite these differences, all orthodox views affirm the same core truths: Christ reigns, Satan is defeated, and God's kingdom triumphs. The millennium is best understood as a family of faithful interpretations, not a test of orthodoxy.

Psalm 2:6–9, Isaiah 11:1–10, Daniel 7:13–14, Zechariah 14:9,
Matthew 19:28, 1 Corinthians 15:24–25, 2 Timothy 2:11–12, Revelation 20:1–6

> "...the righteous shall reign in the earth, waxing stronger by the sight of the Lord: and through Him they shall become accustomed to partake in the glory of God the Father..."
>
> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.35

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

5.10 The New Heavens and the New Earth

The climax of biblical eschatology is the renewal of creation, when God makes "a new heaven and a new earth." This is not an escape from the physical world but the restoration of the world God originally made. Believers live embodied lives in a redeemed creation where righteousness dwells, God's presence is immediate, and the effects of sin are forever removed. This is the final fulfillment of God's covenant promises and the eternal home of His people.

Isaiah 65:17–19, Isaiah 66:22, Ezekiel 37:26–28, Psalm 102:25–27,
Matthew 19:28, Romans 8:18–23, 2 Peter 3:10–13, Revelation 21:1–5

> "This immediate sight of Christ is that which all the saints of God in this life do breathe and pant after."
>
> — Owen, *The Glory of Christ*, ch. 15

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

6.0 The Hope of the Christian Life

Eschatology is not speculation about the future but hope for the present.

Because Christ has already risen, believers live with confidence that death is defeated.

Because the Spirit has been poured out, believers live with power for holiness and mission.

Because Christ will return, believers live with endurance, knowing that their labor is not in vain.

Eschatology anchors the Christian life in the **certainty** that God will finish what He has begun.

Psalm 16:8–11, Isaiah 40:31, Habakkuk 3:17–19, Daniel 7:27,
John 14:18–19, Romans 8:23–25, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 1 Peter 1:3–5

> "And when all things shall be subjected to Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."
>
> — Origen, *De Principiis*, Book III, Chapter VI (quoting/expounding 1 Corinthians 15:28)

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

7.0 Conclusion

Eschatology brings the entire story of Scripture to its God-ordained climax by showing how the work begun in Christ's first coming reaches its completion at His return. The New Testament teaches that we **already** live in the "last days," experiencing the first fruits of the kingdom through the Spirit, even as we await the resurrection, the final judgment, and the renewal of all things. The vocabulary of both Testaments gives believers a framework for understanding God's unfolding plan and the certainty of its fulfillment in Christ.

At the same time, eschatology reminds us that every person passes through the intermediate state after death and will one day stand before the risen Lord. Views differ on the timing of the rapture and the nature of the millennium, yet all orthodox positions affirm the visible, bodily return of Christ and the final establishment of His kingdom. For the believer, these truths are not speculative but deeply practical: they call us to steadfast hope, faithful obedience, and confident assurance that God will finish what He has begun. In the end, eschatology is the **study of Christian hope**—hope grounded in the promise that Christ will come again and make all things new.

Isaiah 2:2–4, Daniel 12:2–3, Ecclesiastes 12:7, Isaiah 65:17–19,
John 5:22–29, Acts 2:16–17, 1 Corinthians 15:20–26, Revelation 21:1–5

> "If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next."
>
> — C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

8.0 Personal Application

Eschatology is not merely a study of future events—it is a call to live faithfully **today**. The Bible's presentation of the future is meant to shape the believer's present life with hope, courage, and steady obedience.

Because Christ will return, we live with purpose.
Because the resurrection awaits, we endure hardship without despair.
Because judgment is certain, we pursue holiness. And
Because the new creation is coming, we invest our lives in what will last forever.
Because of the final promise of heaven, we expect to be reunited with loved ones who have already "gone on to their rewards."

The doctrine of the last things is not speculation about tomorrow but motivation for faithfulness this afternoon. It teaches us to hold the things of this world loosely, to cling to Christ tightly, and to walk through each day with the confident expectation that God will finish what He has begun.

This became especially clear to me in a conversation with my grandson. He once asked me casually, as we were driving to his bowling league, which of the three rapture views I personally believed—pre-trib, mid-trib, or post-trib. I told him that I see Scriptural support for all three positions, so I hold any final conclusion on that subject loosely. But then I explained the **practical** side:

Live hoping for a pre-trib rapture, but prepare your heart for a post-trib one.

In other words, hope for rescue, but train for endurance. That balance captures the heart of biblical eschatology—an expectant hope that looks for Christ's coming and a steadfast faith that is ready to follow Him through whatever may come.

Assignment for this week: Ask your pastor or someone on the church staff (by text, email or in person) which of the three positions on the rapture of the church (Pre-Trib, Mid-Trib, Post-Trib) your local church teaches. Then ask them why they teach that view . . . and **DO NOT** simply accept the answer of . . . "because that is what the Bible teaches!"

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...

8.1 Eusebius On the Pre-Trib Question

Eusebius Audio	*CD10-Segment-10V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Pre-Trib Question



I have to say that I really appreciate Paul's answer to his grandson about the pre-trib, mid-trib, and post-trib views. It makes practical sense and keeps the heart steady.

And remember—when you discuss this doctrine with other believers—the timing of the tribulation in relation to the second coming is ***not*** one of the core doctrines of *orthodoxy.*

As we said earlier in this book: In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity.

So as you finish this chapter on *eschatology,* my recommendation is simple: follow Paul's counsel to his grandson.

Live hoping for a pre-tribulation rapture, but prepare your heart for a post-tribulation one.
And above all, keep your heart in tune with the Holy Spirit so you can endure faithfully whichever may happen.

... Return to Chapter 10 Index ...



"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

Revelation 19:11

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- ***The Case for Heaven* — Lee Strobel.** A clear, story-driven exploration of the Christian hope of life after death, written in an accessible style that helps readers understand why the resurrection and eternal life matter today.
- ***Heaven* — Randy Alcorn.** A warm, imaginative, Scripture-saturated look at the believer's eternal home, written for ordinary Christians who want to understand the new creation and the joy that awaits God's people.
- ***The End Times Made Easy* — Ken Gentry.** A simple, conversational introduction to the major eschatological themes and viewpoints, designed to help readers understand the big picture without getting lost in technical debates.
- ***What Happens After I Die?* — Michael Allen Rogers.** A friendly, pastoral guide to the intermediate state, resurrection, judgment, and eternal life, written for everyday Christians who want clarity without complexity.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- ***The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* — ed. Robert G. Clouse.** A classic scholarly presentation of amillennial, postmillennial, historic premillennial, and dispensational premillennial positions, each defended by a leading theologian; helpful for understanding the millennial views in their strongest form.
- ***The Bible and the Future* — Anthony A. Hoekema.** A standard academic treatment of eschatology from an amillennial perspective, with excellent sections on the kingdom, resurrection, judgment, and new creation.
- ***The Return of the King* — Vern Poythress.** A scholarly yet readable theological commentary on Revelation that emphasizes symbolism, biblical theology, and the unity of Scripture's eschatological message.
- ***Systematic Theology* — Wayne Grudem (chapters on eschatology).** A balanced evangelical treatment of the return of Christ, the resurrection, the final judgment, and the eternal state, with clear explanations of the rapture and tribulation views.
- ***The Coming of the Kingdom* — Herman Ridderbos.** A rigorous study of the kingdom of God in the New Testament, foundational for understanding the **already/not yet** structure of biblical eschatology.

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history.
Ante-Nicene, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: *https://www.ccel.org/fathers*

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

The Meaning of Parousia



The image on the left depicts the ***Parousia*** of the Emperor in a town in the Roman Empire. The "appearance" of the King receives honor and cheering.

The image on the right depicts the ***Parousia*** of the King of Kings when Jesus returns.



"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:
for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;
and there was no more sea."

Revelation 21:1

Note: The **audio and video recordings** give you two options; (1) listen to the entire chapter in one full audio recording including the **Eusebius** commentary in audio only; (2) listen to audio segments one at a time. When you reach a **Eusebius** commentary, click the link to the **Eusebius** audio or bring up a **video** to watch **Eusebius.**

Chapter 11

Full Chapter Audio	*CD11Audio-Full (31 minutes)*

Orthodoxy:
Forged in Battle

"Heresy is the mother of orthodoxy."

> Error, indeed, is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outward form, to make it appear to the inexperienced (ridiculous as the expression may seem) more true than the truth itself.
>
> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 2

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect; I Peter 3:15 [NASB]

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Index

1.0 Introduction
1.1 **Eusebius** On the Refining Fire
1.2 The Refining Fire
2.0 Marcion and the First Major Challenge (c. 85–160 A.D.)
3.0 Gnosticism and the Defense of Apostolic Faith (2nd–3rd Centuries)
4.0 Sabellianism and the Clarification of the Trinity (3rd Century)
4.1 **Eusebius** On the Terminology of Trinity
5.0 Arianism and the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.)
6.0 Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, and the Councils of Constantinople and Ephesus (381, 431)
7.0 Nestorianism (5th Century)
8.0 Eutychianism and the Council of Chalcedon (451)
8.1 **Eusebius** On the Chalcedonian Definition
9.0 The Iconoclast Controversy and the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787)
10.0 Conclusion: Orthodoxy as the Faith That Endured
11.0 Application. Becoming a Guardian of the Faith
11.1 **Eusebius** On Defending the Faith

Nancy | *CD11-Segment-1*

1.0 Introduction

The orderly presentation of the first ten chapters may give the impression that Christian doctrine was originally conceived as a deliberate, pre-planned system, carefully organized in advance like the doctrinal statements modern churches draft when forming their articles of faith. The historical reality is quite the opposite.

Orthodox Christian doctrine did not arise from a premeditated theological blueprint but emerged through ***centuries of conflict, debate, and discernment***. The church was repeatedly compelled to examine false teachings, measure them against the Scriptures, and reject them when found wanting. In this long process of testing and clarification, error was stripped away, and what remained—after the dust of controversy settled—is what the church came to recognize as **Orthodox Christian Doctrine**.

Catch that last statement: what ***remained*** after the error was removed is the true doctrine.[29]

Deuteronomy 13:1–5; Isaiah 8:20; Jeremiah 23:28–29;
Proverbs 30:5–6; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 11:19; 1 Timothy 6:3–5; Jude 3–4

> "Human wisdom which pretends to know the truth, whilst it only corrupts it, and is itself divided into its own manifold heresies, by the variety of its mutually repugnant sects."
>
> — Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics*, Ch. 7

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

[29] **The proverb.** "Heresy is the mother of orthodoxy" is a genuine old theological saying — an old saying that means what we call orthodoxy, correct Christian belief, arose largely in response to the challenges of heresies. It's not attributed to a single named author; it functions the way most "old sayings" do, circulating as received wisdom in historical theology. See also **Vincent of Lérins**, *Commonitorium* (434 AD), chapter 23, where it specifically discusses the development of Christian doctrine and argues that heresies are what forced the Church to dig deeper into truths she already implicitly possessed, articulating them with new precision in response to error. This is the actual theological source of the idea — centuries before the modern proverb, and by someone whose whole purpose in writing was to explain how doctrine gets refined by conflict with heresy.

1.1 Eusebius On the Refining Fire

Eusebius Audio	CD11-Segment-2V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Refining Fire



You may possess a ring or necklace of gold, shining with purity. Yet such beauty was not original. The raw metal, drawn from the earth, was committed to the refiner's fire, where the flame consumed the dross and revealed the true gold.

So also with the teachings delivered by Jesus and His apostles. The Scriptures provided the raw materials, but to correctly interpret them, the church had to go through the fires. The doctrines "in the rough" had to be refined with fire.

During the first several centuries, teachers arose with doctrines that challenged the Faith Once Delivered to the Saints. The church then had to defend the faith. It had to put the doctrines through the fire of debates and test them with the Scriptures. Through these fires the church discarded what was false.

What was left and survived the refining fire became the true orthodox doctrine of the church.

The doctrines in the previous chapters are the purified gold of the Church. In this chapter you will see the most important refining fires that resulted in the correct understanding of the "Faith Once Delivered.

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

Nancy	CD11-Segment-3

1.2 The Refining Fire

Just as raw gold is placed into the fire so that heat can separate the impurities from the precious metal, the church was repeatedly thrust into the fires of controversy. False teaching acted like the dross that rises to the surface when gold is heated. The heat was uncomfortable, the process was messy, and the flames were real—but when the fire died down, what remained was purer, clearer, stronger doctrine. Orthodoxy did not emerge from calm reflection in quiet rooms; it was refined in the furnace of **conflict**, where error was burned away and the truth of Scripture is what remained, shining more brightly because of the conflict!

Many of these doctrines were formally addressed in what later came to be known as the ecumenical councils convened during the fourth to eight centuries of the church's life. Other doctrinal questions arose after the great division between the Eastern Church (centered in Constantinople) and the Western Church (centered in Rome) in the eleventh century, and especially during the Protestant Reformation beginning in 1519 under figures such as Martin Luther and John Calvin. These later developments, while profoundly influential, never received the universal recognition that characterized the early ecumenical decisions. As a result, the doctrinal landscape after the medieval schism and the

Reformation reflects a more fragmented history, with significant teachings affirmed within particular traditions rather than by the whole church.

However, despite the later fragmentation of the Christian world, all three major branches of the contemporary Christian family—Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and the various Protestant traditions—remain united in affirming the **foundational doctrines** articulated in the first two ecumenical councils, expressed in what is commonly called the **Nicene Creed**. A copy of that creed is included in the Appendix. These affirmations constitute the core of historic Christian orthodoxy. Any individual, congregation, or denomination that can sincerely endorse the Nicene Creed stands within the boundaries of orthodox Christianity, regardless of later doctrinal distinctives or denominational developments.

Malachi 3:2–3; Psalm 12:6; Proverbs 17:3; Isaiah 48:10;
Acts 15:6–11; 1 Corinthians 3:13; Ephesians 4:4–6; Jude 3

> "Thus, not being Christians, they have acquired no right to the Christian Scriptures."
>
> — Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics*, Ch. 37

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

2.0 Marcion and the First Major Challenge (c. 85–160 A.D.)

Historical Setting: Marcion of Sinope emerged in the mid-second century as one of the earliest and most disruptive figures to challenge the developing Christian faith. Arriving in Rome around A.D. 140, he quickly gained influence through his wealth, organizational skill, and aggressive promotion of his theological views.

Doctrinal Position: Marcion rejected the Old Testament entirely, insisting that the God of Israel was a lesser, inferior deity distinct from the Father of Jesus Christ. He denied any continuity between the Hebrew Scriptures and the gospel and constructed his own sharply edited list of inspired Scripture consisting of a mutilated version of Luke's Gospel and ten Pauline letters stripped of Jewish elements. His theology was fundamentally dualistic, anti-Jewish, and docetic,[30] denying the true humanity of Christ.

Orthodox Response: The church's response to Marcion forced early Christian leaders to articulate several foundational convictions: the unity of Scripture as one coherent revelation from the one true God; the goodness of creation; the full incarnation of the Son; and the legitimacy of the emerging list of authoritative New Testament documents. In opposing Marcion, the church affirmed that the God revealed in Jesus Christ is the same God who spoke through the Law and the Prophets, and that the gospel stands in organic continuity with the entire biblical narrative.

[30] **Docetic** (from the Greek *dokein*, "to seem" or "to appear") refers to an early Christian heresy that taught that Jesus **only seemed** to have a physical body. Docetists claimed Christ's humanity was an illusion — that He did not truly suffer, bleed, or die, but only appeared to do so. This view denied the real Incarnation and was rejected by the early church as incompatible with apostolic teaching.

Genesis 1:31; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 40:8; Malachi 3:6;
Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:27; John 1:14; 2 Timothy 3:16

> "Are not they who have set at nought the votes of the Three hundred, and have preferred impiety to godliness?"
>
> — Athanasius, *Defence Against the Arians*, §24-25

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

3.0 Gnosticism and the Defense of Apostolic Faith (2nd–3rd Centuries)

Historical Setting: Gnosticism was not a single movement but a broad family of teachings that flourished in the second and third centuries, often associated with figures such as **Valentinus (c. 100–160)** and **Basilides (early 2nd century)**. These teachers blended elements of Christianity with speculative mythology, Greek philosophical dualism, and esoteric "secret knowledge." Gnosticism spread rapidly in urban centers of the Roman Empire and posed one of the earliest and most pervasive threats to the developing Christian faith.

Doctrinal Position: Gnostic systems typically taught a radical dualism between spirit (good) and matter (evil). They denied the goodness of creation, rejected the full humanity of Christ, and reinterpreted salvation as escape from the material world through secret, mystical knowledge (*gnōsis*). Many Gnostics claimed that the true God was distinct from the Creator of the physical world and that Christ only appeared to be human (a docetic Christology). Their teachings undermined the incarnation, the atonement, and the historical nature of the gospel.

Orthodox Response: The church's response to Gnosticism was led most notably by **Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130–202)**, whose work ***Against Heresies*** became the definitive refutation of Gnostic teaching. In opposing Gnosticism, the church affirmed the goodness of creation, the true and complete humanity of Christ, the unity of the Old and New Testaments, and the public, apostolic nature of Christian teaching. The orthodox leaders insisted that salvation is grounded not in secret knowledge but in the historical life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, proclaimed openly by the apostles and preserved in the Scriptures.

Genesis 1:31; Deuteronomy 29:29; Isaiah 45:18; Psalm 19:1;
John 1:14; Luke 24:39; 1 John 1:1–3; 1 Timothy 2:5–6

> "For this salvation which we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning, but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures."
>
> — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture* 4, §17

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

4.0 Sabellianism and the Clarification of the Trinity (3rd Century)

Historical Setting: Sabellianism, also known as *Modalism* or *Modalistic Monarchianism*, arose in the early third century and is associated primarily with **Sabellius**, a theologian active around A.D. 215. His teachings gained traction in parts of North Africa and Rome, appealing to Christians who wished to defend the unity of God against what they perceived as tritheistic tendencies in emerging Trinitarian language.

Doctrinal Position: Sabellius taught that God is a single divine Person who reveals Himself in three **sequential** "modes" or "manifestations": first as the **Father** in creation (Old Testament), then as the **Son** in redemption (The Gospels), and finally as the **Holy Spirit** in sanctification (The Church Age in the balance of the New Testament). According to this view, the distinctions among Father, Son, and Spirit are not eternal personal distinctions within the Godhead but temporary roles adopted by the one God at different times. This effectively collapses the Trinity into a single-person deity and denies the real, eternal relationships revealed in Scripture.

Orthodox Response: The church rejected Sabellianism because it undermined the genuine personal distinctions within the Godhead and made the Father's relationship to the Son merely a dramatic role rather than an eternal reality. Early theologians such as **Tertullian (c. 155–220)** argued forcefully that God is one in essence but three in persons, coexisting eternally rather than appearing sequentially. In refuting Sabellius, the church affirmed the full, eternal deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and clarified that the Trinity is not a set of temporary manifestations but the eternal identity of the one true God. The term "trinity" (*trinitas*, Latin) was first used by Tertullian in this controversy.

Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 48:16; Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 61:1;
Matthew 28:19; John 1:1–2; John 14:16–17; 2 Corinthians 13:14

> "In her craft and cunning, affects to array herself in Scripture language, like her father the devil, and is forcing her way back into the Church's paradise — that with the pretence of Christianity, her smooth sophistry (for reason she has none) may deceive men into wrong thoughts of Christ"
>
> — Athanasius, *Discourse I Against the Arians*, §1

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

4.1 Eusebius On the Terminology of Trinity

Eusebius Audio	CD11-Segment-4V	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Terminology of Trinity



You will remember that in Chapter Five you encountered the term in Colossians translated as **the Godhead** — *theotēs* (θεότης). We traced how this rare word, expressing the full and complete divine nature, later found its doctrinal counterpart in the term in Latin introduced by Tertullian around A.D. 200: **Trinity**. It was in the conflict with Sabellius that this term emerged from the fire of debate as the Church's settled expression for the *theotēs* (θεότης) revealed in Scripture.

Sabellius taught that the one God merely appeared in three successive "modes" — Father in the Old Testament, Son in the Gospels, and Spirit in the rest of the New Testament. But the Church, testing this teaching against the apostolic witness, judged it insufficient. Tertullian's term **Trinity** more faithfully conveyed the Scriptural reality: one God in three distinct Persons, sharing the same divine essence.

Thus, although the word *Trinity* does not appear in Scripture, the Church drew both the term and the concept from the furnace of this controversy and **infused it with Scriptural authority**, recognizing it as the clearest expression of the Godhead taught by Jesus and His apostles.

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

Nancy	CD11-Segment-5

5.0 Arianism and the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.)

Historical Setting: Arianism arose in the early fourth century and is associated with **Arius (c. 256–336)**, a presbyter in Alexandria. Around A.D. 318, Arius began teaching views about the Son that quickly ignited the ***most significant doctrinal crisis of the early church***. His ideas spread rapidly throughout the Eastern Empire, aided by political support and the simplicity of his slogans. The controversy became so widespread and divisive that Emperor Constantine convened the **Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.** to address the issue.

Doctrinal Position: Arius taught that the Son of God was not eternal but a created being—the highest of creatures, exalted above all others, yet still a creature. His famous claim, "There was when He was not," denied the eternal pre-existence of the Son. According to Arius, the Son did not share the same divine **essence** as the Father but was of a similar or subordinate essence. This view undermined the full deity of Christ, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the very foundation of salvation, since a created being could not accomplish the redemption of humanity.

Orthodox Response: The church responded decisively at the **Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.)**, affirming that the Son is ***homoousios***—"of the same essence"—with the Father. This term was chosen specifically to exclude the Arian claim that the Son was a creature. **Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296–373)** became the chief defender of Nicene orthodoxy, arguing that only one who is truly God can save. The church

affirmed the eternal generation of the Son, His full deity, and His equality with the Father. The Nicene Creed became the **definitive statement of orthodox Trinitarian faith** and remains the central doctrinal boundary of Christianity to this day. The expression that "the whole world hung on one letter" came from this Council. The Greek iota which is the smallest Greek letter is the only difference between the "same essence" and "similar essence" in the Greek words.

Psalm 102:25–27; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Daniel 7:13–14;
John 1:1–3; John 17:5; Colossians 1:15–17; Hebrews 1:3–8

> "Heresies arise because Scripture is not understood in the plain sense in which it was written."
>
> — Jerome, *Letter 53*, §7

. . . Return to Chapter 11 Index . . .

6.0 Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, and the Councils of Constantinople and Ephesus (381, 431)

Historical Setting: Apollinarianism arose in the mid-fourth century and is associated with **Apollinaris of Laodicea (d. 390)**, a respected bishop and defender of Nicene orthodoxy. In his zeal to protect the full deity of Christ against Arianism, Apollinaris proposed a Christological explanation that unintentionally compromised Christ's true humanity. His views gained influence in Syria and Asia Minor and became a significant controversy in the decades following the Council of Nicaea.

Doctrinal Position: Apollinaris taught that in the incarnation, the divine Logos took the place of the rational human soul (*nous*) in Jesus Christ. In his model, Christ possessed a human body and a sensitive soul but not a rational human mind; instead, the divine Logos functioned as Christ's mind. This view was intended to safeguard the unity of Christ's person and the certainty of His sinlessness, but it effectively denied that Christ was fully human. According to Apollinaris, Christ was "God in a body," not truly God and truly man.

Orthodox Response: The church rejected Apollinarianism because it undermined the completeness of Christ's humanity and therefore the reality of human redemption. The **Council of Constantinople (381)** condemned Apollinaris's teaching and affirmed that Christ assumed the fullness of human nature—body, soul, and rational mind. Orthodox leaders insisted that "what is not assumed is not healed," meaning that Christ must possess a complete human nature in order to redeem humanity fully. The church upheld the doctrine that Jesus Christ is one person with two complete natures, divine and human, united without confusion or diminishment.

Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:3–5; Psalm 8:4–5; Micah 5:2;
John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14–17; Philippians 2:5–8; 1 John 4:2

> "this also is a part of the devil's craft, by the side of the truth always to bring in error, painting thereon many resemblances, so as easily to cheat the deceivable. Therefore He calls it not any other seed, but tares; which in appearance are somewhat like wheat."
>
> — John Chrysostom, *Homily 46 on Matthew*

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

7.0 Nestorianism (5th Century)

Historical Setting: Nestorianism arose in the early fifth century and is associated with **Nestorius (c. 386–451)**, who became Patriarch of Constantinople in A.D. 428. Nestorius entered a theological environment already tense with debates about how to articulate the relationship between Christ's divine and human natures. His preaching and public objections to certain liturgical expressions—especially the title *Theotokos* ("God-bearer") for Mary—sparked widespread controversy. The dispute escalated quickly, drawing in major theological centers such as Alexandria and Antioch and culminating in the **Council of Ephesus in 431**.

Doctrinal Position: Nestorius emphasized the distinction between Christ's divine and human natures to such an extent that he appeared to divide Christ into **two separate persons**—the divine Son of God and the human Jesus—united only by a moral or cooperative bond. His rejection of the title *Theotokos* was rooted in this separation: he argued that Mary gave birth only to the human Christ, not to the divine Son. This position threatened the unity of Christ's person and undermined the reality of the incarnation, in which the eternal Son truly became man without ceasing to be God.

Orthodox Response: The **Council of Ephesus (431)**, led by **Cyril of Alexandria**, condemned Nestorianism and affirmed the **unity of Christ's person**. The church declared that the one born of Mary is truly the eternal Son of God incarnate, and therefore Mary may rightly be called *Theotokos*. The council upheld that Christ is **one person in two natures**, fully divine and fully human, without separation or division. This affirmation safeguarded the truth that the same person who is God the Son is also the one who lived, suffered, died, and rose again for our salvation.

Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 9:6;
John 1:14; Luke 1:35; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:14

> "The bold and shameless heresy of the Arians, after being publicly cut off from the body of the Church, still abides in its own error, and does not do us much harm because its impiety is notorious to all. Nevertheless men clad in sheep's clothing... within unsparingly ravaging Christ's flocks, find it easy to do hurt to the simpler ones."
>
> — Basil of Caesarea, *Epistle 263*

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

8.0 Eutychianism and the Council of Chalcedon (451)

Historical Setting: Eutychianism arose in the mid-fifth century and is associated with **Eutyches (c. 380–456)**, an elderly monk in Constantinople who had long opposed Nestorianism. In his attempt to defend the unity of Christ's person against what he perceived as excessive division, Eutyches advanced a Christological explanation that quickly drew criticism. His teachings became the center of controversy

leading up to the **Council of Chalcedon in 451**, one of the most decisive doctrinal moments in church history.

Doctrinal Position: Eutyches taught that after the incarnation, Christ had only **one nature**, a fusion in which His humanity was absorbed or overwhelmed by His divinity. This view—often summarized as "one nature after the union"—effectively denied the full and continuing reality of Christ's human nature. In Eutyches's formulation, Christ was not truly consubstantial with humanity, since His humanity was not preserved in its integrity. This position, known as *Monophysitism*, threatened both the reality of the incarnation and the basis of human redemption.

Orthodox Response: The **Council of Chalcedon (451)** condemned Eutychianism and issued the **Chalcedonian Definition**, which remains the classical statement of orthodox Christology. The council affirmed that Jesus Christ is **one person in two natures**, divine and human, united "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." This declaration preserved both the full deity and the full humanity of Christ and ensured that the incarnate Son is truly consubstantial with us in His humanity and consubstantial with the Father in His divinity. Chalcedon thus provided the definitive boundary against both Nestorian division and Eutychian fusion.

Isaiah 7:14; Psalm 45:6–7; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 53:3–4;
John 1:14; Philippians 2:5–7; Hebrews 4:15; Colossians 2:9

> "For there have risen many who have given to the plain words of Holy Writ some arbitrary interpretation of their own, instead of its true and only sense, and this in defiance of the clear meaning of words. Heresy lies in the sense assigned, not in the word written; the guilt is that of the expositor, not of the text."
>
> — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, Book II, §3

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...



8.1 Eusebius On the Chalcedonian Definition

Eusebius Audio	*CD11-Segment-6V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On the Chalcedonian Definition



Eutychianism. That is a really hard word to pronounce!

But it is a really important term because Eutyches' teaching forced the church to really focus and create a precise definition of the Biblical teaching about the Person of Jesus.

The result was the creation of the **Chalcedonian Definition.**

It is a 179 word precise definition that includes the term for Godhead from Colossians - *theotēs* (θεότης) - and the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) - from the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea and clearly states that Jesus Christ is **one Person in two natures**—fully God and fully man—without confusion, change, division, or separation.

Some theologians say that to fully understand who Jesus is, you need to understand this definition drafted by this Council. So we have include a full copy of the Definition in **The Creeds of the Church** in the Appendix to this book.

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

Nancy	*CD11-Segment-7*

9.0 The Iconoclast Controversy and the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787)

Historical Setting: The Iconoclast controversy arose in the eighth century within the Byzantine Empire and unfolded in two major phases (726–787 and 814–843). It began under **Emperor Leo III (r. 717–741)**, who ordered the removal and destruction of religious images (*icons*) throughout the empire. His son, **Constantine V**, intensified the campaign, promoting a theological rationale for icon destruction and persecuting those who defended their use. The controversy divided the Eastern Church for more than a century and prompted the convening of the **Second Council of Nicaea in 787**.

Doctrinal Position: The Iconoclasts argued that the use of icons in Christian worship violated the Second Commandment and amounted to idolatry. They claimed that no material image could represent the divine nature and that portraying Christ inevitably confused His humanity and divinity. Some Iconoclast theologians insisted that any depiction of Christ either denied His divinity (by portraying only His humanity) or denied His humanity (by refusing to portray Him at all). Their position effectively rejected the legitimacy of sacred images and sought to eliminate them from Christian devotion and liturgical life.

Orthodox Response: The **Second Council of Nicaea (787)** condemned Iconoclasm and affirmed the legitimacy of icons as a natural extension of the incarnation. Because the eternal Son truly became man, taking on visible, material flesh, He may be depicted in His humanity without compromising His divinity. The council distinguished between **veneration** (*proskynēsis*), which may be given to icons,

and **worship** (*latreia*), which belongs to God alone. Orthodox leaders taught that honor shown to an icon passes to the prototype it represents, not to the material object itself. This affirmation preserved both the reality of the incarnation and the proper boundaries of Christian worship. The final triumph of icon veneration in 843, known as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy,"[31] remains a defining moment in Eastern Christian history.

Exodus 20:4–5; Deuteronomy 4:15–16; Isaiah 7:14;
Psalm 45:6–7; John 1:14; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 4:2

> "Now that they are outside they do us more good, not by teaching the truth, for they do not know it, but by provoking carnal Catholics to seek the truth, and spiritual Catholics to expound it."
>
> — Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, ch. 8

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

10.0 Conclusion: Orthodoxy as the Faith That Endured

Across the first millennium, Christian doctrine was not pre-constructed but **hammered out on the anvil of controversy**, shaped and tempered through the church's repeated encounters with false teaching. Orthodoxy is the faith that survived these battles—the doctrines that withstood the arrows of error and emerged refined, clarified, and strengthened. Across the first eight centuries of the church, Christian doctrine did not develop as a tidy, pre-planned system but as the hard-won result of conflict, correction, and confession. Each major controversy forced the church to clarify what Scripture teaches and to articulate the boundaries of the faith once delivered to the saints.

From the challenge of **Marcion**, who rejected the Old Testament, to the speculative dualism of **Gnosticism**, the church affirmed the unity of God's revelation and the goodness of His creation. Through the errors of **Sabellianism** and **Arianism**, the church was compelled to articulate the eternal distinctions within the Godhead and the full deity of the Son.

The Christological controversies of the fifth century—**Apollinarianism**, **Nestorianism**, and **Eutychianism**—pressed the church to define with precision how Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man, one person in two natures. These debates culminated in the doctrinal clarity of the Councils of Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, which together established the framework of orthodox Christology. Even later disputes such as **Iconoclasm** required the church to reaffirm the reality of the incarnation and the proper distinction between veneration and worship.

Taken together, these controversies reveal that orthodoxy is not the product of philosophical speculation or ecclesiastical politics but the enduring testimony of the church as it measured every teaching against the Scriptures. Error served as the refining fire through which truth was clarified. Heresy forced the church to say not only what it believed but why it believed it. The ecumenical councils did not create doctrine; they preserved it. They gave voice to what the church already confessed in worship, proclamation, and Scripture.

[31] See the glossary for the definition of "**Triumph of Orthodoxy**."

Thus, the core of Christian orthodoxy—summarized in the Nicene Creed—stands as the faith that survived the testing of centuries. It is the doctrinal center shared by Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and the Protestant traditions. The creed remains the universal boundary of the Christian faith: any person or community that can affirm its truths stands within the stream of historic Christianity.

Orthodoxy, then, is not merely a set of propositions but the living confession of the church,

forged in battle,
purified through controversy, and
anchored in the unchanging Word of God.

> "but do you, remaining on the foundation of the Apostles, and holding fast the traditions of the Fathers, pray that now at length all strife and rivalry may cease"
>
> — Athanasius, *De Synodis*, §48

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

11.0 Application. Becoming a Guardian of the Faith

The doctrines we hold today were not handed to us lightly—they were hammered out on the anvil of conflict, clarified through Scripture, and preserved by believers who refused to let error distort the gospel. Because of this, every Christian has a responsibility to understand sound doctrine and to guard it in their own generation. This book has provided the overview - water skiing across the top of the deep and wide lake of Christian theology. But there are times when you will need to put on the scuba diving gear and go a little deeper to get a better grasp of a doctrine and be able to defend it in a conversation or a teaching situation. Use the recommended reading sources from the chapter ends and the Further Reading in the Appendix to begin to prepare to put on that scuba gear and go deeper. A "Berean" Bible Student (Acts 17) will apply himself to test the doctrines and defend the ones that are supported by the Bible.
For those who want a more complete understanding of how the church has historically addressed these doctrinal questions, the **Appendix on the Seven Ecumenical Councils** provides a concise, structured overview of each council and its major decisions. These summaries offer the broader historical context behind the doctrines and controversies discussed in this chapter and show how the early church clarified and defended the faith. See the appendix for a more complete explanation of these councils and their lasting significance.

Assignment for this week: Select one of the Seven Ecumenical Councils covered in the Appendix and write out a brief explanation of where it was held, when it happened, what the issue was, and what the Council concluded. Then use that little written essay to explain that Council to someone at your local church this coming Sunday.

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...

11.1 Eusebius On Defending the Faith

Eusebius Audio	*CD03-Segment-8V*	Eusebius Video

Eusebius On Defending the Faith



The Apostle Peter told us to always be ready to give an answer to every man who asks for the reason for the hope that is in you. To do that we need to know the reasons behind that hope.

We began this journey at Lake Tahoe. We have "water skied" across the surface of the beautiful and deep Lake of theology. So you have now had a sampling of the ten basic divisions of the central orthodox doctrines of the Christian Faith.

The information you have gained from this skimming the surface is a good start to fulfilling that instruction from the Apostle. You have done well. If you would like to put on the scuba gear and go a little deeper, we have provided further reading resources at the end of the chapters and in the appendix that will help you do that. I trust that, with this brief overview, you will feel a little more prepared to "give an answer to every man who asks you for the reason."

... Return to Chapter 11 Index ...



Thank you for reading this book. I will see you in Heaven!

Recommended Reading

Youth / Beginner Level

- **The Story of the Bible** — Larry Stone. A richly illustrated, accessible overview of how the Bible came to be, ideal for teens and adults new to church history.
- **Christian History Made Easy** — Timothy Paul Jones. A friendly, engaging introduction to major events, people, and controversies in early Christianity.
- **The Drama of Scripture** — Craig Bartholomew & Michael Goheen. A readable narrative of the Bible's storyline that helps younger readers see the unity of Scripture.
- **Know the Creeds and Councils** — Justin Holcomb. A short, clear guide to the major creeds, councils, and heresies of the early church.
- **The Ology: Ancient Truths Ever New** — Marty Machowski. A beautifully illustrated introduction to Christian doctrine for older children and teens.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Against Heresies** — Irenaeus of Lyons. The foundational refutation of Gnosticism and a primary source for second-century theology.
- **On the Incarnation** — Athanasius. A classic defense of the deity of Christ and a central text in the Arian controversy.
- **The Christological Controversy** — ed. Richard Norris. A collection of primary sources from Apollinarian, Nestorian, and Eutychian debates with scholarly commentary.
- **The Seven Ecumenical Councils** — Philip Schaff, ed. The standard English collection of council documents, including Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon.
- **Early Christian Doctrines** — J. N. D. Kelly. A definitive scholarly survey of doctrinal development in the first five centuries.
- **The Formation of Christian Doctrine** — John Behr. A rigorous academic treatment of how early Christian theology emerged through controversy.
- **The Orthodox Way**

Church Fathers

Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) — A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of the Christian writings of the first 1,500 years of church history. *Ante-Nicene*, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene Fathers* sets. CCEL presents the early Christian writings in clean, readable pages with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: https://www.ccel.org/fathers

Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.) For readers who want to explore the great theologians after the early Church Fathers, the **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** provides a large, curated collection of medieval Christian writings in clean, readable form. The **CCEL Medieval Collection** also offers many of these works in easy-to-read formats.

APPENDICES AND REFRENCE MATERIALS

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Appendix A - Seven Ecumenical Councils

Appendix B - The Creeds of the Church

Appendix C - Timeline of Church People and Events

Appendix D **- Indices**

Concepts & Terms
Doctrines and related Terminology
People
Places & Events
Greek
Hebrew
Scriptures

Appendix E **-** Recommended Reading

Appendix F - About the Author

... Return to Table of Contents ...

Appendix A

Seven Ecumenical Councils

> "Church history is the true school of Christian experience. It is a vast repository of the dealings of God with His people, and of the development of Christian doctrine and life. Without some knowledge of it, no educated Christian can fully understand his own faith."
>
> — Philip Schaff, ***History of the Christian Church***, Vol. 1, Preface, p. v

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Introduction to the Councils

Understanding the Seven Ecumenical Councils requires at least a basic sense of where they fit in the flow of church history. This book is not a church-history textbook, and we are not going to dive into the deep waters of the "Lake Tahoe" of church history. But because the councils—and the church leaders quoted in many of the box-quotes throughout this book—are part of a larger story of the early church, we need just enough background to place them in their proper setting.

In the preface, we said we were going to "water-ski across the surface of the Lake Tahoe of "Systematic Theology." In this appendix, we will do something even lighter: we will simply **wade along the shoreline of the "Lake Tahoe" of Church History**. Not swim. Not sail. Not scuba dive. Just wade. Just enough to feel the water, see the landscape, and understand where the councils belong in the larger story of the Christian faith and fit the box quotes into the correct setting.

Church history is vast—stretching from the apostles to the present day, approximately 2,000 years—and the **Seven Ecumenical Councils** occupy only a small portion of that timeline. But they are important because they represent the moments when the church gathered to clarify essential doctrines about Christ, the Trinity, and the nature of salvation. That is when "**orthodoxy**" was defined and clarified. When you read the box-quotes from Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Athanasius, Cyril, or Augustine, you are hearing voices that shaped the very discussions that led to or derived from these councils.

The ***turning point*** in early church history came with Constantine's rise to power in the early fourth century. Constantine became emperor in 306, and in 311 the dying emperor Galerius issued an **Edict of Toleration** that ended the Great Persecution, though it stopped short of granting the Church full legal standing. Prior to this, the church was not officially recognized and was periodically subject to persecution. Although smaller assemblies were held to settle issues like the dating of Easter, the unauthorized status of the church prohibited a universal assembly. After Constantine secured control of the western empire in 312, he and his co-emperor Licinius issued the **Edict of Milan** in 313, granting Christianity full legal recognition throughout the empire. This new environment brought imperial

support and, in time, an end to persecution — complete once Constantine became sole emperor of the whole Roman world in 324. The church could finally "come out of the shadows."

Before looking at the details of these seven councils, it would be good to see a quick overview then look at the historical context in which they occurred. Below is a table that summarizes the issues and conclusion of each Council. Following the table is a brief outline summarizes the Seven Ecumenical Councils then "water skis" over the surface of the time periods in the church's history where these happened and beyond up to the current date. Following that is a summary of each of the seven Councils.

Seven Ecumenical Councils				
#	**Council**	**Date**	**Key Issue**	**Resolution**
1	Council of Nicaea	325	Is the Son fully divine?	Son declared *homoousios* ("same essence") with the Father.
2	Council of Constantinople	381	Deity of the Holy Spirit	Affirmed full divinity of the Spirit
3	Council of Ephesus	431	Two persons in Christ?	Affirmed one person of Christ; upheld title *Theotokos*.
4	Council of Chalcedon	451	Mixing Christ's natures?	Defined Christ as one person in two natures, without confusion.
5	Second Constantinople	553	Clarifying Chalcedon	Reaffirmed unity of Christ's person.
6	Third Constantinople	680–681	One will or two?	Affirmed Christ has two wills, divine and human, in harmony.
7	Second Nicaea	787	Are icons idolatrous?	Approved veneration (not worship) of icons

So before we look at each council individually, we will take a brief walk along the shoreline of early church history—just enough to give you a sense of the world in which these councils took place, the issues they addressed, and why their decisions still matter today.

You can get the overall sense of the history by simply scanning the section headings and their respective dates. Reading the brief description within each section will give you a more complete feel for what the church was like during that time period. There is also a **Time Line** Appendix available that shows the relationship of the councils, people, and other events beginning with the death and resurrection of Jesus up to the Reformation period starting with Martin Luther.

For a brief video that scrolls the main events of church history, click on the image below.



Brief History of the Church

1.0 The *Unified* Church (AD 30–1054)

This era covers the first thousand years of Christianity, when the church—despite internal debates—remained structurally unified.

1.1 **The Apostolic Age (AD 30–100)**

During the Apostolic Age, the apostles preached Christ, planted early churches across the Roman world, and produced the New Testament writings that preserved their teaching. The gospel spread rapidly through the first missionary expansion led by Paul and others, and by the end of the century the church moved into the second-generation leadership of men like Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp who carried forward the apostolic faith.

1.2 **The Age of Persecution (AD 64–313)**

During the Age of Persecution, Christians endured local persecutions under emperors like Nero, Domitian, and Trajan, followed by empire-wide persecutions under Decius, Valerian, and Diocletian. These pressures produced both courageous martyrdom and apologetics as believers defended the faith, and surprisingly rapid growth as the church expanded despite suffering.

1.3 **The Age of the Seven Ecumenical Councils (AD 313–787)**

During the age of the councils, Constantine, who became the Roman Emperor in July of 306 A.D., legalized Christianity through the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D., then allowed the church to emerge from persecution and become publicly organized across the empire. This empire-wide peace allowed the church to officially gather without fear. As Christianity grew, major doctrinal controversies arose concerning the Trinity and the person of Christ, leading to the **Seven Ecumenical Councils** that clarified orthodox doctrine. This era was shaped by key fathers such as Augustine, Athanasius**,** Basil**,** Gregory**,** Cyril**,** Leo**,** and others, whose teaching anchored the church during its most important doctrinal debates.

1.4 **The Last Unified Centuries (AD 787–1054)**

During the final centuries before the split, the church experienced growing cultural differences between the Greek East and the Latin West, along with political tensions between Constantinople and Rome. Over time, liturgical practices and theological emphases drifted apart, creating increasing strain that gradually moved the once-unified church toward eventual separation.

One of the main forces during this period was the **rise of Islam** beginning in 620 A.D., which destroyed many of the churches in the Eastern part of the Empire as it expanded by military conquest. Along with the military expansion, Islam destroyed many of the Greek copies of the Scriptures in the East. Since Latin was the predominant language of the Western church at that time, the Latin Vulgate, translated by Jerome in about 400 A.D., became the dominant form of the Bible. The majority of Greek manuscripts of the Bible that still survive are from the Western church because of the destruction caused by the Islamic expansion and conquests in the East.

2.0 The *Separated* Church (AD 1054–1517)

This era begins with the **Great Schism**, dividing Christianity into **two major branches**.

2.1 **The Great Schism (AD 1054)**

During the Great Schism, mutual excommunications between the Pope in Rome and the Patriarch in Constantinople, formalized the break between East and West churches, resulting in the formation of the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church as distinct bodies. Each developed its own theological emphases and divergent liturgical traditions**,** marking the beginning of a permanently separated Christian world.

2.2 **Medieval Christianity (AD 1054–1517)**

During the medieval period, the church saw the rise of scholastic theology through figures like Anselm and Aquinas, alongside the growth of influential monastic orders that shaped spiritual life across Europe. The era was marked by the **Crusades** from 1095 to 1291 A.D., further splitting the church and increasing calls for reform within the Western church, as voices such as Wycliffe and Hus challenged abuses and prepared the way for the coming Reformation.

3.0 The *Tri-Part* Church (AD 1517–Present)

Beginning with Martin Luther, Christianity expands into **three global families:** Roman Catholic**,** Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant.

3.1 The Protestant Reformation (AD 1517–1650)

During the Reformation era, Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses ignited a movement that soon spread across Europe, with John Calvin shaping the Reformed tradition and Ulrich Zwingli leading the Swiss Reformation. England underwent its own transformation through the English Reformation, while the Catholic Church responded with the Counter-Reformation centered on the **Council of Trent** (1545 - 1563). Out of these movements came the major Protestant confessions that defined the beliefs of the emerging Protestant churches

3.2 Post-Reformation Developments (AD 1650–1900)

3.2.1 Eastern Orthodox Tradition

Hesychasm is the Eastern Orthodox tradition of seeking inner stillness through the continual repetition of the Jesus Prayer, aiming for a quiet heart and focused attention on God. Rooted in the early Desert

Fathers and later developed on Mount Athos, it emphasizes watchfulness, simplicity, and deep prayer. In the 14th century, debates over the hesychasts' claim to experience God's "uncreated light" led Gregory Palamas to articulate the distinction between God's essence and energies, and the church ultimately affirmed hesychasm as a central expression of Eastern Christian spirituality.

3.2.2 Roman Catholic Tradition

During the post-Reformation centuries, the Catholic Church expanded globally through Jesuit missions that carried education and evangelism across Asia, Africa, and the Americas. This period also saw the **First Vatican Council** (1869-1870), which addressed modern challenges and defined papal authority. Together with continued missionary work, these developments contributed to the church's significant worldwide growth.

3.2.3 Protestant Traditions

During the post-Reformation era, Protestant life diversified as **Lutheran** orthodoxy systematized its theology, **Reformed** scholasticism refined Calvinist teaching, and **Anglicanism** developed its own blend of Scripture, tradition, and reason. New movements emerged with the rise of **Baptists** and **Methodists**, and waves of revival known as the Great Awakenings spread across Europe and America, shaping the ***evangelical character*** of much of modern Protestantism.

3.3 Modern Christianity (AD 1900–Present)

In the modern era, Christianity expanded through global missions that carried the faith into every region of the world, while Pentecostal and Charismatic movements introduced renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit and vibrant worship. The ecumenical movement encouraged cooperation among long-divided Christian traditions, and contemporary evangelicalism grew as a major influence through preaching, missions, and media. Together these developments contributed to the worldwide growth of Christianity across diverse cultures and continents.

4.0 Conclusion of Church History Survey

Across the sweep of church history, the movements outlined above show how Christianity eventually took shape in **three major branches**—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—each developing its own structures, traditions, and global presence. Yet all three remain united at the center, sharing the same **orthodox core beliefs** defined and safeguarded in what we now call the **Nicene Creed,** presented in full at the end of chapter four. That Creed is the unified orthodox doctrine and any Christian organization that endorses that Creed is considered "Christian." That orthodoxy was clarified through the **Seven Ecumenical Councils**, which now follow in summary.

The Seven Ecumenical Councils

5.0 The First Council -- Council of Nicaea (AD 325)

5.1 Time and Location

The Council of Nicaea met in AD 325 in the city of Nicaea in Bithynia (Asia Minor - now the country of Turkey), convened by Emperor Constantine shortly after his consolidation of imperial authority. Bishops from across the Roman Empire traveled to Nicaea, making it the first truly universal council in Christian history.[32]

5.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to resolve the Arian controversy, a doctrinal conflict sparked by Arius, a presbyter from Alexandria, who taught that the Son was a created being and not fully divine. Key figures included Alexander of Alexandria and his deacon Athanasius, who opposed Arius and defended the eternal deity of Christ. Constantine's goal was to restore unity in the church and stabilize the empire.

5.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on whether the Son was of the same substance (***homoousios***) as the Father or merely of similar substance (***homoiousios***). Arius argued that "there was a time when the Son was not," insisting the Son was subordinate and created. The opposing bishops argued that the Son is eternal, uncreated, and fully divine, sharing the same divine nature as the Father. The term ***homoousios*** became the focal point of the theological struggle.

5.4 Final Conclusions

The council concluded that the Son is fully and eternally God, of one substance with the Father, and it issued the original Nicene Creed[33] to safeguard this doctrine. Arius's teachings were condemned, several of his supporters were exiled, and the council established a doctrinal foundation that remains central to all orthodox Christian belief across all three major branches of Christianity.

Summary: Son declared *homoousios* ("same essence") with the Father.

[32] The actual "First" ecumenical council was the gathering of the apostles and elders in **Jerusalem**, described in **Acts 15**, where the leaders of the first-generation church met to decide how the rapidly growing Gentile mission should be integrated into the community of faith. Faced with disputes over whether Gentile believers must follow the Mosaic law—especially circumcision—the apostles sought a unified, Spirit-guided solution. Their decision affirmed that Gentiles were fully welcomed into the church without becoming Jews first, establishing a **foundational pattern** for resolving doctrinal conflict and preserving unity in the expanding Christian movement - the gathering of all church leaders to seek a unified decision. However, that meeting is not commonly included in the list of "ecumenical councils" of the church.

[33] **Apostles Creed**. This creed was actually the first universally accepted Creed of the early church. It is included in the other appendix titled "The Creeds of the Church".

6.0 The Second Council - Council of Constantinople (AD 381)

6.1 Time and Location

The Second Ecumenical Council met in **AD 381** in the imperial city of **Constantinople**, convened by Emperor **Theodosius I**, who had recently made Nicene Christianity the official faith of the Roman Empire. Bishops—primarily from the Eastern half of the empire—assembled to continue the doctrinal work begun at Nicaea. Although Western participation was limited, the council's decisions were later universally affirmed, giving it full ecumenical status.

6.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to resolve several theological disputes that persisted after Nicaea. Key issues included:

- The continuing influence of **Arianism**, despite its condemnation in 325.
- The rise of the **Pneumatomachians** ("Spirit-fighters"), who denied the full divinity of the **Holy Spirit**.
- Ongoing confusion about the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Theodosius sought to restore doctrinal unity, strengthen Nicene orthodoxy, and clarify the church's teaching on the **Trinity**, especially the person and nature of the Holy Spirit.

6.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on the **full divinity of the Holy Spirit**. The Pneumatomachians argued that the Spirit was a created being or a lesser divine force. The Nicene bishops insisted that the Spirit is **fully divine**, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son.

Additional discussions reaffirmed the eternal generation of the Son and rejected lingering Arian interpretations. The council emphasized that the Trinity consists of **one God in three co-equal, co-eternal Persons**, each fully sharing the divine nature.

6.4 Final Conclusions

The council reaffirmed the Nicene faith and completed the church's formal Trinitarian doctrine by declaring the **Holy Spirit** to be fully divine: "the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified."

It issued the **final form of the Nicene Creed**, expanding the 325 version and giving the church its definitive confession of Trinitarian faith. This creed is accepted today by **all three major branches of Christianity**—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

The council also produced several canons on church order, including the notable **Canon 3**, which granted Constantinople honorary precedence after Rome because it was "the New Rome."

Summary: Affirmed full divinity of the Holy Spirit

7.0 Third Council - Council of Ephesus (AD 431)

7.1 Time and Location

The Third Ecumenical Council met in **AD 431** in the city of **Ephesus**, located on the western coast of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). It was convened by Emperor **Theodosius II** to resolve a rapidly escalating Christological controversy that threatened the unity of the Eastern churches. Bishops from across the empire gathered, though the council was marked by intense political and theological tension, especially between the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools.

7.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called primarily to address the teachings of **Nestorius**, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who objected to the title **Theotokos** ("God-bearer") for Mary. Nestorius argued that Mary should be called **Christotokos** ("Christ-bearer"), insisting on a sharp distinction between Christ's divine and human natures. His opponents, led by **Cyril of Alexandria**, maintained that the title Theotokos safeguarded the truth of the **incarnation**—that the one born of Mary was truly God in the flesh.

The emperor sought to restore doctrinal clarity and prevent a schism within the Eastern church.

7.3 Primary Arguments

Debate focused on the **unity of Christ's person**. Nestorius taught that Christ existed as **two persons**—one divine and one human—joined in a moral or cooperative union. This view threatened the church's understanding of the incarnation and undermined the reality of Christ's saving work.

Cyril and the Alexandrian bishops argued that Christ is **one person** with **two natures**, fully divine and fully human, united without separation or division. The title **Theotokos** was essential because it affirmed that the one born of Mary was the same divine Son who existed eternally with the Father.

The council's theological struggle centered on preserving the **personal unity** of Christ.

7.4 Final Conclusions

The council condemned Nestorius's teaching as contrary to Scripture and affirmed that Christ is **one person**, not two. It declared Mary to be truly **Theotokos**, a title that protects the doctrine of the incarnation and the unity of Christ's person.

Cyril's **Twelve Anathemas** were upheld, and Nestorius was deposed from his office as Patriarch of Constantinople. The council's decisions became foundational for orthodox Christology and were later reaffirmed and clarified at the Council of Chalcedon (451).

Summary: Affirmed one person of Christ; upheld title *Theotokos*.

8.0 Fourth Council - Council of Chalcedon (AD 451)

8.1 Time and Location

The Fourth Ecumenical Council met in **AD 451** in the city of **Chalcedon**, located just across the Bosporus from Constantinople. It was convened by Emperor **Marcian** and Empress **Pulcheria** in response to growing Christological controversy following the Council of Ephesus (431). More than 500 bishops attended, making Chalcedon one of the largest and most influential councils in church history.

8.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to resolve the crisis created by the teachings of **Eutyches**, an archimandrite in Constantinople, who taught that Christ's human nature was absorbed or dissolved into His divine nature. This view, known as **Monophysitism**, denied the full reality of Christ's humanity.

The council also sought to clarify the relationship between Christ's divine and human natures, respond to the controversial "Robber Council" of Ephesus (449), and restore doctrinal unity across the empire.

8.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on how to properly understand the **union of Christ's two natures**. Eutyches and his supporters argued that Christ had **only one nature** after the incarnation—a divine nature that overwhelmed or replaced His humanity. This threatened the church's understanding of Christ's true human experience and His ability to represent humanity in salvation.

Opposing bishops, led by figures such as **Leo the Great** (Bishop of Rome), insisted that Christ is **one person in two natures**, fully divine and fully human, without confusion, change, division, or separation. Leo's *Tome* became a key theological document, articulating the balanced Christology that would shape orthodox belief.

8.4 Final Conclusions

The council condemned Eutyches's teaching and affirmed the **Chalcedonian Definition**, a precise and enduring statement of Christology. It declared that Jesus Christ is **one person** in **two natures**, divine and human, united "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation."

This definition safeguarded both the full deity and full humanity of Christ and became the standard of orthodox Christology for the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and most Protestant traditions.

The council also issued disciplinary canons, including **Canon 28**, which elevated the status of Constantinople, though this canon was not accepted by the Roman bishops at the time.

Summary: Defined Christ as one person in two natures, without confusion.

9.0 Fifth Council - Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553)

9.1 Time and Location

The Fifth Ecumenical Council met in **AD 553** in **Constantinople**, convened by Emperor **Justinian I**, to preserve doctrinal unity across the empire. Attended mainly by Eastern bishops, the council nevertheless produced decisions later accepted in the West.

9.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to address lingering Christological disputes that persisted after Chalcedon (451). Its primary purpose was to resolve tensions between Chalcedonian Christians and various groups who rejected Chalcedon, especially the **Monophysites**. To accomplish this, the council examined the so-called **"Three Chapters"**:

- Writings of **Theodore of Mopsuestia**
- Certain works of **Theodoret of Cyrrhus**
- A letter attributed to **Ibas of Edessa**

These writings were associated with **Nestorian** tendencies. Justinian believed that condemning the Three Chapters would help reconcile anti-Chalcedonian Christians to the imperial church.

9.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on whether condemning the Three Chapters would undermine the authority of the **Council of Chalcedon**. Opponents feared that revisiting these issues would imply that Chalcedon had erred in its judgments or had tolerated Nestorianism.

Supporters of condemnation, including Justinian, argued that the writings in question contained genuine theological errors and needed to be rejected to safeguard the church's Christology. They insisted that condemning the Three Chapters did **not** contradict Chalcedon's doctrinal definition but rather clarified it. The deeper theological issue involved maintaining the balance established at Chalcedon:

- Christ is **one person**
- In **two natures**, divine and human
- United without confusion, change, division, or separation

9.4 Final Conclusions

The council formally **condemned the Three Chapters**. It reaffirmed the **Chalcedonian Definition**, insisting that this condemnation clarified rather than contradicted Chalcedon. Emphasizing the **unity of Christ's person**, the council rejected any teaching that divided Him into two subjects or persons. Initially controversial in parts of the Western church—especially northern Italy—they were eventually received throughout Roman Catholicism, and the council is recognized by Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and most Protestant traditions as the **Fifth Ecumenical Council**.

Summary: Reaffirmed unity of Christ's person.

10.0 Sixth Council - Third Council of Constantinople (AD 680–681)

10.1 Time and Location

The Sixth Ecumenical Council met from **AD 680 to 681** in the city of **Constantinople**, convened by Emperor **Constantine IV**. The council gathered bishops from both the Eastern and Western churches, including papal representatives from Rome. Its purpose was to resolve a long-standing Christological controversy that had troubled the empire for decades. The council's decisions were later universally recognized, giving it full ecumenical authority.

10.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to address the doctrine of **Monothelitism**, a teaching that claimed Christ had **only one will**—a divine will. This teaching had emerged as a political compromise intended to reconcile Chalcedonian Christians with various anti-Chalcedonian groups.

Opponents argued that Monothelitism undermined Christ's true humanity, while supporters believed it preserved unity within Christ's person. The emperor sought to end the controversy and restore doctrinal harmony throughout the empire.

10.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on whether Christ possessed **one will** or **two wills**. Monothelites argued that Christ's divine nature overwhelmed His human nature, resulting in a single divine will. They believed this protected the unity of Christ's person.

Orthodox bishops, supported strongly by the Roman delegation, insisted that Christ must have **two wills**—a divine will and a human will—corresponding to His **two natures**. They argued that denying Christ a human will effectively denied His full humanity and contradicted the Chalcedonian Definition. The deeper theological issue involved safeguarding the truth that Christ is:

- **One person**
- In **two natures**, divine and human
- Each nature possessing its proper operations, including its own will

10.4 Final Conclusions

The council condemned **Monothelitism** and affirmed that Christ possesses **two wills** and **two operations**, divine and human, harmoniously united in one person. This teaching is known as **Dyothelitism**

.

The council declared that Christ's human will is fully real and fully obedient to His divine will, preserving both the integrity of His humanity and the unity of His person.

The council also condemned several prominent Monothelite leaders, including **Patriarch Sergius I** of Constantinople and **Patriarch Pyrrhus**, and it reaffirmed the authority of the **Chalcedonian Definition** as the foundation of orthodox Christology.

Summary: Affirmed Christ has two wills, divine and human, in harmony.

11.0 Seventh Council - Second Council of Nicaea (AD 787)

11.1 Time and Location

The Seventh Ecumenical Council met in **AD 787** in the city of **Nicaea**, convened by Empress **Irene** and her son **Constantine VI**. The council was called after decades of turmoil caused by the **Iconoclastic Controversy**, during which the veneration of icons had been suppressed throughout much of the Eastern Empire. Bishops from across the empire gathered to restore unity and settle the dispute over the proper use of sacred images in Christian worship.

11.2 Purpose of the Council

The council was called to resolve the deep division created by **Iconoclasm**, a movement that rejected the use of icons and ordered their destruction.[34] Iconoclasts argued that venerating images violated the biblical prohibition against idolatry.

Opponents, including many monastic leaders, insisted that icons were essential for teaching the faith and honoring Christ's incarnation. They argued that because the Son of God truly became human, He could be depicted in visible form.

The emperor and empress sought to restore peace in the church and clarify the proper theological understanding of icons.

11.3 Primary Arguments

Debate centered on whether the veneration of icons constituted **idolatry** or was a legitimate expression of Christian devotion. Iconoclasts claimed that any use of images in worship violated the Second Commandment and encouraged superstition. The defenders of icons argued:

- **The incarnation** makes visible representation possible, since Christ truly became man.
- Honor given to an icon passes to the **prototype**—the person depicted—not to the material image itself.
- Icons serve as ***visual theology***, teaching the faithful and reinforcing the truth of Christ's humanity.

The deeper theological issue involved safeguarding the reality of the incarnation and the church's ability to depict Christ and the saints without falling into idolatry.

11.4 Final Conclusions

The council condemned **Iconoclasm** and affirmed the proper veneration (not worship) of icons. It declared that icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints are to be honored, not as divine objects, but as representations that direct the mind and heart toward the persons depicted. The council distinguished clearly between:

[34] It is helpful to understand that the definition of "**icon**" in this council would also include **pictures of Jesus** often found in both Protestant and Catholic Churches today, as well as **crosses**, both empty and with Jesus hanging on the cross. So, while the initial impression often obtained when reading about this council is that it is something only the Eastern Orthodox churches would be concerned about now, a careful reading of the Council's debates and conclusions will show that it has a direct impact on the current uses of pictures and crosses in the Catholic and Protestant churches as well.

- **Veneration (proskynesis)** — appropriate honor given to icons
- **Worship (latreia)** — due to God alone

The council restored the use of icons in churches and homes and issued canons regulating their proper use. Its decisions were later reaffirmed in AD 843 during the "**Triumph of Orthodoxy**," which permanently ended Iconoclasm in the Eastern Church.[35]

Summary: Approved veneration (not worship) of icons

Final Conclusion: The Seven Councils - the Foundation of Orthodox Theology

Taken together, the **Seven Ecumenical Councils** provide the church with a unified and enduring framework for understanding the core doctrines of the Christian faith. Each council addressed a specific challenge—whether the deity of Christ, the nature of the Trinity, the unity of Christ's person, the relationship of His two natures, the reality of His human will, or the proper expression of worship in light of the incarnation. Yet these councils do not stand as isolated events. They form a **single, continuous theological conversation**, each building on the one before it, refining and safeguarding the apostolic faith handed down from the earliest generations of believers.

- Nicaea (325) established the **full deity** of the Son.
- Constantinople (381) completed the doctrine of the **Trinity**.
- Ephesus (431) protected the **unity** of Christ's person.
- Chalcedon (451) defined the relationship of His **two natures**.
- Constantinople II (553) **clarified Chalcedon** against misinterpretation.
- Constantinople III (680–681) affirmed Christ's **fully human will**.
- Nicaea II (787) defended the incarnation's implications for worship using **icons**.

Together, these councils form the **doctrinal backbone of orthodoxy**—the shared faith of Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Christianity. Their conclusions supply the essential categories, definitions, and boundaries that later generations would organize into what we now call **systematic theology**. Every major doctrine—Father, Son, Holy Spirit, incarnation, salvation, Scripture, church, worship—rests on the foundation laid by these councils. Any organization adopting and affirming these basic doctrines is considered "Orthodox Christian" and is part of the larger Christian family. Those who reject any part are considered a sect, cult, or heresy.

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

[35] The ***Triumph of Orthodoxy*** refers to the final restoration of icon veneration in **AD 843**, ending the long Iconoclastic controversy that had divided the Eastern Church for more than a century. Celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent, this event marked the permanent victory of the theology affirmed at the **Second Council of Nicaea (787)—**that icons may be venerated as representations of Christ and the saints, with honor directed to the **prototype**, not the material image. The ***Triumph of Orthodoxy*** remains a major feast in the Eastern Orthodox Church and symbolizes the church's enduring commitment to the doctrine of the **incarnation** and the proper use of sacred images. Remember, this was still in the ***Unified Church*** period.

Appendix B

The Creeds of the Church

> "The creeds are the rule of faith, the authoritative summary of the doctrines of the Bible. They are the bonds of union and the badges of distinction among Christians."
>
> — Philip Schaff, ***The Creeds of Christendom***, Vol. I

Return to Table of Appendix Index

1.0 Introduction

Christianity today exists in three major branches—**Eastern Orthodox**, **Roman Catholic**, and **Protestant**—yet all three share the same core orthodox beliefs established through the early **ecumenical councils** of the ancient church. Across these traditions, two historic creeds have served as foundational summaries of the Christian faith: the **Apostles' Creed**, used throughout the Western Church, and the **Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed**, the universal doctrinal statement embraced by all branches of Christianity. This appendix presents both creeds along with brief historical explanations of their origin, development, and enduring significance.

2.0 Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed is the oldest and most widely recognized summary of Christian belief in the **Western church**, meaning the Roman Catholic tradition and the many Protestant traditions that later emerged from it. A long-standing tradition—first appearing many centuries after the apostolic era—claimed that the twelve apostles sat together in a circle and, one by one, each contributed a single line until the entire creed was formed. While this story reflects the early church's desire to anchor its doctrine directly to the apostolic message, it has **no foundation in historical evidence** and is not supported by any early Christian writings. Still, it remains an interesting illustration of how deeply the Western church valued continuity with the apostles.

Historically, the creed's earliest form actually emerged in the **second century** as a simple **baptismal confession** used in the churches of Rome, often called the *Old Roman Symbol*. It provided new believers with a clear, memorable statement of the core Christian faith centered on the Trinity, the incarnation, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the hope of eternal life. Over the next several centuries, its wording gradually developed as local churches refined the confession to guard against doctrinal errors and strengthen catechesis.

By the **fourth and fifth centuries**, the creed had taken on a more standardized shape, reflecting the church's response to theological challenges and aligning with the doctrinal boundaries affirmed in the

early ecumenical councils. Its final, fully recognized form appeared in the **eighth century**, becoming the version used throughout the Western church and still recited today in worship, catechism, and personal devotion.

Because of its deep historical roots and its clear expression of essential Christian doctrine, the Apostles' Creed remains a foundational statement of faith shared across Roman Catholic, Protestant, and many global Christian traditions within the Western church.

What follows is the present, universally accepted Western form of the Creed.

Apostles' Creed (Current Western Form)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the Holy Spirit
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.

Amen.

3.0 The Nicene Creed

While the Apostles' Creed has served for centuries as the foundational confession of faith in the **Western Church**—embraced by both Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions—the **Eastern Church** does not traditionally use this creed in its worship or doctrinal instruction. Instead, the Eastern Orthodox churches rely exclusively on the **final form of the Nicene- Constantinopolitan Creed (AD 381)**, the universal statement of faith produced by the early ecumenical councils. This creed is fully accepted by **all three major branches of Christianity**—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—and stands as the shared doctrinal core of historic Christian orthodoxy.

The following text presents this final, universally recognized form of the Nicene Creed to complete this section of the appendix.

Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (AD 381 — Universal Form)

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
Begotten of the Father before all worlds;
Light of Light, very God of very God;
Begotten, not made;
Being of one substance with the Father;
By whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation
Came down from heaven,
And was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
And became man.

He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
And suffered and was buried;
And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures;
And ascended into heaven,
And sits at the right hand of the Father;
And He shall come again with glory
To judge the living and the dead;
Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life;
Who proceeds from the Father;
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
Who spoke by the prophets.

In one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins**.**
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come.
Amen.

4.0 Chalcedonian Definition

The **Chalcedonian Definition** (A.D. 451) is the Church's classic statement on the person of Jesus Christ, forged after centuries of debate over how to understand His deity and humanity. At Chalcedon, the bishops gathered to settle the confusion caused by competing teachings, and they produced a careful, balanced declaration that Jesus is **one Person in two natures** — fully God and fully man — "without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation." This Definition became the standard of orthodox Christology for all branches of the historic Church. Including it in full allows you to see the precise wording that safeguarded the faith and clarified what Christians believe about Christ's identity. For those interested in the original Greek, it is also included in the right column.

English Translation from *Reformed Standards.com*	Original Greek Text from *Reformed Standards.com*
Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in **Godhead** and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one **substance** with the Father as regards his **Godhead**, and at the same time of one **substance** with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his **Godhead**, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.	Ἑπόμενοι τοίνυν τοῖς ἁγίοις πατράσιν ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν υἱὸν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν συμφώνως ἅπαντες ἐκδιδάσκομεν, τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν **θεότητι** καὶ τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι, θεὸν ἀληθῶς καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἀληθῶς τὸν αὐτόν, ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος, **ὁμοούσιον** τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν **θεότητα**, καὶ **ὁμοούσιον** τὸν αὐτὸν ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον ἡμῖν χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας· πρὸ αἰώνων μὲν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν **θεότητα**, ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν αὐτὸν δἰ ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου τῆς θεοτόκου κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστόν, υἱόν, κύριον, μονογενῆ, ἐκ δύο φύσεων [ἐν δύο φύσεσιν], ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως γνωριζόμενον· οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, σωζομένης δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς ἰδιότητος ἑκατέρας φύσεως καὶ εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον καὶ μίαν ὑπὸστασιν συντρεχούσης, οὐκ εἰς δύο πρόσωπα μεριζόμενον ἢ διαιρούμενον, ἀλλ᾽ ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν καὶ μονογενῆ, θεὸν λόγον, κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν· καθάπερ ἄνωθεν οἱ προφῆται περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ιησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐξεπαίδευσε καὶ τὸ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῖν καραδέδωκε σύμβολον.

5.0 Correlation of the Nicene Creed with Chapters in this Book

Correlation of The Nicene Creed with Chapters in this Book	
Chapters in this Book	**Nicene Creed Clause**
2 - Theology	We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
2 - Theology	Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
3 - Christology	And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
3 - Christology	Begotten of the Father before all worlds;
3 - Christology	Light of Light, very God of very God;
3 - Christology	Begotten, not made;
3 - Christology 5 - Trinity	Being of one substance with the Father;
3 - Christology	By whom all things were made.
6 - Anthropology 7 - Hamartiology 8 - Soteriology	Who for us men and for our salvation
3 - Christology	Came down from heaven,
3 - Christology, 6 - Anthropology	And was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
3 - Christology 6 - Anthropology	And became man.
8 - Soteriology	He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
8 - Soteriology	And suffered and was buried;
1 - Scripture 8 - Soteriology	And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures
10 - Eschatology	And ascended into heaven,
10 - Eschatology	And sits at the right hand of the Father;
10 - Eschatology	And He shall come again with glory
6 - Anthropology 7 - Hamartiology 8 - Soteriology 10 - Eschatology	To judge the living and the dead;
10 - Eschatology	Whose kingdom shall have no end.
4 - Pneumatology 5 - Trinity	And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life;
4 - Pneumatology 5 - Trinity	Who proceeds from the Father;
4 - Pneumatology 5 - Trinity	Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
1 - Scripture 4 - Pneumatology	Who spoke by the prophets.
9 - Ecclesiology	In one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
7 - Hamartiology 8 - Soteriology 9 - Ecclesiology	We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins**.**
10 - Eschatology	We look for the resurrection of the dead,
10 - Eschatology	And the life of the world to come.

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Appendix C

Timeline of Church People and Events

> "The history of the church is the rise and progress of the kingdom of heaven on earth. It is the story of redemption in living examples."
>
> — Philip Schaff, ***History of the Christian Church***, Vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), p. 1.

Return to Table of Appendix Index

Introductory Explanation for the Timeline

This appendix brings together the major people and events that shaped the story of the Christian church from A.D. 100 to 1500. It follows the conviction expressed by Philip Schaff that church history is "the rise and progress of the kingdom of heaven on earth" and that its record is "the story of redemption in living examples." The timeline is arranged in clear segments, each beginning with a heading for the period, followed by the key theologians, apologists, councils, controversies, and historical developments that influenced the church's doctrine and life.

By placing people and events side by side, the reader can see how ideas were formed, how challenges arose, how the church responded, and how God used individuals and circumstances to carry the faith forward. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but a guide to the most significant voices and turning points that shaped Christian belief and practice. It is a tool for understanding the flow of history—how doctrine developed, how debates sharpened the church's teaching, and how the witness of faithful men and women helped preserve the gospel through changing times.

To view a video that portrays the following persons and events click graphic below. You can pause the video to read the details and restart to proceed.



Timeline of Persons and Events in Church History			
Person		**Event**	**Dates**
A.D. 100–200 — Apostolic & Early Apologists			
	Clement of Rome		c. 35–99
		Persecution under Trajan	98–117
	Ignatius of Antioch		c. 35–107
		Persecution under Hadrian	117–138
	Papias of Hierapolis		c. 60–130
	Athenagoras of Athens		c. 133–190
	Justin Martyr		c. 100–165
		Persecution under Marcus Aurelius	161–180
	Melito of Sardis		d. c. 180
		Martyrdom of Polycarp	c. 155
	Polycarp of Smyrna		c. 69–155
		Rise of Gnosticism	2nd century
	Irenaeus of Lyons		c. 130–202
		Irenaeus combats heresy	c. 180
	Tatian		c. 120–180
	Theophilus of Antioch		d. c. 183–185
A.D. 200–300 — Ante-Nicene Era			
	Clement of Alexandria		c. 150–215
		Persecution under Septimius Severus	202–211
	Tertullian		c. 155–220
	Hippolytus of Rome		c. 170–235
		Persecution under Decius	249–251
		Persecution under Valerian	253–260
	Origen of Alexandria		c. 185–253
		Manichaeism emerges	c. 250
	Cyprian of Carthage		c. 200–258
		Diocletian’s Great Persecution	303–311
A.D. 300–400 — Nicene & Post-Nicene Golden Age			
	Anthony the Great		251–356
		Edict of Milan	313
		Council of Nicaea I	325
		Council of Sardica	343

Timeline of Persons and Events in Church History			
	Eusebius of Caesarea		c. 260–339
	—	Arian controversy	318–381
	Athanasius of Alexandria		c. 296–373
	Ephrem the Syrian		c. 306–373
	Hilary of Poitiers		c. 310–367
	Basil the Great		329–379
	Gregory of Nazianzus		329–390
	Gregory of Nyssa		c. 335–395
		Christianity becomes official religion	380
		Council of Constantinople I	381
	John Chrysostom		c. 347–407
	Jerome		c. 347–420
	Augustine of Hippo		354–430
A.D. 400–600 — Late Patristic & Early Medieval			
	Cyril of Alexandria		c. 376–444
		Council of Ephesus	431
	Leo the Great		c. 400–461
		Council of Chalcedon	451
		Fall of Western Roman Empire	476
	Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite		late 5th–early 6th c.
	Boethius		c. 480–524
		Justinian's codification of law	529–534
	Cassiodorus		c. 485–585
		Second Council of Constantinople	553
	Gregory the Great		c. 540–604
		Rise of Monophysitism	5th–6th century
A.D. 600–800 — Early Medieval Theologians			
		Islamic expansion	622–750
	Maximus the Confessor		c. 580–662
		Third Council of Constantinople	680–681
	Bede the Venerable		673–735
	John of Damascus		c. 675–749
		Iconoclastic controversy begins	726
		Second Council of Nicaea	787

Timeline of Persons and Events in Church History			
A.D. 800–1200 — High Medieval Scholastics & Apologists			
		Coronation of Charlemagne	800
		Great Schism between East & West	1054
	Anselm of Canterbury		1033–1109
		Investiture Controversy	1075–1122
	Peter Abelard		1079–1142
		First Crusade	1096–1099
	Bernard of Clairvaux		1090–1153
		Second Crusade	1147–1149
		Third Crusade	1189–1192
	Peter Lombard		c. 1100–1160
A.D. 1200–1500 — Late Medieval Scholastics			
		Fourth Lateran Council	1215
	Bonaventure		1217–1274
	Thomas Aquinas		1225–1274
		Rise of Scholasticism	13th century
	Duns Scotus		c. 1266–1308
		Avignon Papacy	1309–1377
	William of Ockham		c. 1287–1347
	John Wycliffe		c. 1330–1384
		Western Schism	1378–1417
	Jan Hus		c. 1369–1415
		Council of Constance	1414–1418
		Fall of Constantinople	1453

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Appendix D - Indices

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Introduction

Appendix D in this volume is designed to provide clear, accessible reference tools that support both study and long-term retention. Because Christian doctrine often requires navigating multiple categories of information—concepts, people, places, languages, and Scripture—these appendixes are intentionally segregated into distinct tables. Each table focuses on a specific type of reference, allowing readers to locate information quickly without searching through unrelated material.

Traditional theological works typically separate a **glossary** (definitions) from an **index** (page references). In this volume, those two functions are intentionally combined. The **Glossary–Subject Index** presents each term with a concise definition and the page numbers where the term appears. This hybrid format eliminates redundancy, reduces page count, and provides a more efficient study tool by allowing readers to see both meaning and location in a single entry.

You can proceed immediately to any of the index/glossary tables by clicking on the item in this list.

Concepts & Terms
Doctrines and Doctrine related Terms
People
Places & Events
Greek
Hebrew
Scriptures

Together, these tables form a unified reference system that supports both academic study and practical teaching. They are arranged for clarity, consistency, and ease of use, ensuring that readers can move seamlessly between definitions, doctrinal themes, historical figures, biblical languages, and Scripture references.

Index and Glossary
General Concepts and Terms

Return to Index List

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Against Heresies	Early Christian work by Irenaeus defending orthodox doctrine against Gnostic teachings.	25, 28, 64, 96, 99, 104, 127, 146, 155, 164, 168, 174, 181, 185, 195
Alexandrian	Relating to the theological and textual traditions centered in Alexandria, Egypt.	204
Anglican	Pertaining to the Church of England and its theological heritage.	135, 151, 152, 201
Anthropomorphic	Describing God using human traits or physical characteristics.	43
Antiochene	Relating to the theological school of Antioch emphasizing literal interpretation.	204
Apologetics	The defense of the Christian faith through reasoned argument.	13, 34, 199
Apostles	The foundational witnesses commissioned by Christ to establish the Church.	30, 73, 74, 75, 78, 158, 193, 202, 210, 211, 212
Aramaic	A Semitic language spoken in the ancient Near East and used in parts of Scripture.	19
Archaeological discoveries	Findings that illuminate biblical history and ancient cultures.	23, 27
Autographs, Original	The first, inspired manuscripts written by biblical authors.	30
Avignon Papacy	Period when the papacy resided in Avignon rather than Rome (1309–1377).	218
Baptists	Protestant Christians emphasizing believer's baptism and congregational governance.	201
Battle, Forged In	Spiritual or historical conflict central to Christian perseverance and witness.	13, 14, 56, 58, 77, 84, 113, 192, 193
Bishops	Overseers responsible for teaching, governance, and preservation of apostolic doctrine.	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 68, 148, 149, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 213
Book of Mormon	Sacred text of the Latter-day Saint movement.	23
Chronology	The ordering of historical events relevant to biblical interpretation.	19, 131
Codex Sinaiticus	Fourth-century manuscript containing most of the Greek Bible.	2
Codex Vaticanus	Fourth-century Greek Bible manuscript preserved in the Vatican Library.	2, 45

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Commentaries	Written explanations of biblical texts by scholars or theologians.	6, 7, 117
Congregationalists	Protestants emphasizing local church autonomy.	151
Cult	A religious group deviating significantly from historic Christian doctrine.	209
Dead Sea Scrolls	Ancient Jewish manuscripts offering insight into Scripture and Second Temple Judaism.	166
Desert Fathers	Early Christian monks known for asceticism and spiritual writings.	200
Diagnostic questions	Questions used to assess spiritual understanding or readiness.	136, 137, 138, 139
Didache	Early Christian manual of ethics, worship, and church practice.	13, 88, 161
Diocletian	Roman emperor known for severe persecution of Christians.	158, 199, 216
Diognetus, Epistle to	Early Christian apologetic letter describing Christian life and belief.	59
Discipleship	The process of following Christ through learning, obedience, and growth.	91, 156
Easter	Celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead.	197
Eastern Orthodox	Christian tradition emphasizing apostolic continuity and liturgical worship.	4, 153, 212
Ecclesiastical customs	Traditional practices within the life and worship of the Church.	29
Ecclesiastical History	Historical accounts of the Church's development and leaders. Book written by Eusebius	2, 14, 18
Edict of Milan	Imperial decree granting religious freedom to Christians (AD 313).	197, 199, 216
Edict of Toleration	Roman decree easing persecution of Christians.	197
Emmanuel	Title meaning "God with us," signifying Christ's divine presence.	52, 53
English Reformation	Movement separating the Church of England from Roman authority.	200
Episcopal	Relating to church governance by bishops.	150
Evangelicalism	Movement emphasizing conversion, Scripture, and active faith.	201
Evangelism	Proclaiming the gospel to bring others to faith in Christ.	73, 126, 139, 156, 201
Exegesis	Interpretation of Scripture based on careful analysis of the text.	6, 7, 30, 42
Faith	Trust in God's character, promises, and saving work in Christ.	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 43, 50,
Faith (Continued)	58, 61, 62, 64, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76, 78, 85, 91, 92, 94, 105, 121, 122, 123, 125, 130, 131, 132, 139, 147, 152, 154, 156, 159, 160, 170, 172, 173, 176, 183, 184, 185,	

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
		188, 192, 193
Finger of God	Biblical expression for God's direct action or power.	25
Gentiles	Non-Jewish peoples included in God's redemptive plan.	168, 202
Hagia Sophia	Historic Byzantine cathedral known for its architecture and influence.	47
High Priest	Title for Christ's mediating role or for Jewish temple leadership.	57
Historical research	Investigation of past events to illuminate Scripture and doctrine.	23, 27
Historical theology	Study of doctrinal development throughout church history.	6, 7, 8, 13, 182
I AM statements	Declarations of Jesus revealing His divine identity.	37, 38, 42
Institutes of the Christian Religion	Calvin's foundational work on Christian doctrine.	15, 32, 90, 112, 139, 173
Jewish scribes	Copyists responsible for preserving Hebrew Scripture.	30
Jewish	Pertaining to the people, culture, or religion of Israel.	18, 30, 38, 39, 40, 85, 86, 91, 119, 144, 145, 166, 184, 202
Judaism	Religion and tradition of the Jewish people.	27, 86
Judge	One who renders judgment; used of God or human authorities.	55, 56, 57, 80, 168, 173, 177
Lamb of God	Title for Christ emphasizing His sacrificial atonement.	55
Lapsi	Christians who renounced faith under persecution but later sought restoration.	158
Latin Vulgate	Jerome's translation of Scripture into Latin.	200
Latin	Language of early Western Christianity and theology.	30, 69, 70, 84, 85, 87, 88, 93, 101, 186, 187, 199, 200
Law	God's commands revealing His will and human sin.	17, 28, 41, 184
Linguistic	Relating to language study and textual analysis.	23, 27, 66, 119
Lutheran	Pertaining to the theology of Martin Luther and his tradition.	152, 153, 201
LXX	Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (Septuagint).	30, 39, 88, 111, 112, 119
Manuscripts	Hand-copied documents preserving biblical texts.	21, 24, 25, 30, 34, 38, 135, 200
Martyrdom	Witness to Christ through suffering or death.	43, 52, 158, 199, 216
Mathematics	Study of numbers and patterns used in chronology or analysis.	19, 26
Medieval	Relating to the Middle Ages and its Christian thought.	15, 29, 34, 46, 47, 62, 81, 94, 108, 120, 139, 161, 179, 183, 195, 200, 217, 218
Messiah	Anointed One promised in Scripture, fulfilled in Jesus Christ.	50, 51, 52

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Methodist	Protestant tradition emphasizing holiness and discipleship.	135, 201
Moravian believers	Christians known for missions and devotion.	135
Mormonism	Religious movement founded by Joseph Smith.	91
Mosaic Covenant	Covenant God made with Israel through Moses.	41
Mosaic law	Laws given to Israel through Moses.	202
Near Eastern studies	Academic study of ancient cultures surrounding biblical history.	27
nomina sacra	Latin for "sacred names"; the scribal practice of abbreviating divine names in early manuscripts. (Latin phrase, not Greek; no BLB lexicon entry.)	38
Old Roman Symbol	Early form of the Roman creed.	210
Papal authority	Jurisdiction and leadership claimed by the pope.	201
Patriarch	Senior bishop in Eastern or ancient Christian traditions.	69, 189, 200, 204, 207
Patristic Fathers	Early Christian theologians shaping doctrine.	13, 38
Pentecost	Outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church.	70, 91, 164, 165
Persecution	Hostility or suffering endured for faith.	142, 148, 158, 159, 160, 170
Persecution, Age of	Period of intensified Roman persecution.	199
Persecution, Great	Severe empire-wide persecution of Christians.	160, 197, 216
perspicuitas Scripturae	Doctrine of Scripture's clarity in essential matters.	30
Prophets	Individuals called to speak God's message. Inspired messengers declaring God's word	7, 20, 24, 28, 30, 36, 52, 66, 76, 80, 149, 151, 166, 28, 73, 75, 184
Protestant Reformation	Sixteenth-century movement reforming church doctrine and practice.	9
Protestant	Christian traditions emerging from the Reformation.	4, 9, 69, 132, 183, 184, 193, 200, 201, 203, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212
Rabbis	Jewish teachers and interpreters of Scripture.	18
Reformation	Movement renewing Christian doctrine and practice.	12, 29, 46, 159, 183, 198, 200, 201
Roman Catholic	Christian tradition centered on papal authority and sacramental theology.	4, 150, 151, 152, 153, 184, 193, 200, 201, 203, 205, 206, 209, 210, 211, 212
Satan	Adversary opposing God and His people.	174
Scholastic theology	Medieval theological method using logic and philosophy.	200
Scholasticism	Medieval academic tradition shaping Christian doctrine.	201, 218
Scientific investigation	Empirical study used to evaluate historical or textual claims.	23
Scriptorium	Room where manuscripts were copied by scribes.	31, 33, 38

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Sect	Group with distinct beliefs diverging from mainstream Christianity.	209
Septuagint	Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible used in early Christianity. See LXX above.	30, 39, 88, 111, 144
Serpent	Symbol of temptation or evil in Scripture.	7, 56, 102
Shema	Jewish confession affirming God's oneness. Deut. 6:4.	39, 40, 86, 91
Southern Baptist	Member of the Southern Baptist Convention. Protestant denomination.	151
Spirit of God	God's active presence and power.	25, 66, 67, 86, 98, 146, 154
Summa Theologiae	Aquinas's major theological work.	46, 102, 116
Tabernacle	Portable sanctuary used by Israel in the wilderness.	144, 145
Temple	Sacred place of worship in Jerusalem.	40, 71, 92, 144, 145, 146, 156
Tetragrammaton	Four-letter divine name YHWH.	37
Textual criticism	Study comparing manuscripts to determine original text.	23, 27
Textual variants	Differences among manuscript readings.	24, 25, 30, 135
Tradition	Teachings and practices handed down in the Church.	15, 29, 30, 32, 38, 39, 46, 77, 108, 115, 142, 151, 152, 154
Worship	Adoration and devotion directed toward God.	4, 5, 10, 12, 28, 29, 36, 42,
Worship (Continued)	45, 50, 58, 61, 65, 72, 77, 78, 88, 90, 91, 92, 99, 104, 107, 134, 135, 143, 144, 147, 151, 154, 156, 157, 158, 161, 173, 191, 192, 198, 201, 208, 209, 211, 212	

... Return to Index List ...

Index and Glossary
Doctrines and Related Terminology

Return to Index List

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Abrahamic Covenant	God's covenant with Abraham promising land, descendants, and blessing to all nations through his seed; foundational to Israel's identity.	41
Accountable, Accountability	The teaching that God holds individuals morally responsible only when they possess genuine awareness of right and wrong, making personal, conscious transgression the basis of guilt rather than inherited sin.	22, 115, 116, 152, 157
Adamíc Covenant	God's post-Fall covenantal pronouncements including judgment, the curse, and the first promise of redemption.	41
Administration	Spiritual gift in the list given by the Apostle Paul, associated with organizational leadership in the church.	76
Adoption	God's act of bringing believers into His family as sons and daughters through Christ.	67, 128, 131, 132, 139, 145
Age of accountability	Age at which a child becomes morally responsible for his or her actions.	152
Already/Not Yet	The tension in New Testament eschatology between the kingdom of God inaugurated at Christ's first coming and its future consummation.	168, 178
Amillennialism	The view that there is no future literal thousand-year earthly reign of Christ, understanding the millennium symbolically as the present church age.	173
Anointing of the sick	A rite involving anointing with oil, prayed for the healing and spiritual strengthening of the sick.	151
Anthropology	The branch of theology concerned with the nature, origin, and purpose of human beings.	95, 96, 97, 105, 107, 108, 110, 122, 127, 129
Apollinarianism	A heresy teaching that Christ had a human body but a divine mind in place of a human soul, denying His full humanity.	188, 192
Apostasy	The willful, total abandonment or renunciation of one's Christian faith.	132, 158
Apostles' Creed	An early, widely used statement of Christian faith summarizing core beliefs about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.	202, 210, 211, 212
Arian	A follower of or pertaining to Arius and his teaching that the Son was a created being subordinate to the Father.	187, 195, 202, 203, 217
Arianism	The heresy, condemned at Nicaea, that the Son of God was created by the Father and not co-eternal or of the same essence with Him.	9, 58, 77, 89, 187, 188, 192, 203

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Ark	The vessel built at God's command to preserve Noah, his family, and the animals through the Flood. Used by Augustine as an illustration of the Church.	143
Ascension	Christ's bodily rising from earth into heaven forty days after His resurrection.	55, 57, 79
Assembly	The gathered congregation of believers; a term describing the church as a called-out gathering.	143, 144, 145, 156, 197
Assurance	The believer's confidence, grounded in Scripture and the Spirit's witness, of being in a right relationship with God.	42, 72, 91, 132, 135, 136, 175
Atonement	The reconciling work of Christ's death that satisfies divine justice and restores sinners to fellowship with God.	57, 58, 119, 128, 139, 185
Authority	The rightful power to command belief and obedience, supremely vested in God and His revealed Word.	5, 18, 20, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32,
	34, 38, 39, 52, 57, 67, 68, 77, 86, 112, 149, 159, 187	
Authority of Scripture	The doctrine that the Bible carries God's own authority and is the final rule for faith and practice.	5, 67
Baby dedication	A ceremony in which parents publicly commit to raising their child in the Christian faith, distinct from infant baptism.	152
Baptism	The rite of initiation into the Christian faith and church, signifying cleansing from sin and union with Christ.	4, 40, 70, 77, 80, 86, 88, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 156
Baptismal confession	The declaration of faith historically made by a candidate at the time of baptism.	210
Baptismal formula	The set words, invoking the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, spoken in administering baptism.	42, 88
Bema Seat	The judgment seat of Christ where believers' works will be evaluated for reward, not for salvation.	140, 171, 172
Biblical revelation	God's self-disclosure recorded in and communicated through the Bible.	21
Biblical Theology	The discipline that traces the unfolding themes of Scripture within their own historical and redemptive progression.	6, 7, 178
Body of Christ	A New Testament image describing the church as a unified, interdependent organism with Christ as its head.	72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 144, 145, 146, 147, 156
Calling	God's summons of a person to salvation and to a particular role of service.	131
Calvinist	Adherent of the Reformed theological tradition associated with the teaching of John Calvin, particularly regarding the sovereignty of God, predestination, and salvation by grace alone.	201

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Chalcedonian Definition	The 451 A.D. statement affirming that Christ is one Person in two natures, fully God and fully man, without confusion, change, division, or separation.	11, 190, 191, 205, 206, 207, 213
Charismatic	Relating to Christian traditions or believers emphasizing the present-day operation of spiritual gifts such as tongues and healing.	77, 201
Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy	A 1978 evangelical statement articulating and defending the doctrine that Scripture is wholly true and without error.	19, 34
Christ-bearer	A title emphasizing that Mary bore Christ, used especially by those preferring it to 'Theotokos' to guard the distinction of Christ's natures.	204
Christian perfection	The Wesleyan teaching that believers may attain a state of love for God and neighbor uncontaminated by willful sin in this life.	71
Christological	Pertaining to the study or doctrine of the person and work of Christ.	87, 188, 189, 192, 195, 204, 205, 206, 207
Christology	The branch of theology dealing with the person, natures, and work of Jesus Christ.	11, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 59, 61, 62, 64,
Christology (Cont.)	87, 94, 110, 122, 185, 190, 192, 204, 205, 206, 207, 213	
Christotokos	A title meaning 'Christ-bearer,' used by Nestorius in preference to 'Theotokos' to describe Mary's relation to Christ.	204
Church	The community of believers united to Christ, both the universal body of all Christians and its local, visible expressions.	vii, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,
	15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30, 34, 37, 42, 44, 47, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 98, 100, 103, 104, 108, 119, 120, 122, 123, 131, 135, 136, 139, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170, 172, 176, 179, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 215, 216	
Circumcision	The Old Testament sign of the covenant, cutting away the foreskin, marking membership in the covenant people.	202
Co-equal	Describing the Persons of the Trinity as sharing fully and equally in the one divine essence.	68, 203
Co-eternal	Describing the Persons of the Trinity as existing eternally together, none preceding or following the others in time.	68, 77, 203
Communion	Fellowship with God and with fellow believers; also another name for the Lord's Supper.	5, 64, 71, 101, 104, 105, 127, 135
Confession	A formal declaration of belief, or the acknowledgment of sin before God.	5, 10, 38, 39, 49, 50, 54, 58, 68, 77,
	84, 85, 91, 92, 93, 101, 130, 152, 156, 158, 192, 193	

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Confirmation	A rite in which baptized persons affirm their faith and receive the laying on of hands, often associated with the Spirit's strengthening.	67, 79, 151
Congregation, Congregations	A local gathering of believers assembled for worship and fellowship.	73, 74, 78, 79, 143, 144, 145, 147, 149, 150, 151, 184
Conscience	The inner faculty by which a person discerns moral right and wrong.	19, 21, 22, 23, 43
Consubstantiation	The Lutheran view that Christ's body and blood are present together with the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.	153
Conversion	The turning of a person from sin to God, involving repentance and faith at the outset of the Christian life.	71, 77, 99, 128, 131, 132, 135, 146, 152, 155
Covenant, Covenants	A binding relational agreement, especially between God and His people, establishing mutual obligations and promises.	22, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 59, 66, 99,
	112, 124, 125, 144, 152, 153, 166, 174	
Covenant Maker	A title for God describing His initiating role in establishing covenants with His people.	40
Covenantal mercy	God's steadfast, compassionate faithfulness shown to His people in keeping with His covenant promises.	22
Created being	Any entity, including angelic or human, that owes its existence to God's act of creation, as opposed to God Himself.	9, 10, 54, 68, 77, 89, 187
Creation	God's act of bringing the universe and all it contains into existence out of nothing.	13, 19, 21, 22, 23, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43,
	44, 50, 52, 53, 55, 57, 59, 64, 65, 66, 81, 87, 96, 98, 100, 101, 102, 105, 115, 122, 129, 130, 134, 139, 164, 165, 167, 168, 170, 172, 173, 174, 176, 178, 184, 185, 186, 191, 192	
Creator	A title for God as the one who brought all things into being.	18, 19, 22, 37, 40, 44, 45, 59, 70, 97, 98, 99, 185
Creeds	Formal, authoritative summaries of Christian doctrine adopted by the church, such as the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds.	80, 169, 191, 195, 196, 202, 210
Cross	The instrument of Christ's crucifixion, and by extension the atoning death He accomplished there.	42, 55, 56, 57, 92, 110, 116, 117, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 208
Crucial Concept	A term used to flag a central idea essential to understanding a given doctrine. The Historical Event of Jesus death and resurrection in real time and space.	130, 131
Davidic Covenant	God's promise to David that his throne and kingdom would be	41

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	established forever, fulfilled in Christ.	
Deacon	A church office of service, assisting the leadership in practical and ministry needs of the congregation.	202
Deity	The state or quality of being God; divine nature.	4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 39,
		44, 54, 58, 60, 65, 67, 68, 77, 86, 87, 88, 89, 104, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190, 192, 195
Deity of Christ	The doctrine that Jesus Christ is fully and truly God, sharing the divine nature with the Father.	202, 209
Divine	Pertaining to God or having the nature and qualities of God.	9, 10, 11, 12, 19,
		20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 32, 38, 39, 42, 43, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 77, 78, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 93, 94, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 107, 116, 117, 123, 124, 125, 127, 129, 134, 156, 159, 166, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 198, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208
Divine initiative	The truth that God is the one who acts first in seeking, calling, and saving sinners.	116
Divine-human synergy	The cooperative interplay between God's action and human response in the process of revelation or salvation.	23
Docetic	Pertaining to Docetism, the view that Christ's humanity and physical suffering were merely apparent, not real.	184, 185
Docetism	An early heresy holding that Christ only seemed to have a real human body and did not truly suffer or die.	58
Doctrinal distinctions	The differences in teaching or emphasis that distinguish one Christian tradition or denomination from another.	157
Donatist / Donatists	Adherents of a fourth-century North African schismatic movement holding that sacraments administered by clergy who had lapsed under persecution were invalid; opposed by Augustine in his writings on the church and the sacraments.	142, 158, 159, 160
Dyothelitism	The orthodox teaching, affirmed against Monothelitism, that Christ possesses two wills, one divine and one human.	207
Ecclesiology	The branch of theology concerned with the nature, structure, and mission of the church.	141, 143, 161
Edenic Covenant	The covenant God made with Adam in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, involving obedience and stewardship.	41
Emotional assurance	The felt, experiential dimension of a believer's confidence in salvation, alongside intellectual and volitional assurance.	135, 136, 137
Empowering	The Spirit's work of equipping and enabling believers for service, witness, and holy living.	71, 81, 103
Entire sanctification	The Wesleyan teaching of a definite work of grace subsequent to conversion that cleanses the believer's heart from inbred sin.	71, 77
Equipping function	The role of church leaders in preparing believers for works of	73

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	ministry and service.	
Eschatology	The branch of theology dealing with the doctrine of last things, including death, judgment, resurrection, and Christ's return.	55, 110, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 171, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178
Essence	The fundamental nature or being of a thing, as in the one divine essence shared by the three Persons of the Trinity.	2, 9, 10, 14, 39, 40, 50, 65, 80, 84,
	85, 87, 88, 89, 93, 119, 164, 168, 186, 187, 198, 201, 202	
Essentials	Core doctrines considered indispensable to orthodox Christian faith, as distinguished from secondary or disputable matters.	5, 13, 62, 94, 177
Eternal life	The everlasting, quality life given by God to believers through union with Christ, begun now and consummated in glory.	7, 8, 122, 125, 134, 138, 166, 170, 172, 178, 210
Eternal Word	A title for Christ as the Logos who has existed eternally with the Father before His incarnation.	59
Eternality	The attribute of God by which He exists without beginning or end, outside the limits of time.	37, 68
Ethics	The branch of theology or philosophy concerned with moral conduct and what is right and wrong.	28, 42, 58, 103, 105
Eucharist	Another name for the Lord's Supper, emphasizing thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice.	151, 152, 153, 154
Eucharistic Mystery	The sacred, transcendent significance ascribed to Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Used in the Orthodox Churches.	153
Eutychianism	A heresy, condemned at Chalcedon, teaching that Christ's human and divine natures were fused into a single new nature.	11, 58, 189, 190, 191, 192
Evangelists	Those gifted and called to proclaim the gospel, listed among the ministry gifts given to the church. The primary function of the Evangelist is seen in the "equipping" of the saints to do evangelism more than doing the evangelism themselves.	73, 75
Exaltation	Christ's elevation to glory and honor following His resurrection and ascension, culminating in His session at the Father's right hand.	54, 56, 91
Excommunications	Formal acts of church discipline removing a person from membership and sacramental fellowship.	200
Exhortation	The spiritual gift and act of encouraging or urging believers toward faithful living.	73, 76
Filioque	The Latin phrase 'and the Son,' added to the Nicene Creed in the West, teaching that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.	69, 77
Filioque Controversy	The historic dispute, contributing to the East-West schism, over whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone or from the	70

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	Father and the Son.	
Filled with the Spirit	The condition of being under the Holy Spirit's controlling influence, empowering holy living and effective service.	29, 71, 78, 154, 156
Final Judgment	God's last, definitive judgment of all people at the end of history, determining eternal destiny.	171
Footwashing	An act of humble service, modeled by Christ, sometimes practiced as an ordinance symbolizing servanthood.	152
Forgiveness	God's gracious pardon of sin, removing guilt and restoring the sinner to favor with Him.	41, 101, 116, 125, 142, 158, 159
Forgiveness of Sins	The gracious removal of guilt and penalty for sin granted to those who trust in Christ.	4
Full deity	The affirmation that Christ possesses the complete and unabridged nature of God, not a lesser or partial divinity.	77, 205, 209
General Revelation	God's disclosure of Himself through nature, conscience, and providence, available to all people everywhere.	21, 22, 23, 32, 43
Gifted Persons	Individuals given by Christ to the church with particular ministry gifts for its edification.	73, 74, 75, 149
Gifting	The Spirit's distribution of particular abilities to believers for the building up of the church.	72
Giving	The gracious sharing of resources, especially financial, as an act of worship and ministry support.	27, 41, 64, 66, 67, 71, 72, 76, 86, 88, 98, 127, 132, 203, 207
Glorification	The final stage of salvation in which believers are conformed fully to the image of Christ in resurrected, sinless bodies.	71, 77, 104, 123, 129, 134
Gnostic	Pertaining to Gnosticism or its adherents, who claimed special spiritual knowledge and denigrated the material world.	185
Gnosticism	An early heresy claiming secret spiritual knowledge and often denying the goodness of the material creation and Christ's true humanity.	185, 192, 195, 216
God-bearer	An English rendering of 'Theotokos,' the title affirming that Mary bore the One who is God.	11, 189, 204
God-Breathed	Describing Scripture as directly originating from God's own breath or spirit; the meaning of 'inspired' in 2 Timothy 3:16. Uses the rare Greek term **θεόπνευστος.**	18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28
God-initiated	Describing an act, such as revelation, that originates in God's own will and action rather than human effort.	20
Godhead	An older theological term for the divine nature or the Trinity as a whole.	35, 36, 49, 50, 53, 63, 64, 69, 77, 83,
	84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 186, 187, 191, 192	

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Gospel	The good news of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.	4, 5, 7, 9, 20, 24, 25, 30, 50, 51, 55,
		58, 61, 72, 73, 89, 90, 96, 122, 126, 130, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138, 139, 143, 145, 148, 150, 151, 152, 154, 156, 157, 158, 164, 173, 184, 185, 193, 199, 215
Grace	God's unmerited favor extended to sinners, the basis of salvation and sustaining power for Christian life.	7, 39, 45, 49, 57, 63, 71, 76, 77, 97,
		100, 102, 103, 105, 108, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 123, 124, 125, 127, 129, 132, 134, 138, 146, 150, 152, 154, 159, 160, 171, 172, 173
Grace gifts	Spiritual abilities given to believers by God's grace, not earned by merit, for the church's benefit.	76
Great Commission	Christ's command to His disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching them.	40, 88, 155, 156, 157
Great tribulation	A period of intense end-times distress and persecution described in biblical prophecy.	169
Great White Throne	The scene of final judgment described in Revelation, before which all the unsaved dead will stand.	171, 172
Hamartiology	The branch of theology concerned with the doctrine of sin, its nature, origin, and effects.	22, 43, 109, 110, 111, 116, 117, 118, 119, 123, 126, 127
Healings	A spiritual gift involving the supernatural restoration of physical health, listed among Paul's charismatic gifts.	76
Helps	A spiritual gift of practical assistance and service rendered to others within the church.	61, 76, 92, 108, 113, 127, 168, 178, 195
Heresy	A teaching that departs from and contradicts essential, orthodox Christian doctrine.	89, 182, 184, 189, 209, 216
Hesychasm	An Eastern Orthodox contemplative tradition emphasizing inner stillness and prayer to experience union with God.	201
Hesychasts	Practitioners of hesychasm, the contemplative prayer tradition within Eastern Orthodoxy.	200
Historic Christian orthodoxy	The body of core doctrines historically affirmed by the church across time as authentically Christian.	4
Historical Jesus	In this book, the historical Jesus is distinguished from the pre-incarnate WORD seen in the Old Testament. The historical Jesus, the "God-Man" ***became*** in the incarnation and was named "Jesus." So the man, Jesus, is not found in the Old Testament, although the Son of God, the WORD, is seen in many places before the incarnation, when Jesus began.	59
Holiness	The attribute of God's absolute moral purity and otherness, and the call for His people to reflect that purity.	38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 46, 71, 72, 77,

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
		103, 119, 125, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176
Holy orders	The sacrament or rite by which persons are ordained to church offices such as deacon, priest, or bishop.	151
Humanity	The human race collectively, or the full, genuine human nature possessed by Christ.	4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 22, 27, 32,
	41, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 58, 60, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 123, 128, 129, 134, 165, 173, 184, 185, 187, 188, 190, 191	
Hypostatic Union	The theological term for the union of Christ's divine and human natures in the one Person of the Son.	54, 59
Icon	A sacred image, especially in Eastern Orthodoxy, depicting Christ, the saints, or biblical events for veneration.	100
Iconoclasm	The movement opposing the use and veneration of religious images, leading to their destruction.	12, 191, 192, 208, 209
Iconoclast	One who opposes and seeks to destroy religious images as idolatrous.	191
Iconoclast controversy	The prolonged Byzantine dispute over whether the veneration of icons was appropriate Christian worship or idolatry.	12
Iconoclastic	Pertaining to iconoclasm or opposition to the use of religious images.	208, 209, 217
Iconoclastic Controversy	The historical conflict within the Byzantine church over the legitimacy of venerating icons.	208
Iconoclasts	Those who opposed and worked to remove religious images from Christian worship.	191, 208
Illumination	The Holy Spirit's work of enabling believers to understand and apply the truth of Scripture.	71
Image	A representation or likeness, as humanity bears God's image, or as used of sacred icons.	13, 42, 43, 71, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100,
	101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 113, 114, 116, 129, 132, 134, 139, 170, 191, 199, 208, 209	
Image of God	The theological truth that human beings are created to reflect God's nature, character, and rule.	13, 95, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102,
	103, 104, 105, 107, 113, 114, 116, 132	
Image-bearers	A term for human beings as those who reflect and represent God's image in creation.	101, 105
Imago Dei	Latin for 'image of God,' the doctrine that humanity uniquely reflects God's likeness.	100, 101, 103, 107
Immanence, Immanent	The doctrine that God is present and active within His creation,	36, 45, 53

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	not distant from it. Describing God's nearness and active presence within creation.	
Immersion	A mode of baptism in which the candidate is fully submerged in water.	152
Immutability	The attribute of God by which His character, purposes, and being do not change.	22, 43
Incarnate	Having taken on human flesh, as the eternal Son did in becoming man.	50, 53, 56, 58, 59, 60, 80, 145, 189, 190
Incarnation	The doctrine that the eternal Son of God took on genuine human nature in the person of Jesus Christ.	4, 10, 11, 12, 22, 43, 53, 54, 56, 59,
	60, 61, 62, 94, 95, 104, 108, 127, 128, 129, 139, 184, 185, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 195, 204, 205, 208, 209, 210	
Indwelling	The Holy Spirit's permanent, personal presence within every believer.	71
Inerrancy, Inerrant	The doctrine that Scripture, in its original manuscripts, is wholly true and without error in all it affirms. Free from error; describing Scripture as entirely truthful in what it teaches.	18, 19, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34
Infant baptism	The practice of baptizing infants of believing parents, typically as a sign of covenant inclusion.	152
Inherited fallenness	The corrupted moral condition passed to all humanity as a consequence of Adam's sin.	22
Inherited sin	The sinful nature and guilt transmitted from Adam to all his descendants.	111
Inspiration	The Holy Spirit's superintending work by which the biblical authors wrote exactly what God intended, without error.	17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 34
Inspired	Describing Scripture as God-breathed, having its ultimate source in God through human authors.	17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 58, 184
Intellectual assurance	Confidence of salvation grounded in rational understanding of biblical promises and doctrine.	135, 136
Intercession	The act of pleading on behalf of another before God, supremely exercised by Christ and the Spirit for believers.	57
Intermediate state	The condition of the soul between death and the final resurrection.	133, 173, 175, 178
Iota	The smallest Greek letter, famously at stake in the one-letter difference between *'homoousios'* and *'homoiousios'* in the Arian controversy.	2, 10, 188
Judgment	God's righteous evaluation and verdict upon human sin and conduct, culminating in the final judgment.	170

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Justice	God's attribute of perfect fairness and righteousness in dealing with sin and His creatures.	42, 55, 57, 101, 103, 123
Justification	God's declarative act of pronouncing a believing sinner righteous on the basis of Christ's righteousness, received by faith.	56, 131, 132, 139, 152
Last Days	The present era inaugurated by Christ's first coming, extending to His return, viewed as the final period of redemptive history.	164, 165, 166, 168, 172, 175
Leadership	The exercise of God-given authority and responsibility to guide and shepherd the church.	69, 73, 74, 75, 76, 147, 148, 149, 150, 157, 161, 199
Leadership gifts	Spiritual abilities given for the oversight, direction, and shepherding of the church.	73, 74
Likeness	Resemblance or similarity, as humanity is made in God's likeness as well as His image.	97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 123, 129, 131, 132
Local church	A particular, visible congregation of believers gathered in a specific place.	151, 157, 176
Lord and giver of life	A title for the Holy Spirit from the Nicene Creed, affirming His deity and life-giving work.	10, 63, 64, 68, 77, 203
Lord's Supper	The ordinance instituted by Christ using bread and wine to commemorate His sacrificial death. Also called the Eucharist.	152, 153
Make disciples	The Great Commission mandate to lead others to faith in Christ and train them in obedience to Him.	154, 155, 156, 157
Manichaeism	A dualistic religious system positing an eternal conflict between good and evil, spirit and matter, condemned as heretical when it influenced Christian thought.	216
Manifestation gifts	Spiritual gifts, such as tongues, prophecy, and healing, that visibly display the Spirit's presence and power.	76
Matrimony	The sacrament or rite of Christian marriage in the Roman Catholic church.	151
Memorial View	The understanding of the Lord's Supper as a symbolic remembrance of Christ's death, without a special sacramental presence.	154
Mercy	God's compassionate withholding of deserved judgment from sinners, and the corresponding virtue in believers.	22, 42, 55, 76, 117, 121, 123, 124, 125
Mid-tribulation	The view that the rapture of the church occurs at the midpoint of the seven-year tribulation.	169
Millennium	The thousand-year reign of Christ described in Revelation 20, understood variously by different eschatological views.	169, 173, 174, 175, 192

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Ministry Gifts	Spiritual abilities given by Christ for the equipping and building up of the church. Not "Gifted Persons."	74, 75, 76
Miracles	Supernatural acts of God that go beyond the ordinary course of nature to reveal His power and purposes. One of the Spiritual Gifts listed by the Apostles.	56, 76, 77
Mission	The church's God-given task of proclaiming the gospel and making disciples throughout the world.	28, 42, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 57, 70, 71,
	72, 73, 78, 128, 142, 143, 148, 150, 154, 156, 157, 161, 175, 202	
Missions	The organized efforts of the church to spread the gospel, especially cross-culturally.	201
Modalism	A heresy holding that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are merely successive modes or roles of one divine Person rather than three distinct Persons. See Sabellianism**.**	85, 186
Modalistic Monarchianism	A form of modalism emphasizing the single sovereignty of God expressed through different modes as Father, Son, and Spirit.	186
Monastic orders	Organized communities of men or women devoted to religious life under vows and a common rule.	200
Monophysites, Monophysitism	Adherents of Monophysitism who held that Christ possesses only one, fused nature. A heresy, rejected at Chalcedon, teaching that Christ has only a single nature rather than two distinct natures.	190, 205, 206, 217
Monotheism	The belief that there is only one true God.	40, 86
Monothelitism	A heresy teaching that Christ, though possessing two natures, had only one will, rejected in favor of Dyothelitism.	12, 207
Montanism	An early Christian movement emphasizing new prophetic revelation and rigorous asceticism, later regarded as heterodox.	77
Moral awareness	The innate human sense of right and wrong, part of the testimony of general revelation and conscience.	22, 116
Natural Revelation	God's disclosure of Himself through the created order, another term for general revelation.	21
Nestorian, Nestorianism	Pertaining to Nestorius or his teaching that overly separated Christ's divine and human natures into two distinct persons. A heresy, condemned at Ephesus, holding that Christ's divine and human natures constituted two separate persons rather than one.	11, 58, 188, 189, 190, 195, 206
New Covenant	The covenant promised through the prophets and inaugurated by Christ's blood, providing forgiveness and the indwelling Spirit.	41
New man	The renewed identity and nature believers receive in Christ, in contrast to the 'old man' of unregenerate life.	97, 99, 101, 102

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Nicaea, Nicene	The city and site of the First Ecumenical Council (325 A.D.), which affirmed the full deity of the Son against Arianism. Pertaining to the Council of Nicaea or the creed and doctrine it produced.	2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 34, 47, 49, 50, 55, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70, 80, 81,
		90, 91, 94, 108, 119, 137, 139, 146, 148, 150, 153, 161, 179, 184, 187, 188, 191, 193, 195, 201, 202, 203, 208, 209, 210, 212, 214, 216, 217
Nicene Creed	The creed formulated at Nicaea and Constantinople affirming the full deity of the Son and, later, the Spirit, against Arianism.	4, 5, 9, 10, 49, 55, 63, 68, 69, 70, 80, 146, 150, 184, 188, 193, 201, 202, 203, 212, 214
Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed	The expanded form of the Nicene Creed, finalized at the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.), affirming the deity of the Holy Spirit.	10, 210, 212
Noahic Covenant	God's covenant with Noah after the Flood, promising never again to destroy the earth by water and establishing the created order's stability.	41
Office gifts	Spiritual gifts tied to recognized leadership offices within the church, such as apostle, pastor, or teacher.	73
Old man	The believer's former, unregenerate self dominated by sin, put off in Christ.	97, 99, 101, 102, 103, 118
Omnipresence	The attribute of God by which He is fully present everywhere at all times.	22, 68
Omniscience	The attribute of God by which He knows all things perfectly, actual and possible.	22, 68
On Already / Not Yet	A discussion heading addressing the tension between the kingdom's present inauguration and future consummation.	164
One person	The affirmation that Christ, though possessing two natures, is a single, unified Person.	11, 12, 54, 58, 78, 89, 126, 188, 189, 190, 192, 198, 204, 205, 206, 207
One Person in two natures	The Chalcedonian formula summarizing that Christ is a single Person who possesses both a fully divine and a fully human nature.	213
Only-Begotten	A traditional title for Christ as the unique, one-of-a-kind Son of the Father.	60
Ordinance, Ordinances	A rite instituted by Christ, such as baptism or the Lord's Supper, to be observed by the church. The plural of ordinance; the rites Christ commanded the church to practice.	147,150, 151, 153, 154, 161
Organism	A term describing the church as a living, unified body rather than merely an institution.	143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 156
Original sin	The corrupted sinful nature inherited by all humanity as a result	102

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	of Adam's fall.	
Orthodox	Conforming to established, correct Christian doctrine; also refers to the Eastern Orthodox tradition.	14, 58, 100, 151, 167, 182, 184,
	185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 195, 200, 201, 203, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212	
Orthodox Christian	A believer who holds to the historic, creedal doctrines of the Christian faith.	182, 209
Orthodox core beliefs	The essential doctrines affirmed as fundamental and non-negotiable within orthodox Christianity.	201
Orthodoxy	Correct, historically established Christian doctrine, or the Eastern Orthodox communion of churches.	2, 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 58, 77, 90, 150,
	153, 174, 177, 181, 182, 183, 184, 187, 188, 192, 193, 197, 201, 203, 209, 212	
Parousia	The Greek term for Christ's promised second coming or appearing.	167
Pastors, Pastoral	Relating to the shepherding care and oversight of a congregation by its ministers. Church leaders responsible for the spiritual care, teaching, and shepherding of a congregation.	8, 24, 73, 81, 139, 148, 158, 178
Penance	A sacrament or rite involving confession, contrition, and satisfaction for sin. Taught in the Roman Catholic Church.	151
Pentecostal	Relating to Christian traditions emphasizing baptism in the Holy Spirit, evidenced by spiritual gifts such as tongues.	201
Perseverance	The doctrine that true believers, kept by God's power, will continue in faith to the end.	129, 132
Persona	A Latin term for an individual, distinct subsistence, used of the three Persons of the Trinity.	85, 87
Personal sin	An individual's own specific acts of transgression against God's law, as distinguished from inherited sin.	111
Personal transgression	A specific act of disobedience committed by an individual against God's law.	22
Personal unity of Christ	The truth that Christ's divine and human natures are united in a single Person, not two separate persons.	204
Persons	Distinct individual subsistences, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three Persons in one divine essence.	39, 40, 43, 44, 73, 75, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 187, 203, 216
Perspicuitas Scripturae	Latin for 'the clarity of Scripture,' the doctrine that the Bible's central message is understandable to ordinary readers.	30
Perspicuity	The doctrine that Scripture's essential meaning is clear and understandable to the ordinary reader.	30

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Plenary	Full or complete, as in the doctrine that inspiration extends to all of Scripture, not merely parts of it.	23, 24, 25
Plenary Dynamic inspiration	The teaching that God fully inspired the thoughts and message of Scripture while human authors expressed them in their own words.	23, 24, 25
Plenary verbal inspiration	The doctrine that God's inspiration of Scripture extends fully to its very words, not merely its concepts.	23, 24, 25
Pneumatology	The branch of theology concerned with the doctrine and person of the Holy Spirit.	10, 63, 64, 65, 78
Pneumatomachianism	A fourth-century heresy denying the full deity of the Holy Spirit.	77
Pneumatomachians	Adherents of Pneumatomachianism, who denied the Holy Spirit's full deity.	10, 68, 77, 203
Post-tribulation	The view that the rapture of the church occurs after the tribulation period, at Christ's visible return.	169
Postmillennialism	The view that Christ will return after the church, through gospel proclamation, ushers in a golden age of righteousness on earth.	173
Pouring	A mode of baptism in which water is poured over the candidate's head.	152
Pre-existence	The truth that the WORD, as the eternal Son, existed before His incarnation and indeed before all creation.	54, 60, 187
Pre-tribulation	The view that the rapture of the church occurs before the seven-year tribulation begins.	169
Premillennialism	The view that Christ will return before establishing a literal thousand-year reign on earth.	174
Presbyter	An elder, a church office involving spiritual oversight and teaching of the congregation.	187, 202
Preservation	God's continual sustaining of Scripture's text and truth through the process of transmission across history.	29, 30
Priesthood of all believers	The doctrine that every Christian has direct access to God and a priestly calling to serve Him, not mediated solely through clergy.	159
Priestly Covenant	A covenant establishing a priesthood set apart for mediating between God and His people.	41
Proceeds	The theological term describing the Holy Spirit's eternal origin from the Father (and, in Western theology, the Son).	63, 68, 69, 77, 80, 203
Progressive revelation	The principle that God disclosed His truth to humanity gradually and cumulatively throughout redemptive history.	40
Prophecy (noun),	The spiritual gift and act of speaking forth God's message,	20, 22, 67, 76, 77,

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Prophesy (verb), Prophesying, Prophetic	whether foretelling or forth-telling truth. To speak under divine inspiration, declaring God's message, whether predictive or exhortative. The ongoing act of speaking forth a Spirit-given message from God. Pertaining to prophecy or the office and function of a prophet.	163
Propitiatory	Relating to propitiation, the turning away of God's righteous wrath through Christ's atoning sacrifice.	57
Prototype	An original model or pattern, sometimes used of Christ or of icons in theological discussion.	192, 208, 209
Public testimony	An open declaration of one's faith before others, often associated with baptism.	152
Ransom	A price paid to secure release from bondage, applied to Christ's death that redeems sinners from sin's penalty.	116, 124, 125
Rapture	The catching up of living and resurrected believers to meet Christ in the air at His coming.	55, 169, 175, 176, 177, 178
Reconciliation, Reconciling	The restoration of a right relationship between God and sinners accomplished through Christ's death. The ongoing act of restoring peace and right relationship between estranged parties, especially God and humanity.	56, 57, 69, 116, 123, 135, 139
Redeemed	Those who have been purchased and delivered from sin's bondage and penalty by Christ's atoning work.	22, 64, 104, 116, 127, 128, 134, 145, 146, 154, 157, 174
Redeemer	A title for God, especially Christ, as the one who purchases and delivers sinners from bondage to sin.	40, 44, 52, 53, 56
Redemption	The deliverance of sinners from the bondage and penalty of sin through the payment of Christ's atoning death.	18, 26, 41, 50, 59, 64, 78, 81, 85, 86,
	103, 108, 110, 115, 117, 119, 122, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 133, 166, 186, 187, 188, 190, 215	
Redemptive	Pertaining to or accomplishing redemption, God's saving deliverance of His people.	21, 22, 27, 43, 55, 57, 64, 70, 103, 143, 164, 165, 166, 168
Redemptive Death	Christ's crucifixion viewed specifically as the means by which He accomplished redemption for sinners.	55
Redemptive purposes	God's overarching plan and intention to save and restore humanity through Christ.	22
Redemptive Revelation	God's disclosure of Himself specifically aimed at making known His plan of salvation.	21
Regeneration	The Spirit's work of imparting new spiritual life to a person dead in sin, the new birth.	65, 71, 81, 104, 116, 128, 131, 132, 134, 139

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Reign	The exercise of sovereign rule, as of Christ over His kingdom, present and future.	168, 173
Reliability	The trustworthiness of Scripture as an accurate and dependable source of truth.	18, 23, 27, 28, 34, 62, 94
Renew	To make new again, as the Spirit renews the believer's heart and mind.	168
Repentance	A genuine turning from sin toward God, involving sorrow, confession, and a changed direction of life. The Greek word **μετάνοια** means, literally, a change of mind.	22, 115, 117, 132, 142, 157, 173
Resurrect	To raise from the dead, as Christ was raised and as believers will be raised at the last day.	168
Resurrection	The bodily raising of the dead to life, supremely accomplished in Christ and promised to believers.	4, 5, 12, 50, 55, 57, 58, 62, 65, 71,
	73, 80, 91, 94, 103, 104, 125, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 152, 165, 166, 167, 170, 173, 175, 176, 178, 185, 198, 210	
Return	Christ's promised second coming to earth in glory to judge and consummate His kingdom.	55, 56, 57, 58, 107, 133, 164,
	165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178	
Revelation	God's self-disclosure of Himself and His truth, given generally through creation and specially through Scripture and Christ.	17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 29, 31,
	32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, 56, 57, 59, 64, 65, 70, 77, 84, 86, 87, 96, 97, 104, 105, 133, 134, 135, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 180, 184, 192	
Righteousness	Conformity to God's moral standard, and the status of being right before God granted through Christ.	17, 20, 29, 39, 42, 56, 71, 102, 103,
	123, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 173, 174, 177	
Sabellianism	A form of modalism, named for Sabellius, teaching that the Father, Son, and Spirit are merely successive manifestations of one God. See Modalism.	186, 192
Sabellius	An early third-century teacher whose modalistic view of the Trinity was condemned as heretical.	186, 187
Sacraments	Sacred rites instituted by Christ, understood by many traditions to convey grace to participants, such as baptism and the Eucharist.	150, 151, 154, 156, 157, 158, 161
Sacred images	Icons or other religious artwork depicting Christ, Mary, or the saints, venerated in some Christian traditions.	191, 208, 209
Sacrifice	An offering made to God, supremely fulfilled in Christ's atoning death for sin.	57, 116, 129, 139, 154, 160
Salvation	God's gracious deliverance of sinners from sin's penalty and power, granted through faith in Christ.	vii, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 19, 22, 27, 29,

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
	30, 42, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, 58, 59, 60, 67, 72, 77, 80, 90, 91, 101, 105, 111, 113, 116, 118, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 147, 152, 166, 171, 172, 185, 187, 189, 197, 205, 209	
Sanctification	The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit conforming the believer's character and conduct to the likeness of Christ.	64, 65, 71, 77, 81, 103, 104, 116, 125, 129, 131, 132, 134, 139, 186
Savior	A title for Christ as the one who rescues sinners from sin and its consequences.	50, 51, 52, 53, 58, 59, 61, 97, 122,
	125, 126, 132, 133, 135, 136, 143, 154, 155, 172	
Scripture, Scriptures	The written, God-breathed Word of God, comprising the Old and New Testaments and serving as the church's supreme authority. The collected sacred writings recognized as God's inspired Word.	vii, 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,
	26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 44, 50, 52, 54, 55, 58, 59, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 77, 79, 80, 81, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 105, 108, 111, 113, 116, 117, 122, 128, 129, 130, 132, 133, 135, 142, 143, 146, 149, 150, 152, 154, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 178, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 192, 193, 195, 196, 200, 201, 204, 209, 219	
Second blessing	A Wesleyan-Holiness term for a distinct work of grace subsequent to conversion, often equated with entire sanctification.	71
Second Coming	Christ's promised future return to earth in glory.	55
Secondary issues	Doctrinal matters on which faithful Christians may disagree without compromising core, essential orthodoxy.	5, 150
Servant	One who serves another; a title applied to Christ in His humble, obedient ministry.	56, 66
Service, Service gifts	Acts of ministry and help rendered to others, often in the exercise of spiritual gifts. One of the spiritual gifts listed by the Apostles. Spiritual abilities oriented toward practical acts of ministry and help within the church.	71, 73, 76, 78, 79, 149, 153, 156
Serving gifts	Spiritual gifts expressed through practical acts of assistance and support to others.	76
Similar essence	The Arian-leaning position (homoiousios) that the Son is of like, but not identical, essence to the Father.	2, 10, 188
Sin	Any failure to conform to, or transgression of, God's moral law, in thought, word, or deed.	vii, 14, 27, 30, 32, 43, 54, 55, 57, 68,
	71, 72, 77, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 122, 123, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 132, 134, 139, 174	
Sinlessness	The doctrine that Christ lived entirely free from sin throughout His earthly life.	55, 188

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Sola Scriptura	The Reformation principle that Scripture alone is the final, sufficient authority for Christian faith and practice.	27, 29
Son of God	A title affirming Christ's unique, eternal relationship to the Father and His full deity.	9, 50, 51, 52, 62, 78, 80, 94, 133, 187, 189
Son of Man	A title Christ used of Himself, emphasizing both His genuine humanity and His messianic authority drawn from Daniel 7.	52
Soteriology	The branch of theology concerned with the doctrine of salvation.	110, 118, 121, 123, 126, 127, 135, 138
Sovereign King	A title for God emphasizing His supreme rule and authority over all creation.	40
Speaking gifts	Spiritual gifts exercised through speech, such as teaching, prophecy, and tongues.	76
Special Revelation	God's direct disclosure of Himself through Scripture, Christ, and miraculous acts, providing truth not available through nature alone.	21, 23
Spirit-fighters	An English rendering of 'Pneumatomachians,' those who opposed the deity of the Holy Spirit.	77, 203
Spiritual Gifts	Abilities given by the Holy Spirit to believers for the edification of the church and the work of ministry.	5, 20, 68, 72, 73, 75, 78, 149, 150
Sprinkling	A mode of baptism in which water is sprinkled on the candidate rather than immersion or pouring.	152
Statement of Faith	A formal document articulating the core doctrinal convictions held by a church or organization.	8
Substitution	The truth that Christ died in the place of sinners, bearing the penalty they deserved.	129, 139
Substitutionary	Describing Christ's atonement as accomplished in the place of, and on behalf of, sinners.	51, 55, 57
Sufficiency	The doctrine that Scripture provides everything necessary for faith and Christian living, requiring no supplementary revelation.	18, 28, 29, 34, 38, 134
Systematic Theology	The discipline that organizes Christian doctrine topically and coherently from the whole of Scripture.	2, 6, 8, 15, 37, 46, 90, 91, 111, 161, 178, 197, 209
Teachers, Teaching	Those gifted and called to instruct believers in sound doctrine, listed among the ministry gifts. The act of instructing others in Christian truth, and a spiritual gift devoted to that task. One of the spiritual gifts listed by the Apostles.	1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 28, 45, 50, 54, 56, 68, 73, 74, 76, 77, 79, 84, 90,
	93, 100, 103, 144, 148, 149, 155, 157, 158, 159, 166, 183, 184, 185, 187, 188, 191, 192, 193, 199, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 215	

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Tetelestai	The Greek word Christ spoke from the cross, meaning 'It is finished,' declaring His redemptive work complete.	57, 118
Theology	The systematic study of God and His relationship to the world, humanity, and salvation.	vii, 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 18, 31, 36, 37,
	39, 40, 46, 50, 59, 60, 65, 69, 81, 85, 90, 97, 110, 111, 139, 153, 165, 184, 193, 194, 195	
Theology Proper	The branch of systematic theology dealing specifically with the doctrine of God Himself.	35, 36, 37, 64
Theotokos	A Greek title meaning 'God-bearer,' affirming that Mary bore the One who is truly God, defended at Ephesus.	11, 100, 189, 198, 204
Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion	The doctrinal statement defining the beliefs of the Church of England at the Reformation.	150
Three Chapters	Writings condemned at the Second Council of Constantinople for their perceived Nestorian tendencies.	11, 206
Tongues	A spiritual gift involving speech in languages unknown to the speaker, given for edification or as a sign.	74, 76, 77
Transcendence, Transcendent	The attribute of God by which He exists above and beyond His creation, distinct from it. Existing above and independent of the created order, as God is in His being.	36, 45, 53
Transubstantiation	The Roman Catholic teaching that the bread and wine of the Eucharist are changed in substance into the actual body and blood of Christ.	153
Tribulation	A future period of intense distress and divine judgment upon the earth described in biblical prophecy.	169, 170, 177, 178
Trinitarian	Pertaining to the doctrine of the Trinity, that God is one Being who eternally exists as three Persons.	36, 37, 39, 46, 88, 89, 91, 186, 188, 203
Trinitas	The Latin term from which 'Trinity' derives, denoting the threefold personal existence of the one God.	88, 91, 186
Trinity	The doctrine that the one true God eternally exists as three distinct, co-equal Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.	4, 5, 22, 36, 40, 43, 46, 59, 65, 68,
	77, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 122, 127, 186, 187, 190, 197, 199, 203, 209, 210	
Triumph of Orthodoxy	The 843 A.D. restoration of icon veneration in the Byzantine church, celebrated as the final defeat of Iconoclasm.	192, 209
Triune	Describing God's nature as three Persons in one essence, another term for Trinitarian.	36, 39, 42, 83, 85, 86, 90, 91, 101, 104, 127, 135
Twelve Anathemas	Cyril of Alexandria's twelve condemnations of Nestorian teaching regarding the person of Christ.	204

Term	Glossary Definition	Page References
Two natures	The doctrine that Christ possesses both a full divine nature and a full human nature united in one Person.	11, 12, 57, 58, 189, 190, 191,
	192, 198, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 213	
Uncreated	Existing without having been made; an attribute belonging to God alone, as distinct from all created beings.	65, 200, 202
Union with Christ	The believer's spiritual union with Christ, the basis for every saving benefit received in salvation.	56, 58, 77, 98, 103, 128, 129
Universal church	The whole body of all believers in Christ across every time and place, as distinguished from the local church.	146, 149
Veneration	The act of showing deep religious honor and respect, as toward icons in some Christian traditions, distinguished from worship.	12, 192, 198, 208, 209
Visual theology	The communication of theological truth through images, art, or symbolic visual representation.	208
Westminster Catechism	A summary of Reformed doctrine in question-and-answer form produced by the Westminster Assembly.	95, 96
Westminster Confession of Faith	The Reformed confessional statement produced by the Westminster Assembly (1646), summarizing Calvinistic doctrine.	8, 29
Westminster Shorter Catechism	A concise question-and-answer summary of Reformed doctrine intended for instructing children and new believers.	96
Without error	Describing Scripture as wholly truthful, containing no mistakes in what it affirms; synonymous with inerrant.	18, 26, 27

Return to Index List

Index and Glossary
Names of People

... Return to Index List ...

Name	Description	Page References
Abelard, Peter	French scholastic philosopher and theologian known for applying dialectical method to theology in Sic et Non, and for his relationship with Héloïse (1079–1142).	218
Adam	The first man in the biblical creation account, whose disobedience introduced sin into the human race; serves as the theological counterpart to Christ, the "second Adam," in Pauline soteriology (biblical).	41, 97, 98, 102, 106, 115, 116, 122
Abraham	Patriarch of nation of Israel in Genesis; father of Isaac, main character in the book of Genesis.	40, 41, 89
Alexander of Alexandria	Bishop of Alexandria who opposed the teaching of his presbyter Arius and defended the full deity of the Son in the lead-up to the Council of Nicaea; mentor of Athanasius (c. 250–326).	202
Anselm	Archbishop of Canterbury and scholastic theologian famous for the ontological argument for God's existence and his satisfaction theory of the atonement in Cur Deus Homo (1033–1109).	34, 47, 62, 81, 94, 101, 108, 120, 124, 129, 139, 161, 179, 195, 200, 218
Anthony the Great	Egyptian ascetic regarded as the father of Christian monasticism; his life, recorded by Athanasius, shaped the development of desert spirituality (c. 251–356).	216
Apollinaris	Bishop of Laodicea condemned for teaching that Christ's divine Logos replaced a human rational soul (Apollinarianism), a Christological error rejected at the Council of Constantinople in 381 (c. 310–390).	188
Aquinas, Thomas	Dominican friar and scholastic theologian whose Summa Theologiae systematized Christian doctrine through the integration of Aristotelian philosophy; among the most influential theologians in Western Christianity (1225–1274).	34, 46, 47, 62, 81, 94, 102, 108, 116, 120, 139, 161, 168, 179, 195, 200, 218
Arius	Alexandrian presbyter whose teaching that the Son was a created being, not eternally divine, provoked the Arian controversy and was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325 (c. 256–336).	9, 10, 187, 202
Athanasius	Bishop of Alexandria and chief defender of Nicene orthodoxy against Arianism as a deacon and later bishop; champion of the homoousios formula affirming the Son's full deity (c. 296–373).	15, 58, 60, 62, 88, 93, 94, 95, 104, 108, 129, 139, 185, 186, 187, 193, 195, 197, 199, 202, 217
Athenagoras	Second-century Christian apologist from Athens, best known for A Plea for the Christians, a defense of the faith addressed to the Roman emperor (c. 133–190).	216
Augustine	Bishop of Hippo and one of the most influential	1, 4, 7, 14, 15, 17, 60, 61, 67,

Name	Description	Page References
	theologians in Western Christian history, whose writings shaped doctrines of grace, original sin, and the Trinity (354–430).	70, 100, 101, 103, 108, 111, 115, 122, 123, 125, 143, 144, 156, 159, 163, 192, 197, 199, 217
Aurelius, Marcus	Roman emperor and Stoic philosopher whose Meditations reflect pagan philosophical ethics contemporaneous with early Christianity (121–180).	216
Barth, Karl	Swiss Reformed theologian and leading figure of twentieth-century neo-orthodoxy, author of the multi-volume Church Dogmatics (1886–1968).	60, 93
Basil	Bishop of Caesarea ("Basil the Great"), a Cappadocian Father whose defense of Nicene Trinitarian theology and treatise on the Holy Spirit shaped later doctrine (c. 330–379).	81, 88, 89, 117, 153, 159, 189, 199, 217
Basilides	Early second-century Gnostic teacher active in Alexandria whose dualistic system was opposed by orthodox writers as heretical (fl. c. 120–140).	185
Bavinck, Herman	Dutch Reformed theologian known for his four-volume Reformed Dogmatics, a major work of modern systematic theology (1854–1921).	40, 60
Bede the Venerable	English monk, historian, and biblical scholar whose Ecclesiastical History of the English People is a foundational work of early medieval church history (c. 673–735).	217
Bernard of Clairvaux	Cistercian abbot, mystic, and influential preacher whose writings on love, contemplation, and devotion to Christ shaped medieval spirituality (1090–1153).	102, 117, 127, 129, 218
Boethius	Roman philosopher and statesman whose Consolation of Philosophy, written while awaiting execution, profoundly influenced medieval Christian thought on providence and free will (c. 480–524).	217
Bonaventure	Franciscan theologian and scholastic thinker known for integrating mystical and Augustinian theology; served as Minister General of the Franciscan order (1221–1274).	34, 47, 62, 81, 94, 108, 120, 139, 161, 179, 195, 218
Bruce, F. F.	British biblical scholar and New Testament commentator widely respected for his work on the historical reliability of Scripture (1910–1990).	31
Bullinger	Heinrich Bullinger, Swiss Reformer who succeeded Zwingli as leader of the Zurich church and authored the Second Helvetic Confession (1504–1575).	149, 169
Calvin, John	French Reformer and systematic theologian whose Institutes of the Christian Religion became foundational for Reformed theology (1509–1564).	15, 32, 88, 90, 112, 133, 139, 173, 183, 200
Cassiodorus	Roman statesman and monk who preserved classical and Christian learning through his monastic scriptorium at Vivarium (c. 485–585).	217
Charlemagne	King of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor whose reign promoted a revival of learning and closer ties	218

Name	Description	Page References
	between church and state (c. 747–814).	
Chrysostom, John	Archbishop of Constantinople renowned for his eloquent preaching (earning the epithet "Chrysostom," meaning "golden-mouthed") and his biblical commentaries (c. 347–407).	74, 115, 128, 141, 142, 147, 157, 188, 217
Clement of Alexandria	Early Christian theologian and head of the catechetical school in Alexandria who sought to synthesize Greek philosophy with Christian faith (c. 150–215).	7, 105, 121, 199, 216
Constantine	Roman emperor whose conversion to Christianity and Edict of Milan (313) ended imperial persecution, and who convened the Council of Nicaea in 325 (c. 272–337).	2, 148, 158, 187, 191, 197, 198, 199, 202, 207, 208
Cyprian	Bishop of Carthage and influential writer on church unity and the authority of bishops, martyred under Roman persecution (c. 210–258).	145, 152, 216
Cyril of Alexandria	Bishop of Alexandria and vigorous defender of Mary as Theotokos ("God-bearer") against Nestorius; his Christology shaped the formulations of the Council of Ephesus (431) and later Chalcedon (c. 376–444).	189, 204, 217
Cyril of Jerusalem	Bishop of Jerusalem known for his Catechetical Lectures instructing new converts in Christian doctrine (c. 313–386).	5, 8, 54, 70, 88, 185
Decius	Roman emperor whose empire-wide edict requiring sacrifice to the gods (AD 250) triggered a major wave of persecution against Christians (c. 201–251).	199, 216
Dionysius the Areopagite, Pseudo-	Anonymous late fifth- or early sixth-century Christian mystical theologian writing under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite (cf. Acts 17:34); his apophatic theology and celestial hierarchies profoundly shaped medieval mysticism (fl. c. 500).	217
Domitian	Roman emperor traditionally associated with persecution of Christians and, according to tradition, the exile of the Apostle John to Patmos (AD 51–96).	199
Duns Scotus	Franciscan scholastic theologian and philosopher known for his subtle metaphysical distinctions and defense of the Immaculate Conception (c. 1266–1308).	218
Edwards, Jonathan	American Reformed theologian and preacher central to the First Great Awakening, author of "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (1703–1758).	170
Erickson, Millard J.	American evangelical theologian and author of the widely used textbook Christian Theology (1932–2023).	15, 60, 111, 114
Eusebius	Bishop of Caesarea and "father of church history," author of Ecclesiastical History, the primary narrative source for the first three centuries of Christianity (c. 260–340).	vii, viii, ix, 2, 6, 10, 14, 17, 18, 21, 25, 26, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38, 45, 49, 51, 53, 56, 57, 61, 63, 65, 69, 75, 79, 82, 83, 84, 90, 93, 95, 97, 101, 106, 109, 110, 113, 118, 121, 122, 126, 131, 137, 138, 141, 143, 148,

Name	Description	Page References
		155, 160, 163, 164, 167, 170, 172, 177, 181, 183, 187, 191, 194, 217
Eutyches	Constantinopolitan archimandrite whose teaching that Christ's human nature was absorbed into his divine nature (Eutychianism) was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 (c. 380–456).	189, 190, 191, 205
Eve	The first woman in the biblical creation account, whose role in the fall is central to discussions of sin and, by later contrast, to Mary as the "new Eve" (biblical).	41, 102, 122
Fee, Gordon D.	American New Testament scholar and Pentecostal theologian known for his work on Pauline theology and biblical exegesis (1934–2022).	103
Gregory (unspecified)	A figure named Gregory referenced apart from the explicit "Gregory of Nazianzus" and "Gregory Palamas" entries above. Given the surrounding page range, this may refer to Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–395), another Cappadocian Father, or may simply be a shorthand reference back to Gregory of Nazianzus — worth confirming against your manuscript before finalizing.	88, 92, 93, 98, 100, 105, 115, 128, 165, 199
Gregory of Nazianzus	Cappadocian Father and Archbishop of Constantinople, celebrated for his orations on the Trinity that earned him the title "the Theologian" (c. 329–390).	59, 60, 61, 72, 85, 87, 217
Hadrian	Roman emperor whose reign saw continued tension with Christians, including the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt and restrictions on Jewish and Christian practice in Jerusalem (AD 76–138).	167, 216
Herodotus	Ancient Greek historian, often called the "father of history," sometimes cited for comparison in discussions of ancient historiography (c. 484–425 BC).	113
Hilary of Poitiers	Bishop of Poitiers and staunch defender of Nicene orthodoxy against Arianism in the West, sometimes called the "Athanasius of the West" (c. 310–367).	78, 190, 217
Horton, Michael	American Reformed theologian, professor at Westminster Seminary California, and author of numerous works of systematic and popular theology (b. 1964).	15, 81, 134, 139
Hus	Jan Hus, Bohemian priest and reformer who preached against church corruption and was burned at the stake as a heretic, anticipating the later Protestant Reformation (c. 1369–1415).	200, 218
Ibas of Edessa	Bishop of Edessa associated with the Nestorian controversy; his letter to Maris was a point of dispute in later Christological debates (d. 457).	206
Ignatius	Bishop of Antioch and early Christian martyr whose letters, written en route to his execution in Rome, are key early witnesses to church order and doctrine (c. 35–108).	92, 154, 197, 199, 216
Irenaeus	Bishop of Lyons and influential theologian whose	7, 15, 25, 28, 60, 61, 64, 76,

Name	Description	Page References
	Against Heresies systematically refuted Gnosticism and articulated early orthodox doctrine (c. 130–202).	88, 96, 99, 100, 104, 127, 146, 155, 164, 168, 174, 181, 185, 195, 197, 216
Irene	Byzantine empress who convened the Second Council of Nicaea (787), restoring the veneration of icons after the first period of iconoclasm (c. 752–803).	208
Jerome	Biblical scholar and translator of the Latin Vulgate, the standard Bible translation of the Western church for over a millennium (c. 347–420).	43, 188, 200, 217
Jesus	Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God; his person and saving work form the central subject of Christian doctrine (biblical, c. 4 BC–AD 30/33).	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53,
		54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 67, 80, 86, 87, 88, 91, 92, 94, 97, 99, 101, 103, 110, 113, 118, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 139, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 150, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 164, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 183, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 198, 200, 205, 208, 210, 213
Justinian I	Byzantine emperor known for codifying Roman law (the Corpus Juris Civilis) and for convening the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 (483–565).	206, 217
Kennedy, D. James	American Presbyterian pastor, apologist, and founder of Evangelism Explosion, longtime pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church (1930–2007).	136, 139
Ladd, George Eldon	American evangelical New Testament scholar known for his work on the kingdom of God and New Testament theology (1911–1982).	171
Leo	Pope Leo I (“Leo the Great”), whose Tome articulated the two-natures Christology adopted at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 (c. 400–461).	191, 199, 205, 217
Lewis, C. S.	British scholar, novelist, and Christian apologist, author of Mere Christianity and The Chronicles of Narnia (1898–1963).	15, 62, 94, 108, 119, 175
Lombard, Peter	Medieval theologian whose Sentences became the standard textbook of theology in medieval universities for centuries (c. 1096–1160).	218
Luther, Martin	German Augustinian friar whose Ninety-Five Theses (1517) sparked the Protestant Reformation and whose teaching on justification by faith reshaped Western Christianity (1483–1546).	130, 133, 135, 150, 183, 198, 200
Machen, Gresham	American Presbyterian scholar and founder of Westminster Theological Seminary, a leading defender of theological conservatism against liberalism in the early twentieth century (1881–1937).	60
Marcian	Byzantine emperor who convened the Council of Chalcedon (451), which defined the two natures of Christ (c. 392–457).	205
Marcion	Second-century heretic who rejected the Old Testament and taught that the God of the Old Testament differed from the God revealed in Christ; his teaching prompted	184, 192

Name	Description	Page References
	the early church to clarify the biblical canon (c. 85–160).	
Mary	The mother of Jesus, whose role in the incarnation is central to Christological and Mariological discussion in the early church (biblical).	11, 59, 80, 100, 189, 204, 208
Maximus the Confessor	Byzantine monk and theologian who defended the doctrine that Christ has two wills (dyothelitism) against monothelitism, for which he suffered mutilation and exile (c. 580–662).	217
Melito of Sardis	Bishop of Sardis and early Christian apologist, author of an important early Paschal homily (d. c. 180).	216
Moltmann, Jürgen	German Reformed theologian known for his Theology of Hope and his work on the doctrine of the Trinity and divine suffering (1926–2024).	171
Moses	Biblical leader and prophet who led Israel out of Egypt and mediated the giving of the Law at Sinai (biblical).	7, 24, 39, 53, 116, 144
Nero	Roman emperor traditionally associated with the first major state persecution of Christians in Rome, including, by tradition, the deaths of Peter and Paul (AD 37–68).	158, 199
Nestorius	Archbishop of Constantinople whose teaching on the two persons of Christ (Nestorianism) was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431 (c. 386–450).	189, 204
Nicodemus	A Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin who came to Jesus by night (John 3) and later assisted in his burial (biblical).	6, 7
Noah	Biblical patriarch who built the ark and survived the flood; a type of salvation through judgment in later Christian typology (biblical).	41, 143, 144
Origen	Alexandrian theologian and biblical scholar, one of the most prolific and influential (though later controversial) writers of the early church (c. 184–253).	72, 146, 158, 175, 216
Orr, James	Scottish theologian and apologist known for his defense of orthodox Christianity against theological liberalism, contributor to The Fundamentals (1844–1913).	27
Owen, John	English Puritan theologian and pastor known for his extensive writings on the mortification of sin, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and Reformed soteriology (1616–1683).	81, 174
Packer, J. I.	British-Canadian Anglican theologian and author of Knowing God, a leading figure in twentieth-century evangelicalism (1926–2020).	37, 62, 81, 93, 94, 108, 119, 134
Palamas, Gregory	Byzantine monk and theologian, defender of hesychasm and the theological distinction between God's essence and energies (1296–1359).	201
Papias	Bishop of Hierapolis and early Christian writer whose now-fragmentary work preserved traditions about the origins of the Gospels (c. 60–130).	216
Paul	Apostle to the Gentiles whose missionary journeys and	7, 15, 18, 21, 22, 24, 29, 30,

Name	Description	Page References
	epistles form a large portion of the New Testament and much of the doctrinal foundation of Christian theology (biblical, d. c. 64/67).	34, 61, 73, 74, 76, 84, 86, 87, 88, 92, 93, 99, 101, 102, 103, 114, 116, 118, 119, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 157, 158, 166, 169, 172, 173, 177, 195, 199
Peter	Apostle and leader among the Twelve, traditionally regarded as the first bishop of Rome (biblical, d. c. 64/68).	20, 23, 28, 30, 32, 51, 58, 67, 73, 74, 76, 86, 91, 127, 134, 138, 141, 142, 144, 145, 158, 159, 162, 163, 164, 165, 171, 174, 175, 181, 194
Polycarp	Bishop of Smyrna and disciple of the Apostle John, martyred for his faith in the mid-second century (c. 69–155).	42, 52, 158, 197, 199, 216
Pulcheria	Byzantine empress and sister of Theodosius II, a defender of Chalcedonian orthodoxy who helped convene the Council of Chalcedon with her husband Marcian (398–453).	205
Pyrrhus	Patriarch of Constantinople associated with the monothelite controversy over the number of wills in Christ (d. 654).	207
Septimius Severus	Roman emperor whose reign included localized persecution of Christians in North Africa, providing the backdrop for several early martyrdom accounts (145–211).	216
Sergius I	Patriarch of Constantinople and chief architect of monothelitism, the teaching that Christ possessed only one will, which was condemned at the Third Council of Constantinople (d. 638).	207
Schaff, Philip	Nineteenth-century church historian whose multi-volume *History of the Christian Church* remains a foundational scholarly survey of Christian doctrine, development, and historical events. (1819 - 1893)	80, 195, 197, 210, 215
Socrates	Classical Greek philosopher, cited here for comparison rather than as a Christian figure (c. 470–399 BC).	97
Spurgeon, C. H.	English Baptist preacher known as the “Prince of Preachers,” pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London (1834–1892).	151
Tatian	Second-century Christian apologist and student of Justin Martyr, best known for compiling the Diatessaron, an early harmony of the four Gospels (c. 120–180).	216
Tertullian	Early Christian writer from Carthage, often called the “father of Latin theology,” who coined much of the Latin vocabulary later used for Trinitarian doctrine (c. 155–220).	40, 56, 83, 84, 86, 88, 89, 91, 93, 133, 165, 182, 184, 186, 187, 216
Theodore of Mopsuestia	Bishop and biblical exegete of the Antiochene school whose Christology influenced, and was later associated with, Nestorianism (c. 350–428).	206
Theodoret of Cyrrhus	Bishop and theologian of the Antiochene school	206

Name	Description	Page References
	involved in the Christological controversies surrounding Nestorius and the Council of Chalcedon (c. 393–458).	
Theodosius I	Roman emperor who made Nicene Christianity the official religion of the empire (Edict of Thessalonica, 380) and convened the Council of Constantinople in 381 (347–395).	68, 203, 204
Theophilus of Antioch	Bishop of Antioch and early Christian apologist, author of To Autolycus — one of the earliest works to use the Greek term for "Trinity" (trias) (d. c. 183–185); referenced at To Autolycus, Book I, Chapter V.	66, 216
Thompson, Francis	English poet best known for "The Hound of Heaven," a poem depicting God's relentless pursuit of the soul (1859–1907).	123
Torrance, Thomas F.	Scottish Reformed theologian known for relating theology and natural science and for his contributions to Trinitarian doctrine (1913–1994).	60
Tozer, A. W.	An American pastor and devotional writer known for his deep emphasis on the holiness of God, inner life of the believer, and the call to authentic Christian worship. (1897 - 1963).	42, 44
Trajan	Roman emperor whose correspondence with Pliny the Younger provides an important early external account of Roman policy toward Christians (53–117).	199, 216
Truman, Harry R.	Thirty-third President of the United States, referenced here likely by way of illustration rather than as a theological figure (1884–1972).	126
Twain, Mark	American author and humorist, referenced here likely for a quotation or illustration rather than as a theological figure (1835–1910).	43
Valerian	Roman emperor whose edicts of 257–258, targeting Christian clergy and property, initiated a severe empire-wide persecution (c. 200–260).	199, 216
Valentinus	Prominent second-century Gnostic teacher whose elaborate cosmological system was a principal target of Irenaeus's Against Heresies (c. 100–160).	185
Wallace, Daniel B.	American New Testament scholar and textual critic, founder of the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (b. 1952).	21, 30, 31
Warfield, B. B.	American Presbyterian theologian and principal of Princeton Theological Seminary; a leading defender of biblical inerrancy within the "Princeton theology" tradition (1851–1921).	23, 34, 88
Wesley, John	English cleric and theologian whose evangelistic ministry gave rise to the Methodist movement (1703–1791).	32, 135, 136
William of Ockham	English Franciscan friar and philosopher known for the principle of parsimony ("Ockham's razor") and his nominalist critique of scholastic realism (c. 1287–1347).	218

Name	Description	Page References
Wright, N. T.	British New Testament scholar and Anglican bishop known for his work on the historical Jesus and Pauline theology within the "New Perspective on Paul" (b. 1948).	62, 94, 135
Wycliffe	John Wycliffe, English theologian and early translator of the Bible into English, later regarded as a forerunner of the Reformation (c. 1330–1384).	200, 218
Xerxes	Persian king mentioned in the book of Esther (traditionally identified with King Ahasuerus), cited here in a biblical-historical context (c. 519–465 BC).	113
Zwingli, Ulrich	Swiss Reformer and leader of the Reformation in Zurich, known for his view of the Lord's Supper as a memorial rather than a real presence (1484–1531).	149, 200

... Return to Index List ...

Index and Glossary
Places and Events

... Return to Index List ...

Name	Description	Page References
Alexandria	Major center of early Christian scholarship in Egypt, home to an influential catechetical school and the episcopal see of figures such as Athanasius, Origen, and Cyril of Alexandria.	39, 60, 158, 187, 189, 202, 204, 216, 217
Asia Minor	Ancient region (roughly modern Turkey) home to many of the New Testament churches and several key sites of the ecumenical councils.	69, 188, 202, 204
Bethlehem	Judean town identified in Scripture as the birthplace of Jesus Christ, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2.	59, 72
Bithynia	Roman province in Asia Minor whose governor, Pliny the Younger, famously corresponded with Emperor Trajan about how to handle Christians.	202
Byzantine Empire	The Eastern Roman Empire, centered on Constantinople, whose emperors convened many of the ecumenical councils and shaped the development of Eastern Christian doctrine and practice.	191
Caesarea (Maritima)	Roman administrative capital of Judea on the Mediterranean coast; home to Eusebius as bishop and a significant early center of Christian scholarship.	2, 31, 49, 88, 153, 189
Carthage	Major North African city and episcopal see of Cyprian and Tertullian, an early center of Latin Christian theology.	88, 145, 216
Constantinople	Capital of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire, founded by Constantine and host to several ecumenical councils; known today as Istanbul.	10, 11, 12, 68, 69, 70, 77, 80, 89, 90, 183, 188, 189, 192, 195, 199, 200, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 217, 218
Corinth	Greek city and site of an early church founded by Paul, recipient of his two New Testament epistles addressing division and disorder in the congregation.	140, 146, 147, 172
Council of Chalcedon	The fourth ecumenical council (451), held in the town of Chalcedon near Constantinople, which defined Christ as one person in two natures (divine and human) against both Nestorianism and Eutychianism. (Merged with the separate “Chalcedon” and “Fourth Ecumenical Council” entries in your list.)	11, 12, 50, 54, 57, 58, 189, 190, 192, 195, 198, 204, 205, 206, 209, 213, 217
Council of Constantinople	The second ecumenical council (381), which affirmed and expanded the Nicene Creed and clarified the divinity of the Holy Spirit against Pneumatomachian teaching; also called the First Council of Constantinople.	10, 11, 12, 40, 68, 69, 80, 188
Council of Ephesus	The third ecumenical council (431), which condemned the teaching of Nestorius and affirmed Mary as	11, 189

Name	Description	Page References
	Theotokos (“God-bearer”).	
Council of Nicaea	The first ecumenical council (325), convened by Constantine, which condemned Arianism and produced the original Nicene Creed affirming the Son's full deity.	2, 7, 9, 12, 68, 89, 148, 187, 188, 191
Council of Trent	Roman Catholic council (1545–1563) convened in response to the Protestant Reformation, defining Catholic doctrine on justification, the sacraments, and the relationship of Scripture and tradition.	200
Crusades	Series of medieval military campaigns, originally launched to reclaim the Holy Land, that deepened the rift between Eastern and Western Christianity and shaped Christian-Muslim relations for centuries. (Merged “Crusade”/“Crusades.”)	200, 218
East	Shorthand for the Eastern, Greek-speaking half of the Christian world, as distinguished from the Latin-speaking West.	200
Eastern	Adjective describing the Greek-speaking, Byzantine tradition of Christianity centered on Constantinople, as distinguished from the Western, Latin tradition centered on Rome.	4, 9, 27, 69, 77, 153, 183, 184, 187, 191, 192, 193, 200, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212
Ecumenical Councils (general references)	Collective, generic references throughout the book to the broader conciliar tradition, as distinct from the individually named councils listed elsewhere in this index. (Merged from the scattered generic mentions “Council,” “Councils,” “councils,” “Ecumenical Councils,” and “ecumenical councils” in your list — flagged here since this is the broadest consolidation in the table; let me know if you'd rather see any of these split back out.)	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 29, 40, 49, 50, 51, 54, 57, 58, 68, 69, 80, 89, 90, 99, 148, 183, 184, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 216, 217, 218
End Times	General term for the eschatological future, the culmination of history at Christ's return. (Merged “End Times”/“end times.”)	5, 166
Ephesus	Prominent city in Asia Minor, home to an early church addressed in the New Testament (including Revelation 2) and the site of the Council of Ephesus in 431.	11, 146, 147, 188, 192, 195, 204, 205, 209, 217
Fifth Ecumenical Council	The Second Council of Constantinople (553), which condemned the “Three Chapters” — writings associated with Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Ibas of Edessa — as tainted by Nestorianism.	206
First Vatican Council	Roman Catholic council (1869–1870) best known for defining the doctrine of papal infallibility.	201
Galatia	Roman province in central Asia Minor, home to the churches addressed in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians on justification by faith.	147
geography	General discussion of biblical or historical geography relevant to the book's subject matter, rather than a single named location.	27, 146
Great Awakenings	Series of Protestant revival movements in Britain and	201

Name	Description	Page References
	America (eighteenth–nineteenth centuries) that renewed emphasis on personal conversion and evangelical preaching.	
Great Schism	The formal split between the Eastern (Orthodox) and Western (Roman Catholic) churches in 1054, rooted in longstanding theological, liturgical, and political differences.	200, 218
Greek East	Shorthand for the Greek-speaking Christian world centered on Constantinople, as distinguished from the Latin West.	199
Heaven	The eternal dwelling place of God and the redeemed, a central theme in Christian eschatology. (Merged "Heaven"/"heaven.")	173, 176
Hell	The place or state of final judgment and separation from God for the unrepentant, discussed alongside Heaven in Christian eschatology.	173
Hippo	North African city where Augustine served as bishop and wrote much of his most influential theological work.	60, 217
Islamic Expansion	The rapid seventh-century spread of Islam across the Middle East and North Africa, which permanently altered the political and religious landscape of the ancient Christian world. (Merged "Islamic expansion"/"rise of Islam.")	200, 217
Istanbul	Modern name of Constantinople, used here to orient readers to the present-day location of the ancient Byzantine capital.	9, 10, 11, 12
Jerusalem	The holy city central to biblical history, the site of Christ's death and resurrection, and later home to early church leadership and events such as the Jerusalem council of Acts 15.	5, 8, 54, 70, 88, 160, 185, 202
Lake Tahoe	Lake on the California–Nevada border. (Flagged: this reads as a modern illustration or personal anecdote rather than a historical or biblical site — you mentioned you may remove this and the two entries below yourself.)	194, 197
Laodicea	City in Asia Minor, seat of Bishop Apollinaris and home to one of the seven churches addressed in Revelation 3.	188
Lyons	City in Gaul (modern France) where Irenaeus served as bishop and wrote his influential Against Heresies.	28, 60, 61, 146, 185, 195, 216
Mount St. Helens	Volcanic mountain in Washington State. (Flagged: this reads as a modern illustration rather than a historical or biblical site — you mentioned you may remove this and the two related entries yourself.)	126
Nazareth	Galilean town where Jesus grew up, giving rise to the title "Jesus of Nazareth."	28, 50, 52, 54
New Heaven and New Earth	The renewed creation described in Revelation 21, representing the culmination of God's redemptive plan. (Merged "new heaven"/"new earth.")	174

Name	Description	Page References
Oregon	U.S. state referenced alongside the Mount St. Helens entry above, likely part of the same illustrative example. (Flagged as a modern reference — see note above.)	126
Persian Wars	Series of fifth-century-BC conflicts between the Greek city-states and the Persian Empire, cited here for historical-illustrative comparison.	113
Pope	The Bishop of Rome, whose office developed increasing authority in the Western church over the centuries covered in this book.	69, 200
Qumran	Site near the Dead Sea where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, providing important background for Second Temple Jewish eschatological expectation.	166
Robber Council	Derisive nickname (“Latrocinium”) for the Second Council of Ephesus (449), a council later repudiated as illegitimate for its irregular procedures and its support of Eutyches.	205
Rome	Capital of the Roman Empire and, in the Christian era, the episcopal see associated with the growing authority of the papacy in the Western church.	69, 70, 158, 183, 184, 186, 199, 200, 203, 205, 207, 210, 216
schism	General term for a formal division within the church, used at points in the book distinct from the specific 1054 Great Schism entry above.	183, 204
Seven Ecumenical Councils	The traditional collection of seven councils, from the Council of Nicaea (325) through the Second Council of Nicaea (787), recognized as authoritative in Eastern Orthodox tradition.	9, 197, 198
Seventh Ecumenical Council	The Second Council of Nicaea (787), which restored the veneration of icons after the first period of Byzantine iconoclasm.	208
Sinai	Mountain in the wilderness where God gave the Law to Moses, foundational to the Old Testament covenant.	40, 41
Sixth Ecumenical Council	The Third Council of Constantinople (680–681), which condemned monothelitism and affirmed that Christ possesses two wills, divine and human. (Merged with the separate “Third Council of Constantinople” entry in your list.)	12, 207
Tunisia	Modern country corresponding to the region of ancient Carthage, used here to orient readers to the present-day location of that early Christian center.	88
Turkey	Modern nation occupying most of the territory of ancient Asia Minor, home to numerous early Christian sites and council venues referenced in this book.	9, 10, 11, 12, 69, 202, 204
Western	Adjective describing the Latin-speaking tradition of Christianity centered on Rome, as distinguished from the Greek-speaking Eastern tradition.	9, 65, 69, 77, 183, 200, 203, 206, 207, 210, 211, 212, 217, 218

... Return to Index List ...

Index and Glossary
Greek Terms and Glosses

... Return to Index List ...

There are hyperlinks on each Greek word in column two. Clicking on the Greek word will bring up a webpage in the ***Blue Letter Bible*** website that presents that word with a great deal of additional information on the word as well as a concordance listing of all the places the word is found in the Greek New Testament. Those words not found in the New Testament (such as *ὁμοιούσιος*) have links to the LSJ wiki website which cites Lampe's Patristic Greek Lexicon as the source for those word definitions.

Transliterated Word	Greek Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
Abba	ἀββᾶ	"Transliteration of the Aramaic word for **'father'** in an intimate, personal sense — closer to '**my father'** or even '**dear father.'**"	45
adelphoi	ἀδελφοί	"Brothers"; used for fellow believers in the faith.	145
aiōnios	αἰώνιος	"Eternal" or "everlasting"; describes unending duration, often of life or judgment.	166
anastasis	ἀνάστασις	"Resurrection"; a rising up, especially from the dead.	166
anomia	ἀνομία	"Lawlessness"; a state of being without law or in violation of it.	112, 119
apokalypsis	ἀποκάλυψις	"Revelation"; an unveiling or disclosure of what was hidden.	19, 20
apolytrosis	ἀπολύτρωσις	"Redemption"; release secured by the payment of a ransom.	125
apostoloi	ἀπόστολοι	"Apostles"; those sent out with a commission, especially Christ's messengers.	149
asebeia	ἀσέβεια	"Ungodliness"; a lack of reverence for God.	112, 119
baptizontes	βαπτίζοντες	"Baptizing"; present participle of βαπτίζω, to immerse or wash ritually.	155
bēma	βῆμα	"Judgment seat"; a raised platform used for public speaking or judicial rulings.	171, 172
charis	χάρις	"Grace"; God's unmerited favor and kindness.	124, 125
Christos	Χριστός	"Christ" or "Anointed One"; the Messiah.	51, 52
diakonoi	διάκονοι	"Deacons" or "servants"; those who minister to others.	149
didaskaloi	διδάσκαλοι	"Teachers"; those who instruct in doctrine.	149
didaskontes	διδάσκοντες	"Teaching"; present participle of διδάσκω ("to teach").	155
dikaioō	δικαιόω	"To justify"; to declare or make righteous.	125
dokein	δοκεῖν	"To seem" or "to appear"; infinitive of δοκέω.	184
doxa	δόξα	"Glory"; splendor, honor, or radiant presence.	4, 99
eikōn	εἰκών	"Image"; a likeness or representation.	99, 101
ekklēsia	ἐκκλησία	"Church" or "assembly"; those called out and gathered together.	143, 144, 145, 156
episkopoi	ἐπίσκοποι	"Overseers" or "bishops" (plural); those who superintend the church.	149
episkopos	ἐπίσκοπος	"Overseer" or "bishop" (singular).	148
eschatos	ἔσχατος	"Last"; final, farthest, or last in a series.	163, 166

Transliterated Word	Greek Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
eskēnōsen	ἐσκήνωσεν	"He tabernacled" or "dwelt"; aorist of σκηνόω (John 1:14).	144
este	ἐστε	"You are"; second person plural present tense of εἰμί ("to be").	126
este sesōsmenoi	ἐστε σεσωσμένοι	"You have been saved"; phrase from Ephesians 2:8 combining εἰμί with the passive of σῴζω.	126
euangelistai	εὐαγγελισταί	"Evangelists"; those who proclaim the good news.	149
exēgeomai	ἐξηγέομαι	"To explain" or "declare"; to make fully known.	42
exēgēsato	ἐξηγήσατο	"He has declared" or "made known"; aorist of ἐξηγέομαι (John 1:18).	42
gnōsis	γνῶσις	"Knowledge."	185
hagiasmos	ἁγιασμός	"Sanctification"; the process of being made holy.	125
hagioi	ἅγιοι	"Saints" or "holy ones."	145
hamartia	ἁμαρτία	"Sin"; missing the mark of God's standard.	110, 111,
Hamartia (Continued)	ἁμαρτία	112, 113, 114, 116, 118, 119, 120	
harpazō	ἁρπάζω	"To seize" or "catch up"; often associated with the rapture.	169
hēmera kyriou	ἡμέρα κυρίου	"Day of the Lord"; the eschatological day of divine judgment and deliverance.	166
heterodox	ἑτερόδοξος	Holding a different or deviant opinion/doctrine; a term for departure from orthodox teaching. (Patristic term; not found in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	5
ho Paraklētos	ὁ Παράκλητος	"The Comforter," "Advocate," or "Helper"; title for the Holy Spirit.	67
homoiousios	ὁμοιούσιος	"Of similar (not identical) substance"; term at the center of the 4th-century Trinitarian debates. (Patristic term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	10, 202
homoi-ousios	ὁμοι-ούσιος	Hyphenated form emphasizing "similar" (homoi) + "substance" (ousios). (Patristic term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	2
homoousia	ὁμοουσία	"Sameness of substance" (noun form of homoousios). (Patristic term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	50
homoousios	ὁμοούσιος	"Of the same substance"; the Nicene term affirming the Son's full deity with the Father. (Patristic term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	9, 10, 89, 187, 198, 202
homo-ousios	ὁμο-ούσιος	Hyphenated form emphasizing "same" (homo) + "substance" (ousios). (Patristic term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	2
hypostasis	ὑπόστασις	"Substance" or "person"; in Trinitarian theology, a distinct person within the Godhead.	87
icon	εἰκών	"Image"; in later usage, a sacred image used in worship.	101, 191, 192, 208, 209
icons	εἰκόνες	Plural of icon; sacred images used in worship.	12, 99, 191, 198, 208, 209
idolatry	εἰδωλολατρία	"Idol worship"; the worship of images or false gods.	12, 42, 191, 208
kai	καί	"And"; the common Greek conjunction.	149
kainos anthrōpos	καινὸς ἄνθρωπος	"New man"; the renewed identity believers have	97, 99, 102,

Transliterated Word	Greek Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
		in Christ (Eph. 4:24).	103
katallassō	καταλλάσσω	"To reconcile"; to restore to favor.	125
katholikē	καθολική	"Catholic" or "universal"; describing the whole, universal church. (Post-biblical term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	146
kyrios	κύριος	"Lord" (general use); a title of authority.	39
Kyrios	Κύριος	"Lord" (as a divine title for God or Christ).	53
laos theou	λαὸς θεοῦ	"People of God."	145
latreia	λατρεία	"Service" or "worship."	192, 209
logia	λόγια	"Oracles" or "sayings"; divine utterances.	111
Logos	Λόγος	"The Word"; title for Christ as the eternal Word of God (John 1:1).	52, 60, 61, 188
logos	λόγος	"Word," "message," or "reason" (general use).	59
lytroō	λυτρόω	"To redeem"; to release by paying a ransom.	125
mathēteusate	μαθητεύσατε	"Make disciples!"; aorist imperative from the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19).	154
metanoia	μετάνοια	"Repentance"; a change of mind and heart.	132
mia ousia, treis hypostaseis	μία οὐσία, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις	"One substance, three persons"; the classic patristic formula for the Trinity.	87
mystērion	μυστήριον	"Mystery"; a divine truth once hidden, now revealed.	87
naos theou	ναὸς θεοῦ	"Temple of God."	145
nous	νοῦς	"Mind"; the faculty of understanding.	188
oikos theou	οἶκος θεοῦ	"House of God."	145
orthodox	ὀρθόδοξος	Holding right belief; adhering to correct doctrine. (Post-biblical term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	4, 11, 13, 68, 85, 174,
Orthodox (Continued)	ὀρθόδοξος	175, 183, 184, 185, 188, 190, 192, 194, 199, 201, 202, 204, 205, 207, 210, 213	
orthodoxia	ὀρθοδοξία	"Orthodoxy"; right belief or doctrine. (Post-biblical term; not in the NT/BLB lexicon.)	4, 5
orthos	ὀρθός	"Straight" or "correct/right."	4
palaios anthrōpos	παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος	"Old man"; the former, unregenerate self (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22).	97, 99, 102, 103
paraptōma	παράπτωμα	"Trespass" or "transgression."	112, 119
parousia	παρουσία	"Coming," "arrival," or "presence"; often refers to Christ's return.	55, 166, 167, 168
phanerōsis	φανέρωσις	"Manifestation."	20
pherō	φέρω	"To bring" or "carry along"; used of prophets carried along by the Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21).	20
pneuma	πνεῦμα	"Spirit" or "breath."	21, 66, 67, 99
pneuma huiothesias	πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας	"Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15).	67
poimenes	ποιμένες	"Shepherds" or "pastors."	149
poimnion	ποίμνιον	"Flock."	145
poreuthentes	πορευθέντες	"Having gone" or "as you go"; aorist participle from the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19).	155
presbyteroi	πρεσβύτεροι	"Elders" (plural).	149
presbyteros	πρεσβύτερος	"Elder" (singular).	148
prophētai	προφῆται	"Prophets."	149
proskynēsis	προσκύνησις	"Worship" or "veneration"; the act of bowing down (related to the verb προσκυνέω).	192

Transliterated Word	Greek Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
sesōsmenoi	σεσωσμένοι	"Having been saved"; perfect passive participle of σῴζω ("to save").	126
skēnē	σκηνή	"Tent" or "tabernacle."	144, 145
sōma	σῶμα	"Body."	145, 146
sōtēr	σωτήρ	"Savior" (general use).	125
Sōtēr	Σωτήρ	"Savior" (as a divine title).	53
sōtēria	σωτηρία	"Salvation."	123, 125
sōzō	σῴζω	"To save" or "to rescue."	125
synagōgē	συναγωγή	"Synagogue" or "assembly."	144, 145
synteleia tou aiōnos	συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος	"The end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).	166
tetelestai	τετέλεσται	"It is finished"; perfect passive of τελέω, Christ's cry from the cross (John 19:30).	57, 128, 133
theopneustos	θεόπνευστος	"God-breathed"; describes the divine origin of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).	19, 20, 21, 27, 31
theos	θεός	"God" (general use).	39
theotēs	θεότης	"Deity" or "Godhead"; the essential nature of God (Col. 2:9).	84, 86, 87, 88
to pneuma Christou	τὸ πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ	"The Spirit of Christ."	67
to pneuma tēs alētheias	τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας	"The Spirit of truth" (John 14:17).	67
to pneuma to hagion	τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον	"The Holy Spirit."	67
to pneuma tou Theou	τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ	"The Spirit of God."	67
zōē	ζωή	"Life"; often used of spiritual or eternal life.	125, 166

... Return to Index List ...

Index and Glossary
Hebrew Words

Return to Index List

Transliterated Word	Hebrew Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
ʾādām	אָדָם	“Man” or “mankind”; also the proper name Adam.	98
ʾaḥarīt hayyāmim	אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים	“The latter days” or “end of days”; the eschatological future.	166
Adonay	אֲדֹנָי	“Lord” or “Master”; a title of God used in place of the divine name.	38
āvon	עָוֹן	“Iniquity” or “guilt”; moral perversity and its consequence.	111, 119
bêt-YHWH	בֵּית־יְהוָה	“House of YHWH”; the temple as God's dwelling place.	144
dābār	דָּבָר	“Word” or “thing”; a spoken utterance, matter, or event.	20
demuth	דְּמוּת	“Likeness” or “resemblance” (Gen. 1:26).	98
ēdāh	עֵדָה	“Congregation” or “assembly.”	144
ʾEl ʿElyōn	אֵל עֶלְיוֹן	“God Most High”; a divine title emphasizing God's supremacy.	38
ʾEl Shaddai	אֵל שַׁדַּי	“God Almighty”; a divine title emphasizing God's power.	38
ĕlōhîm	אֱלֹהִים	“God” or “gods” (general use); the common Hebrew word for deity.	37
Elohim	אֱלֹהִים	“God” (as a divine title for the God of Israel).	86, 114
Emmanouēl	עִמָּנוּ אֵל	“God with us” (Isa. 7:14); rendered “Immanuel.”	52
ga’al	גָּאַל	“To redeem”; to act as a kinsman-redeemer.	124
gālāh	גָּלָה	“To reveal” or “uncover”; also “to go into exile.”	20
ge’ullāh	גְּאֻלָּה	“Redemption”; the act or right of redeeming.	166
go’el	גֹּאֵל	“Redeemer”; one who redeems (participle of גָּאַל).	124
ḥaṭṭā’āh	חַטָּאָה	“Sin” or “sin offering.”	111, 119
ḥesed	חֶסֶד	“Steadfast love,” “lovingkindness,” or “covenant faithfulness.”	22, 124, 125
kaphar	כָּפַר	“To atone” or “to cover”; to make ritual atonement.	124
ko amar adonay	כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי	“Thus says the Lord”; the classic prophetic messenger formula.	24
Mashiach	מָשִׁיחַ	“Messiah” or “Anointed One.”	51, 52
mishkan	מִשְׁכָּן	“Tabernacle” or “dwelling place.”	144
nābā’	נָבָא	“To prophesy.”	20
nephesh	נֶפֶשׁ	“Soul,” “life,” or “breath”; the living self.	66, 98
padah	פָּדָה	“To redeem” or “ransom.”	124
peša	פֶּשַׁע	“Transgression” or “rebellion.”	112, 119
qāhāl	קָהָל	“Assembly” or “congregation.”	144
qēṣ	קֵץ	“End”; often of the end of an age.	166
raphah	רָפָה/רָפָא	“To heal”; restoration to wholeness.	124
ruach	רוּחַ	“Spirit,” “wind,” or “breath” (general use).	66
Ruach	רוּחַ	“Spirit” (as a divine title, the Spirit of God).	66
rūaḥ bīnāh	רוּחַ בִּינָה	“Spirit of understanding” (Isa. 11:2).	66
rūaḥ daʿat	רוּחַ דַּעַת	“Spirit of knowledge” (Isa. 11:2).	67
rūaḥ ʾĕlōhīm	רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים	“Spirit of God” (Gen. 1:2).	66
rūaḥ ʿētsāh	רוּחַ עֵצָה	“Spirit of counsel” (Isa. 11:2).	66
rūaḥ gᵉvūrāh	רוּחַ גְּבוּרָה	“Spirit of might” (Isa. 11:2).	67
rūaḥ ḥokmāh	רוּחַ חָכְמָה	“Spirit of wisdom” (Isa. 11:2).	66
rūaḥ qodshō	רוּחַ קָדְשׁוֹ	“His Holy Spirit” (Isa. 63:10–11).	66
rūaḥ ṭōvāh	רוּחַ טוֹבָה	“Good Spirit” (Neh. 9:20; Ps. 143:10).	66
rūaḥ YHWH	רוּחַ יְהוָה	“Spirit of the LORD.”	66

Transliterated Word	Hebrew Term	Brief Glossary Definition	Page
rūaḥ yirʾat YHWH	רוּחַ יִרְאַת יְהוָה	“Spirit of the fear of the LORD” (Isa. 11:2).	67
Shalom	שָׁלוֹם	“Peace,” “wholeness,” or “well-being.”	124
Tselem	צֶלֶם	“Image” (Gen. 1:26–27).	98, 114
Y H W H	יְהוָה	The Tetragrammaton, the personal name of God, set apart typographically in the text.	22, 66
yasha	יָשַׁע	“To save” or “deliver.”	124
yeshuah	יְשׁוּעָה	“Salvation” or “deliverance.”	124
YHWH	יְהוָה	The Tetragrammaton; the personal, covenant name of God, traditionally rendered “LORD.”	37, 38, 39, 40, 53, 144, 166

... Return to Index List ...

Scripture Index

... Return to Index List ...

Scripture Index	
Reference	**Page References**
Genesis	
Gen. 1:1	39, 42
Gen. 1:2	64, 65, 67, 70
Gen. 1:26	85, 87, 89, 186
Gen. 1:26–27	96, 97, 99, 100, 105, 114, 129
Gen. 1:26–30	41
Gen. 1:27	95
Gen. 1:31	185
Gen. 2:7	99
Gen. 2:15–17	41
Gen. 2:17	115
Gen. 3	114
Gen. 3:1–7	102, 111, 112, 115
Gen. 3:8–10	114
Gen. 3:8–19	102
Gen. 3:14–19	41
Gen. 3:15	51, 56
Gen. 3:22–24	96
Gen. 6:5	103
Gen. 8:20–22	41
Gen. 9:1–17	41
Gen. 9:6	100, 103
Gen. 12:1–3	41
Gen. 15:1–21	41
Gen. 17:1–14	41
Exodus	
Ex. 3:1–15	53
Ex. 3:14	38
Ex. 3:14–15	39
Ex. 6:2–3	39
Ex. 6:2–7	42
Ex. 6:6	125
Ex. 12:3	147
Ex. 14:13	123
Ex. 18:21	149
Ex. 18:21–22	149, 150, 151
Ex. 19–24	41
Ex. 19:5–6	142, 144
Ex. 20:4–5	192
Ex. 24:3–4	25
Ex. 24:8	152, 154
Ex. 34:6–7	37, 43

Scripture Index	
Reference	**Page References**
Numbers	
Num. 11:16–17	149, 150, 151
Num. 11:25	64, 67, 74, 76
Num. 15:27–30	116, 117
Num. 20:1	145
Num. 25:10–13	41
Deuteronomy	
Deut. 4:15–16	192
Deut. 5	41
Deut. 6:4	37, 40, 42, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 185
Deut. 6:5	101
Deut. 6:6–7	2
Deut. 7:6	144
Deut. 8:3	28
Deut. 9:10	144, 145
Deut. 10:17	39
Deut. 13:1–3	9, 13
Deut. 13:1–4	23, 58
Deut. 13:1–5	182
Deut. 18:18	25
Deut. 29:29	5, 20, 21, 43, 150, 185
Deut. 30:11–14	31
Deut. 32:7	4
Ruth	
Ruth 4:14	125
1 Samuel	
1 Sam. 3:21	20, 21
2 Samuel	
2 Sam. 7:8–16	41
Nehemiah	
Neh. 8:8	8, 31
Job	
Job 19:25–26	134
Job 19:25–27	104, 170
Psalms	
Ps. 2:2	54
Ps. 2:6–9	174
Ps. 2:7	189
Ps. 2:7–8	127
Ps. 8:3–6	96, 99, 100, 103, 105

Scripture Index	
Reference	**Page References**
Ps. 8:4–5	41, 104, 188
Ps. 12:6	184
Ps. 16:2	39
Ps. 16:8–11	175
Ps. 16:10	128, 129
Ps. 16:10–11	173
Ps. 16:11	101, 104, 134
Ps. 17:15	134
Ps. 19:1	185
Ps. 19:1–4	19, 23, 32, 43
Ps. 19:7–8	31
Ps. 19:7–9	32
Ps. 19:7–11	21, 29
Ps. 22:16–18	130
Ps. 22:27	146, 155, 156, 157
Ps. 23:6	145
Ps. 33:6	60, 85, 87
Ps. 40:2	127
Ps. 45:6–7	190, 192
Ps. 51:5	102, 103, 111, 112, 115
Ps. 51:10–12	129, 133
Ps. 51:11	90, 91
Ps. 51:11–12	72
Ps. 73:23–26	133, 135
Ps. 74:2	144
Ps. 90:2	37, 40
Ps. 93–99	40
Ps. 95:1–2	151
Ps. 96:9	42
Ps. 97:6	23
Ps. 97:9	39
Ps. 100:1–2	151
Ps. 100:3	142
Ps. 102:25–27	174, 188
Ps. 103:3	125
Ps. 104:30	64
Ps. 110:1	13, 57, 89, 186
Ps. 116:13	154
Ps. 119:18	8
Ps. 119:89	28, 29, 32, 105, 130, 160
Ps. 119:105	2
Ps. 119:130	21, 31

Scripture Index

Reference	Page References
Ps. 119:160	4, 5, 9, 19, 28
Ps. 130:7–8	133
Ps. 133:1	147
Ps. 139:13–16	97
Ps. 143:10	72, 79
Proverbs	
Prov. 1:7	29
Prov. 2:1–5	8
Prov. 2:6	29
Prov. 8:22–31	60
Prov. 9:10	29
Prov. 11:14	151
Prov. 14:12	127
Prov. 17:3	184
Prov. 20:27	23
Prov. 27:17	150
Prov. 30:5–6	182
Ecclesiastes	
Eccl. 7:20	103
Eccl. 7:29	99, 100, 102
Eccl. 12:7	133, 173, 175
Eccl. 12:13	97
Eccl. 12:14	171
Isaiah	
Isa. 2:2–3	155, 156
Isa. 2:2–4	164, 165, 166, 168, 175
Isa. 6	40
Isa. 6:1–5	42
Isa. 6:3	40
Isa. 7:14	55, 128, 188, 189, 190, 192
Isa. 8:20	2, 4, 5, 9, 23, 182
Isa. 9:6	13, 58, 89, 129, 188, 189
Isa. 9:6–7	51
Isa. 11:1–10	174
Isa. 11:2	65, 67, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78
Isa. 12:2	125
Isa. 25:8	134
Isa. 25:8–9	104
Isa. 26:19	133, 170
Isa. 26:20–21	169
Isa. 32:15–17	129
Isa. 34:16	8
Isa. 40:8	28, 32, 185
Isa. 40:10	168
Isa. 40:28	37, 39, 43
Isa. 40:31	175
Isa. 41:10	42
Isa. 42:8	39
Isa. 43:1–4	103
Isa. 43:7	96, 97, 101
Isa. 43:10	42
Isa. 43:20–21	142, 144, 146, 155, 156, 157
Isa. 45:18	185
Isa. 45:22	58, 122
Isa. 46:10	128, 135
Isa. 48:10	184
Isa. 48:16	60, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 186
Isa. 52:7	149, 152, 153
Isa. 52:10	123
Isa. 53:3–4	190
Isa. 53:3–5	13, 58, 188
Isa. 53:4–5	128, 154
Isa. 53:4–6	55, 56, 57, 104, 105, 123
Isa. 53:5–6	130
Isa. 53:6	111, 112, 115, 122
Isa. 53:10	127
Isa. 53:10–12	57
Isa. 53:11	58, 129, 133
Isa. 55:6–7	127, 133
Isa. 55:8–9	43, 150
Isa. 55:10–11	43
Isa. 56:7	147, 150, 151
Isa. 59:2	114, 115
Isa. 59:16	123
Isa. 61:1	54, 127, 186
Isa. 63:10–11	67, 78, 79
Isa. 63:16	90, 91
Isa. 65:17	165
Isa. 65:17–19	134, 168, 174, 175
Isa. 66:15–16	171
Isa. 66:22	174
Isa. 66:22–23	134
Isa. 66:22–24	165, 173
Jeremiah	
Jer. 1:7	20
Jer. 1:7–9	21, 25
Jer. 6:16	2, 4, 9
Jer. 17:9	103, 111, 112, 115
Jer. 23:5–6	58
Jer. 23:28–29	182
Jer. 31:3	128
Jer. 31:31–33	152, 153, 154, 157
Jer. 31:31–34	41
Jer. 31:33–34	133
Ezekiel	
Ezek. 2:7	25
Ezek. 18:4	122
Ezek. 18:20	117
Ezek. 33:4–5	127
Ezek. 34:11–12	123
Ezek. 34:30–31	142, 145, 146
Ezek. 36–37	66
Ezek. 36:25–27	41, 123, 153
Ezek. 36:26–27	72, 104, 105, 129, 133, 135
Ezek. 36:27	64, 65, 67, 70, 72, 79, 127, 133
Ezek. 37:12–14	170
Ezek. 37:26–28	134, 174
Daniel	
Dan. 2:22	19
Dan. 2:44	164
Dan. 7	52
Dan. 7:9–10	171
Dan. 7:13–14	51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 104, 128, 168, 174, 188
Dan. 7:27	175
Dan. 12:1	169
Dan. 12:1–2	164, 166
Dan. 12:2	170, 173
Dan. 12:2–3	104, 133, 134, 165, 168, 175
Dan. 12:3	123, 135
Hosea	
Hos. 6:2	130
Hos. 11:1	128
Hos. 11:8–9	123
Joel	
Joel 2:28–29	65, 67, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 79, 129
Joel 2:28–32	164, 165, 166, 168
Joel 2:30–31	169
Joel 2:32	122, 133
Joel 3:14–17	165, 168
Amos	
Amos 3:7	21
Jonah	
Jonah 2:6	130
Micah	
Mic. 3:8	67, 74, 76, 78
Mic. 4:1–2	146, 147, 149,

Scripture Index

Reference	Page References
	150, 151, 152, 153, 155, 156, 157
Mic. 4:2	150
Mic. 5:2	51, 54, 55, 188, 189, 190
Mic. 6:8	5, 42, 101, 115
Habakkuk	
Hab. 2:14	168
Hab. 3:17–19	175
Zechariah	
Zech. 9:9	56
Zech. 14:1–5	169
Zech. 14:4–5	168
Zech. 14:9	174
Malachi	
Mal. 2:10	99, 103
Mal. 3:1–2	168
Mal. 3:2–3	184
Mal. 3:6	40, 43, 185
Mal. 3:16–18	171
Mal. 3:17	128
Mal. 4:1–2	166
Matthew	
Matt. 1:18	70
Matt. 1:21–23	54
Matt. 3:16–17	40, 87
Matt. 4:4	29
Matt. 4:4–10	28
Matt. 5:13–20	61
Matt. 5:17	185
Matt. 5:17–18	32
Matt. 5:27–28	117
Matt. 6:9	42
Matt. 6:9–13	44
Matt. 11:25	31
Matt. 12:28	25
Matt. 16:16	51, 54
Matt. 16:18	141, 142, 144, 145, 146
Matt. 16:18–19	149, 150
Matt. 16:24–28	61
Matt. 19:4–6	99
Matt. 19:28	174
Matt. 22:29	28, 29
Matt. 22:37–39	101
Matt. 24:21–31	169
Matt. 24:30–31	165, 166, 168
Matt. 25:31–34	171
Matt. 26:26–28	152, 154
Matt. 28:18–20	155, 156, 157
Matt. 28:19	40, 42, 43, 85, 87, 152, 153, 186
Matt. 28:19–20	42
Mark	
Mark 1:10–11	83
Mark 10:17	122
Luke	
Luke 1:1–4	8, 25
Luke 1:35	189
Luke 1:47	125
Luke 1:68–69	123
Luke 4:18	70
Luke 5:31–32	117
Luke 6:27–38	61
Luke 11:20	25
Luke 15:20–24	103
Luke 16:22–26	173
Luke 19:10	123
Luke 22:19–20	154
Luke 22:20	41
Luke 23:43	133
Luke 24:27	29, 31, 45, 185
Luke 24:39	185
Luke 24:44–45	28, 29
John	
John 1:1	14, 39, 45, 49, 51, 54, 55, 58
John 1:1–2	186
John 1:1–3	14, 60, 85, 89, 188
John 1:1–14	13, 89
John 1:14	18, 23, 32, 56, 59, 96, 97, 104, 105, 128, 129, 144, 185, 188, 189, 190, 192
John 1:18	42, 43
John 3:5–6	72, 129
John 3:5–8	67
John 3:16	6, 7, 8
John 3:17	125
John 3:18	122
John 3:19–20	103, 127
John 4:23–24	151
John 4:24	37, 40
John 5:22–29	171, 175
John 5:28–29	165, 168, 170
John 6:38–39	127
John 6:40	134
John 6:44	116, 133
John 6:53–56	154
John 7:17	31
John 8:34	102, 117
John 8:58	42
John 9:41	117
John 10:35	28, 29
John 11:25–26	104
John 12:21	53
John 13:31–35	61
John 14:1–3	169
John 14:2–3	134, 173
John 14:6	58, 91
John 14:6–9	23
John 14:9	37, 42
John 14:9–11	89
John 14:16–17	65, 67, 70, 72, 78, 79, 85, 87, 186
John 14:18–19	175
John 14:26	25, 64, 67, 89
John 15:8–10	101
John 15:26	69, 70, 78
John 16:13	65, 67, 150, 155
John 17:3	135
John 17:5	188
John 17:17	19, 32
John 17:24	128
John 19:30	128, 130, 133
John 20:28	39
Acts	
Acts 1:8	65, 72
Acts 1:9–11	55
Acts 1:10–11	168
Acts 1:16	25
Acts 2:1–4	70
Acts 2:16–17	164, 165, 168, 175
Acts 2:17	67
Acts 2:24	130
Acts 2:32–33	56, 91
Acts 2:38–41	153
Acts 2:41–42	152
Acts 2:42	4, 5
Acts 2:42–47	142, 144, 145, 155, 156, 157
Acts 2:46–47	146, 147, 151
Acts 4:12	122
Acts 5:3–4	70, 78
Acts 14:16–17	23
Acts 14:23	149, 150, 151
Acts 15:6	9
Acts 15:6–11	184
Acts 17	22
Acts 17:11	2, 8, 9, 29, 31, 182

Scripture Index	
Reference	Page References
Acts 17:22–31	23, 32
Acts 17:24–26	99
Acts 20:28	151
Romans	
Rom. 1:3–4	51
Rom. 1:17	20, 21
Rom. 1:19–20	19, 23, 32, 43
Rom. 1:21	114
Rom. 1:21–24	115
Rom. 2:12	117
Rom. 2:14–15	23
Rom. 3:21–26	42
Rom. 3:23	103, 111, 112, 115, 117
Rom. 3:23–24	127
Rom. 4:25	130
Rom. 5	
Rom. 5:1	133
Rom. 5:1–2	56
Rom. 5:8	42, 116, 123
Rom. 5:10	123, 125
Rom. 5:12	96, 102, 105, 109, 111, 112, 115
Rom. 5:13	116, 117
Rom. 5:18–19	57, 129
Rom. 5:19	128
Rom. 6:3–4	153
Rom. 6:4	58
Rom. 6:6	116
Rom. 6:12	114
Rom. 6:16	114
Rom. 7:18	103
Rom. 8:1	133, 171
Rom. 8:9–11	65, 70, 129
Rom. 8:9–14	79
Rom. 8:9–16	72
Rom. 8:11	63, 64, 170
Rom. 8:14–16	67
Rom. 8:14–17	90, 91
Rom. 8:18–23	168, 174
Rom. 8:20–22	115
Rom. 8:23	134
Rom. 8:23–25	175
Rom. 8:28	42
Rom. 8:29	97, 99, 100
Rom. 8:29–30	103, 104, 123, 128, 135
Rom. 8:30	104
Rom. 9:19–21	43
Rom. 10:9–10	91, 122, 130, 152

Scripture Index	
Reference	Page References
Rom. 12:4–5	146
Rom. 12:6–8	73, 74, 76
Rom. 14:1–5	150
Rom. 14:10	171
Rom. 14:10–12	171
Rom. 15:4	29, 32
Rom. 16:5	147
1 Corinthians	
1 Cor. 1:2	146, 147
1 Cor. 2:10–12	43
1 Cor. 2:10–13	19
1 Cor. 2:12–13	25, 32
1 Cor. 3:11–15	171
1 Cor. 3:13	184
1 Cor. 6:3	171
1 Cor. 7:10–12	25
1 Cor. 8:6	37
1 Cor. 10:31	101
1 Cor. 11:7	99
1 Cor. 11:19	182
1 Cor. 11:23–26	152, 154
1 Cor. 12:4–7	64
1 Cor. 12:4–11	73, 74, 76, 78, 150
1 Cor. 12:7	20, 21
1 Cor. 12:12–13	146
1 Cor. 12:13	153
1 Cor. 12:27–31	76
1 Cor. 14:40	151
1 Cor. 15:3	4
1 Cor. 15:3–4	5, 57, 130
1 Cor. 15:14	130
1 Cor. 15:20–26	175
1 Cor. 15:22	102
1 Cor. 15:23–26	168
1 Cor. 15:24–25	174
1 Cor. 15:49	99, 100
1 Cor. 15:51–52	165, 166, 168
1 Cor. 15:51–53	104, 170
1 Cor. 15:52–53	134
1 Cor. 15:58	175
2 Corinthians	
2 Cor. 3:18	100, 103, 104, 135
2 Cor. 4:4	129
2 Cor. 4:16	133
2 Cor. 5:6–8	173
2 Cor. 5:10	171
2 Cor. 5:17	96, 97, 105, 116
2 Cor. 5:17–18	123
2 Cor. 13:14	85, 87, 89, 91,

Scripture Index	
Reference	Page References
	186
Galatians	
Gal. 3:27–28	150
Gal. 4:4–5	128
Gal. 4:6	67
Gal. 5:3	132
Gal. 5:16	116
Gal. 5:16–18	79
Gal. 5:22–23	72
Gal. 5:22–25	129
Ephesians	
Eph. 1	42
Eph. 1:4–5	128
Eph. 1:7	125, 127
Eph. 2:1	111, 112, 114, 115
Eph. 2:1–3	102
Eph. 2:1–5	127
Eph. 2:4–5	123
Eph. 2:8	126
Eph. 2:8–9	121, 125
Eph. 2:10	42, 99, 101
Eph. 2:18	90
Eph. 2:19–22	142, 145, 157
Eph. 3:3–5	21
Eph. 4	73, 74
Eph. 4:4–6	5, 146, 184
Eph. 4:6	35, 37
Eph. 4:7–13	73, 74, 150
Eph. 4:11	73
Eph. 4:11–12	149, 150
Eph. 4:11–13	144
Eph. 4:12	73
Eph. 4:15–16	146
Eph. 4:22–24	99, 103
Eph. 4:24	116
Eph. 5:18	79, 156
Eph. 5:18–19	151, 155, 156
Eph. 5:18–20	29
Philippians	
Phil. 1:6	129, 133
Phil. 1:23	133
Phil. 2:5–7	60, 190
Phil. 2:5–8	188
Phil. 2:5–11	13, 55
Phil. 2:6–8	128
Phil. 2:12–13	133
Phil. 3:20–21	134
Colossians	
Col. 1:15	104, 129, 192
Col. 1:15–17	89, 188

Scripture Index

Reference	Page References
Col. 1:15–20	104
Col. 1:18	146
Col. 1:21	114, 115
Col. 2:2–3	87
Col. 2:9	13, 36, 58, 86, 87, 88, 89, 92, 189, 190
Col. 3:1–4	58
Col. 3:10	97, 99, 100, 116
Col. 3:16	29
Col. 3:16–17	151, 156
1 Thessalonians	
1 Thess. 4:15–17	166, 168, 169
1 Thess. 4:17	169
1 Thess. 5:21	23
2 Thessalonians	
2 Thess. 1:8–9	122
1 Timothy	
1 Tim. 2:5–6	185
1 Tim. 3:1–13	149
1 Tim. 3:16	13
1 Tim. 6:3–5	182
1 Tim. 6:20	9
2 Timothy	
2 Tim. 1:13–14	4
2 Tim. 2:11–12	174
2 Tim. 2:15	1, 8
2 Tim. 3:15–17	23, 29, 31, 32
2 Tim. 3:16	17, 19, 20, 21, 185
2 Tim. 3:16–17	2, 8, 19, 21, 25, 32
Titus	
Titus 1:5	147, 149, 151
Titus 1:5–9	149
Titus 2:13	54
Titus 3:4–7	123
Titus 3:5	116, 127, 133
Titus 3:5–6	127
Hebrews	
Heb. 1:1–2	19, 23, 25, 32, 164, 165, 168
Heb. 1:1–3	43, 51, 60
Heb. 1:3	89, 192
Heb. 1:3–8	188
Heb. 2:14	189
Heb. 2:14–17	129, 188
Heb. 4:12	29
Heb. 4:15	55, 190
Heb. 7:25	57
Heb. 10:12–14	128

Scripture Index

Reference	Page References
Heb. 13:7	2
James	
James 1:14–15	111, 112, 115
James 1:17	40, 43
James 4:17	116, 117
1 Peter	
1 Pet. 1:2	127
1 Pet. 1:3–5	58, 175
1 Pet. 1:20	164, 165
1 Pet. 2:9–10	142, 144, 145
1 Pet. 3:15	181
1 Pet. 4:10–11	73, 74, 76
2 Peter	
2 Pet. 1:20–21	19, 21, 25, 29, 32
2 Pet. 1:21	20, 24, 67
2 Pet. 2:4	171
2 Pet. 3:10–13	174
2 Pet. 3:13	134
2 Pet. 3:15–16	31
1 John	
1 John 1:1–3	185
1 John 1:1–5	60
1 John 1:8	115
1 John 2:1	55
1 John 4:1	23
1 John 4:1–3	58
1 John 4:2	60, 188, 192
Jude	
Jude 3–4	58, 182
Jude 6	171
Jude 20–21	90
Revelation	
Rev. 1:1	21
Rev. 1:1–3	164
Rev. 5:9–10	56
Rev. 7:13–14	169
Rev. 14:13	133
Rev. 19:11–16	57, 168
Rev. 20:1–6	174
Rev. 20:11–15	165, 166, 171
Rev. 20:12–13	170
Rev. 21:1–5	165, 168, 174, 175
Rev. 21:1–8	173
Rev. 21:3	135
Rev. 21:3–4	104, 134
Rev. 21:3–5	96
Rev. 21:5	105
Rev. 22:3–5	134
Rev. 22:17	64, 70

Appendix E
Recommended Reading

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Youth / Beginner Level

- **Basic Christianity — John Stott;** A classic explanation of who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him.
- **Christian History Made Easy — Timothy Paul Jones;** A friendly, engaging introduction to major events, people, and controversies in early Christianity.
- **Evangelism Explosion — D. James Kennedy;** A practical, easy-to-grasp guide to sharing the gospel using the two diagnostic questions.
- **Forgotten God — Francis Chan;** A clear, accessible call to rediscover the Holy Spirit's presence and power in the Christian life.
- **Heaven — Randy Alcorn;** A warm, imaginative, Scripture-saturated look at the believer's eternal home.
- **How We Got the Bible — Neil Lightfoot;** A simple, accessible explanation of canon, manuscripts, and transmission.
- **Keep in Step with the Spirit — J. I. Packer;** A balanced, pastoral exploration of the Spirit's work in sanctification and Christian living.
- **Know the Creeds and Councils — Justin Holcomb;** A short, clear guide to major creeds, councils, and heresies of the early church.
- **Know What You Believe — Paul Little;** A friendly, straightforward introduction to the major doctrines of the Christian faith.
- **Know Why You Believe — Paul Little;** A classic introduction to why Christians trust the Bible as God's revelation.
- **Knowing God — J. I. Packer;** A devotional yet doctrinal exploration of the character and nature of God.
- **Mere Christianity — C. S. Lewis;** A clear, accessible exploration of human nature, morality, and the Christian vision of what we were made to be.
- **More Than a Carpenter — Josh McDowell;** A concise, accessible defense of Jesus' identity and the trustworthiness of Scripture.
- **Taking God at His Word — Kevin DeYoung;** A concise, readable defense of the authority, clarity, necessity, and sufficiency of Scripture.
- **The Biggest Story — Kevin DeYoung;** A beautifully illustrated overview of the Bible's story, helping young readers see how God rescues His people and restores His world.
- **The Case for Christ — Lee Strobel;** A journalistic investigation into the historical reliability of Jesus and the New Testament.
- **The Case for Heaven — Lee Strobel;** A story-driven exploration of the Christian hope of life after death.
- **The Drama of Scripture — Craig Bartholomew & Michael Goheen;** A readable narrative of the Bible's storyline showing its unity.
- **The End Times Made Easy — Ken Gentry;** A simple introduction to major eschatological themes and viewpoints.
- **The Garden, the Curtain, and the Cross — Carl Laferton;** A simple, engaging explanation of why Jesus came, how sin separates us, and how Christ brings us back to God.

- **The Holiness of God — R. C. Sproul;** A compelling introduction to God's holiness and why sin is so serious.
- **The Mystery of the Holy Spirit — R. C. Sproul;** A readable theological overview of the Spirit's identity, work, and role in redemption.
- **The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict — Josh McDowell;** Lay-friendly apologetic material supporting the reliability of Scripture.
- **The Ology — Marty Machowski;** A kid-friendly systematic theology explaining creation, sin, salvation, and new creation in simple language.
- **The Ology: Ancient Truths Ever New — Marty Machowski;** A beautifully illustrated introduction to Christian doctrine for older children and teens.
- **The Screwtape Letters — C. S. Lewis;** A creative look at temptation, sin, and spiritual formation that helps readers understand the human condition.
- **The Story of the Bible — Larry Stone;** A richly illustrated, accessible overview of how the Bible came to be.
- **What Happens After I Die? — Michael Allen Rogers;** A friendly guide to the intermediate state, resurrection, judgment, and eternal life.
- **Who Is Jesus? — Greg Gilbert;** A clear and friendly introduction to who Jesus is, why He matters, and how He saves.
- **Who Is the Holy Spirit? — Sinclair Ferguson;** A concise introduction to the person and ministry of the Spirit for everyday believers.

Advanced / Scholar Level

- **Against Heresies — Irenaeus;** The foundational refutation of Gnosticism and a primary source for second-century theology.
- **Canon Revisited — Michael Kruger;** A rigorous defense of the canon's authenticity, authority, and self-attestation.
- **Christian Theology — Millard Erickson;** A comprehensive, evangelical systematic theology written in clear prose.
- **Christology — Gerald O'Collins;** A comprehensive academic survey of Christology across Scripture and church history.
- **City of God — Augustine;** A sweeping theological vision of humanity, history, sin, and redemption.
- **Confessions — Augustine;** A profound exploration of the restless human heart, sin, grace, and the search for God.
- **Doctrine of Sin — I. Howard Marshall;** A concise but scholarly overview of biblical terminology and theological development.
- **Early Christian Doctrines — J. N. D. Kelly;** A definitive scholarly survey of doctrinal development in the first five centuries.
- **Formation of Christian Doctrine — John Behr;** A rigorous academic treatment of how early Christian theology emerged through controversy.
- **God's Empowering Presence — Gordon Fee;** A major academic treatment of the Spirit's role in Pauline theology.
- **Hamartiology in the New Testament — Colin Gunton;** Explores sin as relational rupture and examines key Greek terms.

- **Institutes of the Christian Religion — John Calvin;** A foundational theological work exploring God, Scripture, salvation, and the Christian life.
- **Jesus and the God of Israel — Richard Bauckham;** A scholarly defense of Jesus' inclusion in the divine identity of Israel's God.
- **Meaning of the Millennium — Robert G. Clouse, ed.;** A scholarly presentation of four major millennial views.
- **Paul and the Power of Sin — James D. G. Dunn;** A detailed study of Paul's understanding of sin as a dominating power.
- **Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics Vol. 3 — Richard Muller;** The definitive historical-theological study of classical theism in the Reformed tradition.
- **Redemption Accomplished and Applied — John Murray;** A precise treatment of the order of salvation.
- **Rediscovering the Holy Spirit — Michael Horton;** A systematic and historical examination of the Spirit's work in creation, redemption, and the church.
- **Reformed Dogmatics Vol. 2 — Herman Bavinck;** A monumental, rigorous treatment of the doctrine of God from a Reformed perspective.
- **Reordered Love, Reordered Lives — David Naugle;** A philosophical and theological study of the human heart, desire, and the restoration of the image.
- **Scripture and Truth — Carson & Woodbridge;** Scholarly essays addressing revelation, inspiration, and hermeneutics.
- **Seven Ecumenical Councils — Philip Schaff, ed.;** The standard English collection of council documents.
- **Sin: A History — Gary A. Anderson;** A scholarly exploration of how Jewish and Christian traditions have understood sin.
- **Summa Theologiae (Prima Pars) — Thomas Aquinas;** The foundational medieval treatment of God's existence, nature, and attributes.
- **Systematic Theology — Louis Berkhof;** A classic, concise, and highly structured presentation of God's being and attributes.
- **Systematic Theology — Wayne Grudem;** A widely used evangelical theology with extensive Scripture references.
- **The Bible and the Future — Anthony Hoekema;** A standard academic treatment of eschatology from an amillennial perspective.
- **The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy;** The modern benchmark articulation of inerrancy, with explanatory articles.
- **The Christian Faith — Michael Horton;** A modern, academically rigorous systematic theology rooted in Reformed tradition.
- **The Christological Controversy — Richard Norris, ed.;** Primary sources from major Christological debates with scholarly commentary.
- **The Coming of the Kingdom — Herman Ridderbos;** A rigorous study foundational for understanding the already/not-yet structure of biblical eschatology.
- **The Cross of Christ — John Stott;** A comprehensive study of the atonement—sacrifice, substitution, victory, and reconciliation.
- **The Deep Things of God — Fred Sanders;** A modern, scholarly yet readable exploration of Trinitarian theology.
- **The Doctrine of God — John Frame;** Philosophically rich, biblically grounded, and exceptionally clear.
- **The Doctrine of the Word of God — John Frame;** A comprehensive, philosophical, and theological exploration of Scripture.

- **The Holy Spirit — John Owen;** A classic Puritan study of the Spirit's ministry in illumination, regeneration, and sanctification.
- **The Holy Spirit — Sinclair Ferguson;** A comprehensive theological study of the Spirit's person and work across Scripture and history.
- **The Human Condition — Reinhold Niebuhr;** A penetrating analysis of human dignity and human sinfulness in the modern world.
- **The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible — B. B. Warfield;** The definitive historical and theological treatment of inspiration.
- **The Nature of Sin — G. C. Berkouwer;** A rigorous theological study of sin's essence, effects, and relationship to human freedom.
- **The Orthodox Way — Kallistos Ware;** A classic introduction to Eastern Orthodox spirituality and theology.
- **The Person of Christ — Donald Macleod;** A rigorous theological study of Christ's person, natures, and mediatorial work.
- **The Resurrection of the Son of God — N. T. Wright;** A detailed historical and theological analysis of the resurrection accounts.
- **The Return of the King — Vern Poythress;** A theological commentary on Revelation emphasizing symbolism and biblical theology.
- **Theological Anthropology — Marc Cortez;** A modern scholarly treatment of the doctrine of humanity in dialogue with Scripture and tradition.
- **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT) — Gerhard Kittel;** Essential for in-depth study of Greek terms with historical, linguistic, and theological analysis. Ten volumes in the original publication but abridged into one volume by **Geoffrey W. Bromiley**
- **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT) — Botterweck, Ringgren, Fabry;** A multi-volume scholarly lexical-theological set covering Old Testament terms; this is the comprehensive Old Testament counterpart to the TDNT series.
- **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament — Harris, Archer, Waltke;** Authoritative entries on Hebrew terms with LXX equivalents.

Historical & Broader Perspectives

- **The Spirit of Early Christian Thought — Robert Louis Wilken;** Insight into how the early church understood itself and its mission.
- **The Story of Christianity Vol. 1 — Justo González;** Historical context for the development of church structures and practices.
- **The Didache;** A brief window into the worship, leadership, and sacraments of the earliest Christian communities.
- **The Purpose Driven Life — Rick Warren;** A simple introduction to identity, purpose, and the meaning of human life.
- **Desiring God — John Piper;** A readable call to understand humanity's deepest longing: joy in God.

Church Fathers

- **Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL)** A free, user-friendly website containing many collections of Christian writings from the first 1,500 years of church history.

- **Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers** Clean, readable editions of early Christian writings with simple navigation. Perfect for beginners. Website: https://www.ccel.org/fathers

- **Medieval Christian Writers (Aquinas, Anselm, Bernard, Bonaventure, etc.)** Curated medieval Christian writings available in readable formats.

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Appendix F
About the Author

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...

Paul Lorenzen holds a **Bachelor of Arts** degree from *Pasadena College* in Pasadena, California, and a **Master of Divinity** degree from *Nazarene Theological Seminary* in Kansas City, Missouri, with a concentration in Biblical Language and Literature. After leaving school, he served a few years in local church pastoral ministry positions then, for personal reasons, left the full time ministry to pursue a career in real estate. During his real estate career, he completed four of the most respected professional designations in the real estate industry:

- **CCIM** — Certified Commercial Investment Member, CCIM Institute, Chicago
- **CPM** — Certified Property Manager, Institute of Real Estate Management, Chicago
- **CSM** — Certified Shopping Center Manager, International Council of Shopping Centers, New York City, NY
- **MAI** — Member of the Appraisal Institute, Chicago

These credentials represent *three separate professional disciplines*: commercial real estate sales, leasing, and development; commercial property management; and commercial real estate appraisal. Mr. Lorenzen is the only person known to have attained all four of these top-tier designations in the history of the profession.

Over the past four decades, he has developed a side vocation of teaching and writing in both real estate and Christian ministry/Biblical studies. He has taught at local, regional, and national levels in real estate including presenting seminars for the National Association of Realtors and the Institute of Real Estate Management. He has taught real estate courses and New Testament Greek in both state community college and Bible college settings. Several of his articles have been published in professional journals in both real estate and Christian ministry. Before starting this "Made Simple" series, he had published one prior full length book: ***Soteriology in the Apostolic Fathers***, published by Alpha Chi Publishing, Nampa, Idaho.

He is currently semi-retired, teaching on-line real estate brokerage and appraisal courses for the McKissock Real Estate School in Pennsylvania. He is an AQB Certified USPAP Instructor with The Appraisal Foundation in Washington, D.C., authorized to teach the ***Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice*** at the national level.

He has been married to his beautiful wife, Joyce, for 58 years, has one son and four grandchildren and resides in Nampa, Idaho.

... Return to Table of Appendix Index ...