Theology Proper

2019

† Blessed is our God always, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. ... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Through the prayers of our holy Ancestors, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen. Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

† Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times).

† Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

“Ὁ θεός, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ.” — Luke 18:13

“Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.” — Luke 23:42

“David ascended in the Ascent of Olives, ascending and weeping, with head covered, he went barefoot; and each person with him covered his head, so they went up, ascending and weeping.” — 2 Samuel 15:30

“The sowers will reap in joy. The ones going, went and wept, casting their seeds; yet, the ones coming, will come in exultation, carrying their sheaves. — Psalm 125:5-6 LXX [126:5-6][[1]](#footnote-1)

### Introduction

God Himself

Two issues immediately come into view:

One is that in discussing God, we must immediately introduce the topic of Trinity, which no one understands: so complex is the mystery of Godliness[[2]](#footnote-2). Yet Trinitarian passages are inescapable.[[3]](#footnote-3) Still, the heresy of modalism is alive and well in many quarters.

“Indisputably great is the good-worship mystery[[4]](#footnote-4): which was clearly displayed in flesh; which defended righteousness in Spirit; which was witnessed by messengers; which was proclaimed internationally; which was believed cosmically; which was taken up in Glory.” — 1 Timothy 3:16

Another is that the discussion of God must begin with God and not with the Bible; yet, so many systematic theologies commit this blunder, it deserves our careful attention: God is ***The*** object of worship[[5]](#footnote-5), the Bible is not. We must begin with God. Yet, Bibliolatry is anything but a dead topic.

The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets:

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

“…: for, not of will of man, came prophecy when(ever): but, by Spirit Holy, were being carried, spoke from God, men.” — 2 Peter 1:21 a rough translation

“…: for, when prophecy came, not by human will: but, being carried by Holy Spirit, humans, spoke from[[6]](#footnote-6) God.” — 2 Peter 1:21 a smoother attempt

Still, we will make little progress without the Bible:

“Now, these [Bereans] were better begotten than the [people] in Thessaloníki; they welcomed the word with all enthusiasm: daily examining the writings if it[[7]](#footnote-7) might have these things in this way.” — Acts 17:11

Unfortunately, instead of taking a fresh look at the writings the way the Bereans did, all too often we simply parrot some poorly understood lesson learned in childhood without rethinking our own presuppositions. Our unwillingness to reexamine the standard answers, looking for possible errors, is a principal reason why we make no progress in theology. This is why we continue repeating century-old false arguments. This is why we are stuck with, “we’re right, they’re wrong, that settles it”, which some have termed the “we-they siege mentality”. This is why the Church remains splintered into thirty thousand fragments. We can build walls, or we can try to build bridges.

Other contemporary issues loom on the horizon.[[8]](#footnote-8) We will not follow the path of sound theology if we fail to correctly meld all of these issues.

Godhead

As soon as we have introduced the Trinity, the idea surfaces that the Trinity must have a leader. This is not what Godhead[[9]](#footnote-9) means. Godhead means Godhood; it refers to all the attributes, energies, and essences that pertain to God: thus, the Godhead or Godhood is equally shared by all members of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Spirit.

“Therefore, begotten [one], being God’s possessions, we are not indebted or obligated to [any] conception or idea [that] the Divine nature[[10]](#footnote-10) is to be similar to gold, or silver, or stone, [an] engraving of art and [an] immagination of man.” — Acts 17:29

We also claim that the Son and the Spirit proceed from the Father by eternal procession;[[11]](#footnote-11) this most certainly does not mean that the Father somehow creates or energizes the Son and the Spirit: procession is Scriptural language,[[12]](#footnote-12) we don’t necessarily understand it.

The procession of the Son also bears the special name, μονογενὴς,[[13]](#footnote-13) which takes on special technical significance when applied to Christ, since it is applied before He was born, exclusive of the Virgin Mary.

Sound theology begins here, with the study of the Θεῖον, the God-essence.

Paucity

Information about God in general, and the Father in particular seems sparse[[14]](#footnote-14), possibly leading some to extremes in their use of apophatic theology.

Apophatic statements come as no surprise to the mathematician. Many theorems of mathematics defy straightforward or cataphatic proof; such theorems have only been solved by disproving the opposite theorem.

Scientists, as well, are confronted by the tension between apophatic and cataphatic ideas. P = 1 and P = 0, are simply unknown to science, except in certain kinds of rigged game theory: even in flipping a perfectly random coin, it is not impossible for the coin to land on edge.

Early in physics class we were disabused of using the term, proved[[15]](#footnote-15), to describe an experiment; if we wanted to graduate, we learned to substitute the word demonstrated for proved.

So, scientists state their hypotheses in the null form whenever possible: the null hypothesis is then disproved. Failing to disprove the null hypothesis may lead to a calculation of probability: but, never to absolute certainty.

After, many observations of many replications, distributed over various locations; the scientific community may arrive at a consensus and honor a hypothesis with the name theorem, or even, with greater distinction and honor, call it a law: still, no matter how closely P = 1 or P = 0 are approached, there is no arrival at absolute certainty.

The disproval of the null hypothesis is always easiest and best… the apophatic approach is the surest ground in science.

So, we are not especially surprised when apophatic terms crop up in Theology. What does surprise us is the denial of any cataphatic term applied to God: but, it happens.

The ludicrous extreme occurs when a theologian insists on replacing the clearly cataphatic, “God is love,”[[16]](#footnote-16) with the apophatic, “God is not unloving.”

The problem, as so often observed by many, is that human knowledge is like a circle or sphere of light: the larger the circle or sphere grow, the darkness they encompass grows exponentially larger, as square, cube, or even greater exponent. The more we learn, the more we are humbled by what we don’t know. The recent quest for the Higgs Particle has resulted; not in one simple understanding of the physical universe; but, in even greater complexity within the simplicity.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Good theology must balance the unknown, the more apophatic, with the known, the more cataphatic.

Logic

God forbid that we should inject anything as foreign and onerous as logic into the discussion. Generally speaking, though, whenever we encounter a contradiction, we suspect that something might be wrong: so, from logic, the law of contradiction or non-contradiction, whichever you prefer to call it, is still held in fairly high regard, even among theologians.

It is patently absurd to believe that the God of Science and the God of Scripture conflict or contradict; since, the One and Same God is sole author of both Science and Scripture, as well as the possibility of art, beauty, history, music, poetry, and dozens of other things.[[18]](#footnote-18) Conflicts and contradictions can only possibly exist in human ignorance.[[19]](#footnote-19)

You also already know that if a positive is true, its opposite is rarely true. Generally speaking, all cows are quadrupeds (unless, of course, amputation, genetic defect, or graft have altered the animal’s legs); but all quadrupeds are not cows: far from it, even alligators, turtles, and whales are quadrupeds. When both the positive and the opposite (the negative) are true, we call it a definition or an identity… in math we might use the ≡ sign. The contrapositive, on the other hand, is always true: if it’s not a quadruped, its unlikely to be a cow (unless one of the aforementioned defects exists). Again, the opposite or negative of the contrapositive is also, usually untrue.

It is both profound and sublime to note that, “God is love.” It is simply silly to say that love is God. The opposite of a true statement is almost always false. The only way for the absurdity, love is God, to be true, would be for love to say everything about God that there is to say about God: which is patently untrue, and not something we could ever know anyway, even if it could possibly be true. To claim that love subsums all the other things that Scripture desires to say about God, trivializes the whole subject: you decide.

Correct theology demands that we face the problem of a bent and fallen human rationality.

Apophatic Statements

“God is not a man….” — Numbers 23:19; Job 33:12

“… we know Him not….” — Job 36:26

“God is no respecter of persons….” — Acts 10:34

“God is not the author of confusion….” — 1 Corinthians 14:33

“God is not mocked….” — Galatians 6:7

“God is not unrighteous….” — Hebrews 6:10

“… impossible for God to lie….” — Hebrews 6:18

“God is not ashamed….” — Hebrews 11:16

“God’s understanding is infinite….” — Psalm 147:5

“God is eternal[[20]](#footnote-20)….” — Deuteronomy 33:27; Romans 1:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 5:9; 9:14; 1 Peter 5:10

“… unchangeable….” — Hebrews 1:12; 7:24; Malachi 3:6

“… undivided….” — Matthew 12:25

“… invisible….” — Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:15, 16; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27

Cataphatic Statements

“God is a consuming fire….” — Deuteronomy 4:24; 9:3; Hebrews 12:29

“God is a merciful God….” — Deuteronomy 4:31; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Psalm 116:5

“God is One….” — Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Galatians 3:20

“God is a jealous God….” — Deuteronomy 6:15; Nahum 1:2

“God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.” — Deuteronomy 7:21; Joshua 3:10; Job 36:5; Job 37:22; Psalm 46:5; Isaiah 45:14; 1 Corinthians 14:25; Revelation 21:3

“God … goes … before you….” — Deuteronomy 9:3; 20:1, 4; Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 8:10; Zechariah 8:23

“God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible….” — Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 47:7; Daniel 2:47

“God is not among you….” — Deuteronomy 31:17

“God is your refuge….” — Deuteronomy 33:27

“God is my strength and power….” — 2 Samuel 22:33; Habakkuk 3:19

“God is great….” — Job 36:26; Psalm 77:13

“God judges … and is angry….” — Psalm 7:11; 50:6; 75:7

“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever….” — Psalm 45:6; 48:14

“God is our refuge and strength….” — Psalm 46:1; 62:7, 8; 73:26; 94:22

“God is my helper….” — Psalm 54:4

“God is my defense….” — Psalm 59:9, 17

“God is my salvation….” — Psalm 62:7; 68:20; Isaiah 12:2; Jeremiah 3:23

“God is good….” — Psalm 73:1; 100:5

“God is my king….” — Psalm 74:12; 118:27

“God is a sun and shield….” — Psalm 84:11

“God is holy….” — Psalm 99:9

“God does what He pleases….” — Psalm 115:3

“God is righteous….” — Daniel 9:14

“God is able….” — Luke 3:8; Romans 14:4; 2 Corinthians 9:8

“God is true….” — John 3:33; 2 Corinthians 1:18

“God is Spirit….” — John 4:24

“God is glorified….” — John 13:31

“God is my witness….” — Romans 1:9; Philippians 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:5; 1 John 5:9

“God is faithful….” — 1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13

“God is well pleased….” — Hebrews 13:16

“God is light….” — 1 John 1:5; Isaiah 60:19, 20

“God is greater than our heart….” — 1 John 3:20

“God is love….” — 1 John 4:8, 16; Jeremiah 31:3

“God is everlasting….” — Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 41:13; 90:2; 93:2; 106:48; Isaiah 9:6; 26:4; 40:28; 60:19, 20; 63:16; Jeremiah 10:10; Habakkuk 1:12; 3:6; Romans 16:26; 1 Timothy 6:16

“God is our Father….” — Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:1; 32:5, 6; 2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chronicles 28:6; Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 42:1; 63:16; Matthew 5:16, 45, 48; 6:1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 26, 32; 7:11, 21; 10:20, 29, 32, 33; 11:25-27, 50; 13:43; 15:13; 16:17, 27; 18:10, 14, 19, 35; 20:23; 23:9; 24:36; 25:34; 26:29, 39, 42, 53; 28:19; Mark 8:38; 11:25, 26; 13:32; 14:36; Luke 2:49; 6:36; 9:26; 10:21, 22; 11:2, 13; 12:30, 32; 22:29, 42; 23:34, 46; 24:49; John 1:14, 18; 2:16; 3:35; 4:21, 23; 5:17-23, 26, 30, 36, 37, 43, 45; 6:27, 32, 37, 39, 44-46, 57, 65; 8:16, 18, 19, 27-29, 38, 41, 42, 49, 54; 10:15, 17, 18, 25, 29, 30, 32, 36-38; 11:41; 12:26-28, 49, 50; 13:1, 3; 14:2, 6-13, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 31; 15:1, 8-10, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26; 16:3, 10, 15-17, 23, 25-28, 32; 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25; 18:11; 20:17, 21; Acts 1:4, 7; 2:33; Romans 1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 8:6; 15:24; 2 Corinthians 1:2, 3; 6:18; 11:31; Galatians 1:1, 3, 4; 4:6; Ephesians 1:2, 3, 17; 2:18; 3:14; 4:6; 5:20; 6:23; Philippians 1:2; 2:11; 4:20; Colossians 1:2, 3, 12, 19; 2:2; 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 3; 3:11, 13; 2 Thessalonians 1:1, 2; 2:16; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:3; Hebrews 1:5; 12:9; James 1:17, 27; 3:9; 1 Peter 1:2, 3, 17; 2 Peter 1:17; 1 John 1:2, 3; 2:1, 13, 15, 16, 22-24; 3:1; 4:14; 5:7; 2 John 1:3, 4, 9; Jude 1:1; Revelation 1:6; 2:27; 3:5, 21; 14:1

“God is Almighty….” — Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49.25; Exodus 6:3; Numbers 24:4, 16; Ruth 1:20, 21; Job 5:17; 6:4, 14; 8:3, 5; 11:17; 13:3; 15:25; 21:15, 20; 22:3, 17. 23, 25, 26; 23:16; 24:1; 27:2, 10, 11, 13; 29:5; 31:2, 35; 32:8; 33:4; 34:10, 12; 35:13; 37:23; 40:2; Psalm 68:14; 91:1; Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 1:24; 10:5; Joel 1:15; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22

“God is Creator….” — Genesis 1:1, 21, 27; 2:3, 4; 5:1. 2; 6:7; Deuteronomy 4:32; Ezra 6:22; Job 10:8; Psalm 8:6; 89:12; 92:4; 95:5; 102:18; 104:30; 119:73; 148:5; Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 40:26, 28; 41:20; 42:5; 43:1, 7, 15; 45:8, 12, 18; 48:7; 54:16; Jeremiah 31:22; Ezekiel 21:30; 28:13, 15; Malachi 2:10; Mark 8:25; 13:19; 14:58; Luke 13:13; Roman 1:25; Acts 7:48; 17:24; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Ephesians 2:10; 3:9; 4:24; Colossians 1:16; 2:11; 3:10; 1 Timothy 4:3; Hebrews 9:11; 1 Peter 4:19; Revelation 4:11; 10:6

“… is….” — Exodus 3:14; John 4:26; 6:20, 35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12, 18, 24, 28; 9:9; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1, 5; 18:5, 8

Theological Statements

We are impressed with the fact that “the foolishness of God is wiser than men:”[[21]](#footnote-21) for, God, in His wisdom, evidently placed the emphasis on that which is cataphatic; while men value the apophatic more. Still, that which is apophatic requires attention.

Eternal sounds as if it were cataphatic; yet, the prefix means not or without: without time, timeless. We want to think in terms of that which is very old; or that which exists in the linear inconceivable future: which is true enough, as far as it goes. Others, conceive of the eschaton as ever repeating cycles, where we must inevitably face our karma: which cannot possibly be true. Neither of these capture the biblical idea of the eschaton: for the ubiquity of God is fully present now, before time began, and long after time has ceased. We are incapable of considering life and existence without time; yet, the eschaton is fully present at every moment of time. We do not receive a foretaste[[22]](#footnote-22) of the feast to come: for, in the mystery of God, He is completely present in the eternal now. We do not receive God in little pieces: rather, He is totally with us today, as He is already in all our yesterdays, and tomorrows. The progress of time has some sort of meaning; but, it is, at best, a trope of the heavenly reality.[[23]](#footnote-23)

We need to be cautious here: time, though nothing more than a trope of heavenly glory, is, nevertheless, a reality. We believe in the resurrection of the dead.[[24]](#footnote-24) Every one of Paul’s examples exists in time. He says that the new body is spiritual, heavenly, incorruptible, and immortal. The proof rests upon Christ’s resurrection: but, Christ’s resurrected body exists in time… it also passes through walls. So, even throughout the eschaton, time has some sort of spiritual meaning, not merely as natural, earthly, corruptible, and mortal. We do best to leave these things as the mysteries they are: they are far beyond human understanding.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Infinite seems cataphatic, as well. Our perception runs to the very large, bigger than the universe. Do you have a Big God, or a small god?[[26]](#footnote-26) But, infinite means, not measurable, immeasurable. So time, in relationship to God, may exist, it just doesn’t have any quantifiable meaning in relation to God. God cannot be measured in terms of mass, space, time, or any other quantity. His love, mercy, salvation, and more, are equally immeasurable.

Think of dividing or multiplying by zero: the problem with dividing or multiplying by zero is that very large numbers solve the equation; so do very small numbers; as do all the numbers in between: this is the true meaning of infinity. Division by zero has an endless supply of solutions[[27]](#footnote-27), which is why it is forbidden: there is no single correct solution. Yet, if each of these limitless solutions were a place, God would be equally and fully present at all of them. God is the heart of the solution to every place, puzzle, or time….

This is a major difference between Christianity and pantheism; pantheism thinks of God as spread around, distributed in pieces, like butter on toast: Christianity knows that God has no pieces, He is fully present everywhere. Moreover, our concept of space is three dimensional: there is no good reason to limit God to our three dimensional spatial ideas… why not a million dimensions?

Unchangeable… wow. In terms of God’s sense of right and wrong, fair and foul, good and evil: God is the universal moral constant. He cannot change; He cannot lie; He cannot deny Himself. Still, in terms of the created universe, we probably should think of God as dynamic: ever breathing, creating, singing, in ever-increasing new beauty, and endless delight and glory: changeless, yet, everchanging. We believe that God’s creation is complete:[[28]](#footnote-28) yet, we also believe that His providence is unending.

Why does God speak so cataphatically, when the apophatic seems so profound? Because, we are His children: so, He speaks to us in terms that children can understand. We can, however, “get too big for our own britches”; “get too smart for our own good”.

Accurate theology gives due weight to the apophatic and cataphatic evidence before us; without placing undue weight on the theological statements that capture our thinking all too easily.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Judaism

Many look to Judaism for answers. We hear endless prating about a Judeo-Christian ethic: there is no Judeo-Christian ethic. The ethos, logos, and pathos of Christianity all center in Christ, Father, and Spirit: One God. The ethos of Judaism centers in anti-Christos[[30]](#footnote-30): the explicit denial that Christ is God, just as the Father and Spirit are God.

Moreover, much of Judaism is absorbed in mysticism, some of that mysticism is Kabbalah, some Luria, some even Spinoza. While it is fair to say that all Jews are not mystics, not all mystics Kabbalists, not all Kabbalists Lurian, not all Lurians Spinozists: many are. The cold dead Ein Sof of Kabbalah has nothing to do with the living, loving Almighty, Creator, Father of the Bible. YHWH is nothing like Ein Sof.

Judaism is a distinct religion that originated around 516 BC, shortly after the Shəkinah abandoned the Oracle, the Temple and Jerusalem.[[31]](#footnote-31) As Judaism evolved, it became more and more legalistic, finally reducing itself to the defunct state mainly characterized by Pharisaism and Sadduceeism. When the Shəkinah returned, Judaism did not recognize Him.[[32]](#footnote-32)

The total absence of the Shəkinah from Judaism means that Judaism and its supposed ethic are entirely foreign to the ethos of Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Josiah, or Christianity: all of which confess the same Shəkinah. Judaism talks much about the Shəkinah: but, the Shəkinah is gone from its midst. Christianity talks little about the Shəkinah; but, the Shəkinah dwells among them:[[33]](#footnote-33) thus, Christianity is the true heir of Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Josiah, and all the Prophets. Christianity is the religion present with the Shəkinah; Judaism is the religion that has no Shəkinah.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Since the Shəkinah returned, Judaism has been the constant and primary enemy of Shəkinah centered faith: sowing discord, murder, and war.

Sadly, Christianity has learned to respond in like kind: Christianity becomes more legalistic, Pharisaical and Sadducaical every day.

Pharisaism and Sadduceeism only seem like opposites: yet, the fleshly rules of Pharisaical legalistic behavior, and the faithless rules of Sadducaical ritual observance are equally foreign to God. Both are cut from the cloth of unbelief; both substitute manmade regulations and rules for heartfelt sincerity of love for God and neighbor: the Sadducees openly confess their unbelief; the Pharisees multiply rules as a substitute for true faith.

Judaism was made illegal in England (1290) and Spain (1492) with good cause. Canon Law prohibited Christians from committing usury; as also does Torah and the New Testament: strangely, Judaism was exempt from Canon Law, and practiced this sin openly. By the Reformation, Dutch Christianity is heavily infiltrated by Judaism; Judaism will also inform much of Puritan theology and thinking.[[35]](#footnote-35)

In the United States, Judaism controls most of Hollywood, much of publishing, and in general, what we are allowed to think: the voice of Judaism is greatly disproportionate to its population. Our psychology is founded in and informed by Freud. Our physics is based in and centered around Einstein. Much of world political thought is still directed by Spinoza and Marx.

Lutheranism, at first, resisted the temptation to usury. Some grew up on the rubric, “Neither borrower, nor lender, be!” Calvinism decided that usury was a moral good, early in its history: before long, Calvinism was practicing usury openly, side-by-side with Judaism. Today, if anything, Lutheranism leads the way in aping the common usury of Judaism. Again, not all Jews are usurers; but, many are: the influence of Judaism in world money markets is overwhelming.

Judaism is not the Chosen People of God; it lost any claim to that when it rejected Jesus, the Christ of God. The Christian Church, where it exists in sincerity, is the Chosen People of God.[[36]](#footnote-36) Paul tells us about the pruning of Judaism from the Olive Tree of God: Judaism is clearly cut off. Paul also holds forth the hope of an olive branch of amnesty: Judaism can be grafted in again. That being said, the price of in-grafting or re-grafting is sincere faith in Christ: Judaism must fully and truly embrace Christ in order to be rejoined to the Olive Tree of God. Paul cites the absence of Judaism from the Olive Tree of God as a warning to Christianity: that by following the path of Judaism, Christianity will also be pruned off from the Olive Tree of God.

There are hubristic Jews and there are humble Jews; there are hubristic Gentiles and there are humble Gentiles: the key operative word is humility.

“When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” — Luke 18:8

We fear that the answer to this question is clearly and resoundingly, NO! Absolutely not! If present trends mean anything, when the Son of Man comes, He will find warmed over Judaism, primarily Pharisaism and Sadduceeism in a morbid, necrotic, and putrid church that no longer remembers much of Christianity at all. Baring our fervent hope of a miraculous repentance, all trends seem headed in this direction: Christianity is locked in a downward death spiral.

This is not a tirade against Jewish ethnicity, which is now indistinguishable from any other Gentile ethnicity. This is a rant against corrupt behavior and unbelief, which is now shared openly by most of the world’s population. If Christianity imitates Judaism, and it does so openly, the outcome will be identical to the history of Judaism. What is that outcome? Jesus said of the Pharisees:

“Cast them out! Get rid of them! Forgive them![[37]](#footnote-37) Blind they are, leaders of the blind; if blind should lead blind, both into a hole will fall.” — Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for, you neither go in yourselves, neither do you allow them that are entering to go in.” — Matthew 23:13

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore, you shall receive the greater damnation.” — Matthew 23:14[[38]](#footnote-38)

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” — Matthew 23:15

“Woe unto you, blind leaders, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the Oracle, it is nothing; but, whoever swears by the gold of the Oracle, is obligated. You blind fools: for, which is greater, the gold or the Oracle[[39]](#footnote-39) that has consecrated the gold?’ And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar is nothing, but whoever swears by the gift on it is obligated.’ You blind…: for, which is greater, the gift or the altar that consecrates the gift? So, whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; whoever swears by the Oracle, swears by it and by the One who dwells in it; and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the One seated on it.” — Matthew 23:16-22

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you tithe mint, anise, and cumin; yet, have cast out the weightier matters of the law: judgment, mercy, and faith; these it was and is necessary to do, and not to have cast out that. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat, yet swallow a camel.” — Matthew 23:23-24; Luke 11:42

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you clean the outside of the cup and bowl, while inside they are laden with robbery, and extortion.[[40]](#footnote-40) You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and bowl, so that the outside may also be clean.” — Matthew 23:25-26

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you resemble whitewashed tombs, which outside indeed shine beautiful, while inside they are laden with dead bones, and all uncleanness.[[41]](#footnote-41) Thus, you also outside indeed shine to men as righteous, while inside you are engorged with hypocrisy and lawlessness.” — Matthew 23:27-28

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because, you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the memorials of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had been in the days of our fathers, we had not been in fellowship with them in the blood of the prophets.’ ” — Matthew 23:29-30

“Woe to you, when all men speak well of you: for, so did their fathers to the false prophets.” — Luke 6:26

“Woe to you, Pharisees: because you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.” — Luke 11:43

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because you are like unseen graves, and men walk upon them unaware.” — Luke 11:44

The Sadducees were well aware of their unbelief, even proud of it. The Pharisees harbored the delusion that their many rigorous rules were a substitute for True belief.

No True Christian theology exists, which is a copy of Judaism.

Christianity

Christianity began to turn away from Christ, toward Judaism, not only in biblical times, but additionally, as early as the third century in Novatianism, the fourth century in Donatism, and in many other groups. The very thing that Christ forbade was committed.[[42]](#footnote-42) More and more, the Church began to see salvation in the perfection of doctrine[[43]](#footnote-43) rather than in the blood of Christ as taught by the Spirit.[[44]](#footnote-44) New rules multiplied, until by Nicaea, correctly stated doctrine has taken primacy. By Chalcedon doctrine is stated incorrectly: Christians are killing Christians over dogma.[[45]](#footnote-45) The way is clear for the leadership of the Church on earth to be seized by political oligarchs; rather than by the humble shepherds of Christ. Not only is correct doctrine lost in the process: but, the blood of Christ is trampled underfoot.

There is no theology that is not centered on prayer and worship, nurtured on the shed blood of Christ, and empowered by the Spirit.

Chalcedon the Ominous

Cyril of Alexandria was right. Πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός: hence, πνεῦμα ὁ Πατρὸς, πνεῦμα ὁ Υἱός or πνεῦμα ὁ Χριστός, and πνεῦμα ὁ Πνεύματος. It is inherently self-contradictory, stretching the natural meaning of φύσις to the breaking point to say something as absurd as, φύσις ὁ Θεός. Consequently, the doctrine of Dyophysitism (δυοφυσιτισμός) is incorrectly stated. The ὑπόστασις of the Son is μονο-πνεῦμα, or μία-πνεῦμα in which He adds to Himself μονο-φύσις, or μία-φύσις. Φύσις is a property of the material universe; it is more than confusing to use it as a descriptor of either the immaterial universe or the uncreated ὁμοούσιον τοῦ θεοῦ.

“δι’ ὧν τὰ τίμια [ἡμῖν] καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως, ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν [omit τῷ] τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς.” — 2 Peter 1:4

“through which the precious and greatest to us”, or, “through which the precious to us and greatest” … “promises He has given, so that through them you could be begotten of [the] Divine-essence [that] He fellowships of [or with] [the] physical, having fled from the” … “in the world in desires of rottenness”, or, “the rotten desires in the world”. — 2 Peter 1:4 a rough translation

“through which He has given the precious and greatest promises[[46]](#footnote-46) to us, so that through them you could be begotten of Divine-essence [that] He fellowships with physical-nature, having fled from the rotten desires in the world”. — 2 Peter 1:4 a smoother attempt

It seems to us that this verse makes a clear distinction between θείας[[47]](#footnote-47) and φύσεως, so, there is no justification for translating φύσεως as nature or essence in description of anything Divine. He Who is very θείας with the Father and the Spirit added to Himself a sinless human φύσεως, so that we could have fellowship by virtue of new birth in Christ. “God became man so that man could become god.”[[48]](#footnote-48)

“For I tell you that except your righteousness would have excelled more than [that] of the scribes and Pharisees, you could “never ever”[[49]](#footnote-49) have gone into the kingdom of the heavens.” — Matthew 5:20

Chalcedon is held in high esteem by many Christian bodies; instead, it is the abyss of theology. Chalcedon was dubbed Chalcedon the Ominous because it led to the widespread persecution of Egyptian Christians.

We cannot construct a correct theology until we have dealt with the Chalcedon issues honestly and squarely.

Tares

Jesus promised that the tares would be sown amid the wheat.[[50]](#footnote-50) Neither the wheat plants nor the sowers were permitted to uproot the tares: the two were to grow together side-by-side. The business of wheat plants is to resist emulating tares or being strangled[[51]](#footnote-51) by tares. Judaism is cut off: the New Testament says so dozens of times. For a tare to be saved it must repent and become wheat. Judaism has nothing in common with Christianity.

Nearly the worst thing that Christians can do is absorb or emulate the teaching and theology of Judaism. Almost as bad, is allowing Judaism to choke and crowd out Christian faith.[[52]](#footnote-52) That being said, there are at least two things that are even worse than these, more destructive to the development of relational theology[[53]](#footnote-53) than these: the first is Christians persecuting and murdering Jews; the second is Christians persecuting and murdering other Christians. If we are forbidden to root up the tares it is difficult to see how persecution and murder can be approved: yet, long before Chalcedon the murders had already begun.

The custodial heritage of the Israelites was frittered away and lost. The Church can also have its custodial heritage removed; don’t be tempted to think, it can’t happen to us: it certainly can happen to us. Judaism is still claiming, it can’t happen to us, two thousand years after it was removed: this is just denial of the cold hard facts.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Genuine theology cannot be built by either copying or destroying tares: Christians must discover who they are and make peace with that identity alone.

Hebrew Language

Along this same line, a theology built primarily on the Masoretic text is also doomed to failure: Jesus and the Apostles gave us both Old and New Testaments in Greek. Parts of the Church on earth were already turning away from the Greek Old Testament to a predecessor of the Hebrew Masoretic text before 420. An even greater defection to the Masoretic text took place circa 1517.

Judaism is no longer the custodian of Scripture. The Church is the sole custodian of Scripture: thus, all issues of text criticism, distribution, and interpretation belong to the Church, as long as Judaism remains unrepentant. Thus, since Christ bequeathed the Scripture to us in Greek, there is no reason to seek answers from what was a dead language for over two thousand years.

We do not know the language of Moses or the Exodus (1406-1366 BC): the probabilities are heavily weighted in favor of Akkadian cuneiform.[[55]](#footnote-55) Our present knowledge of Levantine languages indicates that paleo-Hebrew was invented slightly before 1010 BC, around the time of David; paleo-Hebrew was then the first language of the Israelite people from 1010 to 586 BC. Around 722 BC Israel fell to Assyria. Between 586 and 516 BC, the Judeans, with a remnant of Israelites were being absorbed into Babylonian culture: they emerged after 516 BC as the Jews; speaking and writing a language we call Hebrew, which was really block-Aramaic. When the Babylonians were conquered by the Medo-Persians, who in turn were conquered by the Greeks: other massive cultural changes took place. Greek was made the national language: after that, Hebrew became a dead language, the toy of scholars and scribes. The Bible was translated from Hebrew to Greek around 200 BC. When the Romans conquered Greece, they loved and retained Greek culture and language, at least among those wealthy enough to afford a Greek slave to tutor their children. Latin was the despised language of common peasants.

The facts: that we do not know the language of Moses (1406-1366 BC); that paleo-Hebrew was the language of the Judeo-Israelite kingdoms, not Hebrew (1010-586 BC); that Hebrew only emerged as a language after 516 BC; that Hebrew was eclipsed by Greek around 200 BC…. These facts argue strongly that there is no special value to Hebrew: Hebrew is, at most a transition language in the chain of Old Testament authorship.

The only benefit to either Hebrew or the Masoretic text is evangelization of Jews.

Christian theology can only develop immediately from the study of the Greek text, the language canonized by Jesus, and continued by the Apostles for the sole custodianship of the Church.[[56]](#footnote-56)

Science

Were it not for the irrational love for Judaism in several sectors of Christendom, as well as the imitation of Judaism’s behavior; pseudo-science might very well be the greatest threat to sound Christian theology. Since it is impossible to separate the God of Scripture and science; He is One and the Same God: we must take the genuine discoveries of science seriously, without being misled by speculations that are not science at all.

Evidence, is evidence, is evidence. All evidence is God’s evidence; it deserves to be treated with respect. We are not free to choose which evidence we like and which evidence we do not like. We get to evaluate evidence, examine evidence, try to understand evidence, weigh evidence. We look for the provenance of evidence: for evidence is considerably devalued without its attendant provenance. We try to fit the pieces of evidence together in their natural logical pattern to see if a picture develops. There are, of course, things that look like evidence which are frauds, or false evidence. Generally, in the quest for human knowledge, we need more evidence, much more evidence. Evidence comes in a variety of types; not all evidence is scientific evidence: for evidence to be scientific it must conform to the rigors of the scientific method. For example: history is not science; even though certain aspects of history can benefit from the help of scientific examination; there is no such thing as the scientific study of history… or art… or dozens of other things. The scientific method excludes a great deal of human knowledge; science excludes most of human knowledge.

The first step in the scientific method is the statement of a working hypothesis, usually in the null form. We are always amused by statements about scientific deduction: for, deduction is fundamentally foreign to the scientific method.[[57]](#footnote-57) The hypotheses of science are either inductions (educated guesses), or abductions (silly wild guesses): the scientist then sets out to disprove the null hypothesis; failing in a rational disproof, he may be able to examine probabilities.

The second step in the scientific method is the design of an experiment, multiple experiments, or series of repeated multiple experiments that will test the working hypothesis: it is a carefully laid out plan. Such a plan is very often a statistical plan: it includes ANOVA, Chi Square or other plan of measurement and evaluation; it may be blind or double blind; it seeks to exclude confounding from potentially overlapping causes; it is multivariate[[58]](#footnote-58) wherever possible.

The third step in the scientific method is the design of an apparatus or apparatuses. Once a mathematical, statistical plan is in place, the tools to perform and measure the experiment must be acquired: this may be as simple as poking around in the garage or as complicated and expensive as designing and building the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). America’s Superconducting Super Collider (SSC) construction was cancelled in 1993 when it proved to be too economically and politically expensive.[[59]](#footnote-59) The experiment will apply the same forces to the apparatus that are applied to the test specimen; thus, the apparatus must be many magnitudes stronger than the forces that will be applied to the test specimen: else the apparatus will break before results can be measured. Particles with 125 GeV mass cannot be hurled around at the speed of light without breaking things: consequently inspection, repair, and improvement of all kinds of apparatus are a way of life.

The fourth step in the scientific method is the collection of data… tons of data… the more the better. Once data is collected it can be evaluated in accordance with the statistical design of experiment.

The fifth step in the scientific method is replication with repetition. If at all possible, the scientific design will be run on another scientific apparatus in another location. Several astronomers observe a celestial object from several different telescopes around the globe to confirm each other’s findings, or deny them. An apparatus may be disassembled, moved, and reassembled to get necessary replications. Had SSC completed construction it could be used to confirm or deny the LHC measurements at CERN. Replications are best performed blind; one team does not know what the other team is doing until the findings are complete… only then they compare notes.

The sixth step in the scientific method is statistical evaluation. This involves the Central Limit Theorem and the Law of Large Numbers: in simple terms, we cannot predict individual behavior, we can only predict herd behavior. If we have a single molecule of U-238, we have no idea when it will decay, why it will decay, or if it will ever decay. If we have several pounds of U-238, we are pretty sure that it has a half-life of around 4.468 G-years. Application of the Central Limit Theorem and the Law of Large Numbers lead to the calculation of such a half-life; as well as the half-life of all the medicines in our medicine cabinets; which is why we take some once-a-day, others four-times-a-day: few of these medicines are subject to radioactive decay; instead, the rate of metabolism in the human body is evaluated, and the dose rate is set to maintain a relatively stable level in the body.[[60]](#footnote-60) This statistical evaluation may predict that there is a certain probability of a particular variable to cause a percentage of the outcome: for example; 50% of the failure was found to be due to dynamic loading with a 95% probability; 30% of the failure was attributed to fretting corrosion with a 90% probability; the remaining 20% of causes are unknown and left to experimental error. All of the probabilities were derived from the error; it takes repetitions to see error; the experimental design enables some things to be evaluated as distinct from the error. If we are measuring radiocarbon age, there are several sources of error and at least two calibrations that must be checked. If this sort of technical statistical information is not reported, the outcomes are worthless: this sort of reporting failure happens all the time.

The seventh step in the scientific method is attempting to evaluate the cause-and-effect relationships observed in the statistical analysis. It is not enough to say that 50% of the failure was found to be due to dynamic loading with a 95% probability; 30% of the failure was attributed to fretting corrosion with a 90% probability. We must discover why dynamic loading and fretting corrosion were factors. If our long-term goal is a better product we might want to find ways to defeat the effects of dynamic loading and fretting corrosion: then we would retest to see if the product was improved. If the factors were medicinal side-effects these would be reported.

The eighth step in the scientific method is a report, which may or may not be worth publishing. Significant findings are reported in scientific journals, where the whole working hypothesis, as well as all its procedures and all its findings, are reviewed by peer scientific subject matter experts: such experts may choose to replicate the whole experiment themselves. In any case, the evidence is of little value until the scientific community has reached some consensus about its meaning. Alternatively, the experiment may be ignored as insignificant, disproved, or otherwise rejected for many reasons.

If any of these steps is missing, it’s not science. There is no scientific study of history, simply because it is impossible to replicate or repeat any major significant historical event: once Dresden was destroyed by a firestorm in WWII, there is no way to put Dresden back together in the same space and time environment, in order to destroy Dresden by firestorm all over again… the dead cannot be brought back to life by man. Similarly, art, music, and poetry are not replicable or repeatable… there is only one original piece. Copies may be made, but they are merely copies. There is no scientific study of art, music, or poetry: the strictures of the scientific method prohibit such studies. *Dead Poets Society* wins.

Most of the stuff reported in the popular press is not science; little of it meets the rigors of the scientific method; most of it is poorly vetted, or not even reviewed for error; non-scientist reporters rarely understand the outcomes, and frequently misrepresent them: this is junk science… it’s not true science.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Other things are simply raw speculation, not science at all; several won’t even qualify as decent working hypotheses. Even if a working hypothesis has stood for centuries, failure to discover a single shred of supporting evidence is cause for rejection: big bang and general evolution[[62]](#footnote-62) are not science; neither is the theory of general relativity[[63]](#footnote-63).

In spite of these careful controls, science is plagued by error. The scientist who is faced with marginalization[[64]](#footnote-64) by a powerful and wealthy adversary, may buckle, rather than continue arguing with a fool. Scientific technicians may be browbeaten into reporting preliminary results; even when they know that such results are inconclusive, statistically unfounded, or based on ill selected, ill prepared, and compromised specimens: it happens all the time in radiocarbon dating. Some scientists report that eggs are good, others that they lead to dangerous blood serum cholesterol levels;[[65]](#footnote-65) coffee is bad, coffee as good; DDT is safe:[[66]](#footnote-66) scientists are as fad-prone as the rest of the populace. Real dangers lurk in the work; results can be confounded, which is to say that something else is present that actually caused the reported results: once a cause of replication is identified, further experimentation may isolate and separate the two causes. Still, some things can’t be isolated: two chemicals may report nearly identical spectrographic signatures. There are liars in the jungle: a pig’s jaw was once reported as humanoid, the evidence kept hidden under the floor until the liar died and the fraud was discovered. Dr. Julian Simon (1932-1998) once claimed that copper could be created from other metals; and that if the sun burned out, we could just find a new one: yet he had the ear of the President of the United States who wanted justification for his actions, whether that justification was true or false. It takes mere moments to make a scientific mistake or to design and perpetrate a scientific fraud; it takes decades, even centuries, to find and correct the error, to expose and fix the fraud. Meanwhile, trillions of dollars are stolen by the perpetrators. Be careful of what you believe; test evidence to be sure that it is truly evidence; demand that the statistical details and scientific procedures be fully reported; reject anything that is suspicious; demand confirmation; don’t accept every tale that comes down the pike.

The next generation of theologians has a responsibility to reconcile the evidence of science and Scripture; they have no such responsibility to the tomfoolery of speculation, ignorance, or fraud. Let all things be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

We must be careful here; we are not endorsing the various hypotheses of science:

* Not of paleontology, which is based on sedimentary rock dating, which is no dating at all, but rather a fabricated scale without any controls: for, without the presence of carbon corrected by tree calibrations, no real date can be fixed. So, dates of millions of years ago, speaking only of rock sequences, have no measurable chronological correlationship whatsoever; they simply provide a convenient means of keeping discoveries in their proper geological sequence: they are not real dates.
* Not of Babylonian cosmology: for too little is known; too much untranslated.
* Not “big bang”, for “big bang” is an unprovable speculation.
* Not evolution in the broader sense: for no shred of evidence has ever been found to demonstrate that life changes or develops across species boundaries. While in the narrow sense: there is ample evidence of environmental development within species.
* Not psychoanalysis with its wildly abductive and assumptive conjectures.
* Not a space-time continuum: for, space is inherently about vectors, while, time is a scalar. Attempting to redefine time with vector properties makes gibberish out of much of physics.

What we do endorse is the idea that all true evidence comes from God. Thus, the only reasons we are left with unreconciled evidence are: that we don’t yet have enough evidence; and that we don’t yet understand the evidence we do have. These caveats apply equally to Scripture: since, Scripture is evidence in its own right.

So, we have no good reason to doubt the evidence of Genesis; while we have every reason to question the wildly speculative hypothesis of oral tradition. On the other hand, we have no evidence that Moses (1406-1366 BC) wrote in either paleo-Hebrew or Hebrew; the extant evidence indicates that paleo-Hebrew was invented around the time of David (1010-970 BC), Hebrew developed around the time of the Babylonian Captivity (586-516 BC, or even later). The evidence suggests that Moses most likely wrote in Akkadian cuneiform: but we don’t know that for a fact either. So, until the autographa of Moses, or their very close archetypes are unearthed and interpreted, we are left with a certain amount of ignorance. This ignorance should humble us; so that, we do not exaggerate what we truly know: yet, it should not divert us from that conviction that Genesis is True evidence, which we honor and respect, even when our understanding is far from complete or perfect. So, we do not hesitate to date Moses (1406-1366 BC), based on the Septuagint text, rejecting the Masoretic text as corrupted. Yet, at the same time, we confess some uncertainty that the world was created circa 4000 BC: for our linguistic understanding of the use of numbers circa 4000 BC is far from perfect: for example, it is not true, that we can say with certainty that the seven days of Genesis 1 are in fact exactly seven, twenty-four-hour periods. Since, the world that then was, was destroyed by the flood, perhaps we should leave the door open for the idea that the entire cosmology has shifted... but, we have no idea how it was shifted. God explained the events to Moses in terms that Moses and his contemporaries could understand: but, Moses had no life experiences that would enable him to fully understand what he heard, and neither do we. We simply take the evidence as it stands, and hope that someday, God will make us better informed.

Similarly, we cannot endorse the distinction between created and uncreated truth. God clearly spoke or sang the universe into existence; that is created truth. While, Jesus, insofar as He is the Second Person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God, is uncreated truth; His adding to Himself a human φύσις, or physicality, is entirely created truth. On the other hand, the speech of God, coming from the mouth of God is as created as the universe. That Moses and all the Prophets and Apostles, heard that speech of God, were Spirit powered to understand it, and Spirit guided to record it, does not make it uncreated. In Scripture, it seems to us, that the record of the uncreated and created are freely mixed, without drawing much attention to the distinction. The Son, before His incarnation, is the only uncreated Word we have; after the incarnation, the uncreated and created are joined without mixture or confusion. To use this questionable distinction between created and uncreated truth (not Truth) to claim that Scripture knows nothing of chronology, history, science, or any other subject than the uncreated Divinity, is absurd. Equally absurd is any idea that the human intellect, mentality, or reason is not also corrupted by the fall.

Thus, we agree that Moses writes the words of God: for after they were written, Moses directs that they be laid up in the Oracle. When they were laid up in the presence of God, God took full ownership of them: which fact we have, in that God did not destroy either the documents or those doing the work. We can have no doubt, since God destroyed those who offered strange fire, that God’s tolerance of the documents and their bearers, on many and various occasions, signifies His good pleasure with them and full endorsement of them. Thus, the humble record of Moses is received as the completed constitutional record of God Himself, even though mere man wrote it. Unfortunately: these documents are no longer in earthly human existence….[[67]](#footnote-67)

Sensible theology will respect and incorporate genuine scientific, as well as other evidence.

Ecumenism

The heresy of Ecumenism is notorious: Ecumenism is among the greatest flops in Christendom. Still, we are commanded to love our enemies; we are forbidden to dig up the tares. We, on the other hand, commonly ignore these admonitions: we hate our enemies, thinking nothing of it; we try to destroy tares as a common practice… that is what dogma is all about… destroying tares. We readily forget that no one can enter the Kingdom of God’s Forgiveness as a bitter, grudge filled, unforgiving person.

So, where else can we go to tear down walls of separation, and build bridges of truth, if not to the World Council of Churches, or to the National Council of Churches? If we’re afraid to have our own presuppositions challenged, how will we ever discover our own mistakes. Of course, the answer is, we don’t make mistakes: our dogma is error free.[[68]](#footnote-68) Really? Or is that so much denial in action? Okay, so we don’t like Ecumenism very much. Find a better instrument.

In bitter church splits, the intellectuals and the traditionalists go in opposite directions; just as the Pharisees and Sadducees were often bitterly opposed… two forms of unbelief, posed falsely, one hundred eighty degrees apart. Having split, the intellectuals float off in an ivory tower, like Sadducees, while the traditionalists speed away in an unthinking inflexibility, a cranial rigidity, like Pharisees, where nothing ever changes, or can change, or is allowed to change.[[69]](#footnote-69) The true picture is that the so-called conservatives and liberals need each other to be tethered to reality. After the split, the anchor points are lost and both parties drift away into the meaningless void.

Behind the opposition to any sincere ecumenism lies a submerged conviction that there possibly can be (or can’t be)[[70]](#footnote-70) more than One Church, more than One Body of Christ, united in His Shed Blood and Broken Body. We hide our isolation behind terms like heterodox; all the while forgetting the tremendous contribution to Christian advancement, which is sourced in nearly every denomination, every particular church under the sun. Where would we be without the enormous contributions to theology of Thomas? How would we think without the challenges of Palamas? What would we know of Patristics in the English language without Schaff? Where would we go to study the Syriac Fathers without Brock? What would we know of early catechesis without Cyril of Jerusalem? Who would warn us of our dangerous errors, if not Cyril of Alexandria? Where would we discover details of early worship without Egeria? Who would advise us of the immensity of mystery, were it not for Augustine? What power of the Paschal message would we have without Chrysostom? How would we realize that the Church is not in unanimous agreement without Hus, Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII, or the Conciliar Movement? How would we ever reestablish a conciliar spirit?

Yet, God promised Abraham a people from every kindred, tongue, and nation.[[71]](#footnote-71) Do our claims of heterodoxy overthrow the promises of God? Is the Heart-knower, who makes children from rocks limited by our human opinion? Shall we fail to complete our appointed duties because we are frustrated by the bitterness of war; intrigue, murder, and treachery within the Church; or because of our precious canons and dogmas?

Well then, these are illegitimate children, you will say. Ah, but even a bastard is a real child. We believe that every person on earth, “every son of Adam, and daughter of Eve”, is given pieces of the puzzle. Yet these puzzle pieces can never be fitted into the puzzle without the existence of Spirit created relationships: all we have to do is keep on asking.[[72]](#footnote-72) When the Spirit becomes active in lives, the proper locations of the puzzle pieces come into view; not unilaterally; but, through the cooperation and synergy found within the Body of Christ: when unanimous agreements are reached, the proper locations of the puzzle pieces, snap into clarity… but, not without unanimous agreement. We already know what the finished picture looks like: it looks exactly like Christ crucified and raised.

The dialogue of ecumenicity, no matter how defective or flawed, or else something like it, is necessary to resolving differences and completing the puzzle picture.

Practical theology builds bridges of truth, rather than walls of separation.

The Jerusalem Council

“Now, there stood apart some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, ‘it is necessary to circumcise them, and command them to keep the law of Moses.’

“So, the apostles and elders assembled to consider this matter.

“Much discussion having taken place, Peter stood up, and said to them, ‘Men, Brethren[[73]](#footnote-73), you know that from early days God chose among you, that the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel through my mouth, and believe. Now God, who knows hearts, witnessed to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as also to us; making no distinction between us and them, having purified their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why are you testing God, putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But through the grace of the Lord Jesus, we believe that we will be saved, in the same manner as they.’

“Then all the multitude grew silent to listened to Barnabas and Paul report what signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.

“Then after they were silent, James concluded, ‘Men, Brethren, hear me: Simeon has reported how God first visited to take from among the Gentiles a people for his name. With this agree the words of the prophets; as it stands written:

“After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David, which is fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up: so that the rest of mankind could seek-out the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name has been called upon them, says the Lord, who does all these things, known from the ages.”

Wherefore, I judge that we not trouble those, from among the Gentiles [who] are turning to God: but, to write to them to abstain from the pollutions of idols, from fornication, from strangled things, and from blood: for Moses, from ancient generations, has in every city, those preaching him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.’[[74]](#footnote-74)

“Then it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole assembly, to send men, chosen from among them, to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: namely, Judas, the one called Barsabas; and Silas; lead men among the brethren, having written through their hand this…

‘The apostles and elders and brethren, to those in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, Brethren from among the Gentiles, greeting.

‘Since we have heard that some from among us, having gone out, have troubled you with words, upsetting your souls, to whom we gave no such instruction. It pleased us, having decided unanimously, to send chosen men to you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men pledging their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we have sent Judas and Silas, themselves also telling you the same things through word: for, it pleased the Holy Spirit, and us, to place no further burden on you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from strangled things, and from fornication: from which keeping yourselves, you will do well. Be well.’ ” — Acts 15:5-29

There are so many lessons to be learned from the Jerusalem Council; I doubt that I shall ever learn the half of them all: every time I look, I see something new, often more essential than what I saw before. Here we see the Bible’s compete and perfect pattern for all conduct of all Christian Councils. Has it ever been followed since? We fear that it has never been followed, not ever again.

* First, we note that the Council rests on the cardinal virtues of the Holy Spirit. The introductory point is that the Gentiles have received the Spirit exactly as the apostles, elders, and brethren have received the Spirit: the rest of the logic structure hangs from this fact. Subliminally, this makes the statement that if you don’t have the Spirit, you cannot be a Christian.[[75]](#footnote-75)
* The Spirit is seen here in His office of The Vicar of Christ on Earth; we are, at most, vicars of Christ on earth. More than one particular church sees itself as the exclusive dispenser of the Spirit; but, this is inside out reasoning. The Spirit is Heavenly King: He decides; He disposes, and no other. If He decides that a local or particular church is cut off, they are cut off; He also has the power to graft them in again: His decisions are always in perfect agreement with the authority of Christ. Subliminally, we should realize that no local or particular church can cut off another by removing name(s) from prayer lists; moreover, if the Spirit wills to bless individuals in former churches, He can and does;[[76]](#footnote-76) if the Holy Spirit wishes to run ahead of the evangelists to save and bless some pagan with the knowledge and love of Christ, He will.
* The Holy Spirit determines how, when, where, and why people receive His gifts, and in what measure. The Church does not direct the Spirit, the Spirit directs the Church.
* The gift of the Spirit is justified because God, alone, is the Heart-knower.
* In this chapter, these actions please the Spirit and He canonizes the action.
* The legal action hinges on three witnesses: Peter, Paul, and Barnabas.
* The believing Christian Pharisees are confronted with the sin of testing God: their conviction of conscience brings them to silence.
* Obedience to the law of Moses in the flesh has always been an impossible yoke to bear. Such fleshly obedience was never intended, and it cannot be accomplished.
* Salvation is viewed as a process with future results.
* James adds the fourth witness of the prophets in his concluding arguments.
* James rules ex-cathedra: but his ruling is not and can never be a unilateral decision. Rather James recognizes and announces the unanimous decision of the whole assembly; the Spirit, apostles, elders, and all the laity present, including the women, agree: for, the term brethren invariably includes both brothers and sisters. Ex-cathedra rulings have no merit unless they express the unanimous agreement of The Church: as long as there is disagreement there can never be an ex-cathedra ruling. As long as there is disagreement there can be no confidence that the Spirit has brought us to the final authority of Christ, or to the place where the Spirit’s power has been displayed.
* Separatist groups have no right to justify their separatism by claiming their gladness that the Spirit has brought them to this hour: their very separation is proof enough that the Spirit has no hand in it.
* The final ruling shows us that the Kingdom of God does not come with lists of dogma: for, only four things are singled out as important… idolatry, especially the things it pollutes, such as the idol meat sacrifices sold in the market, it is not merely eating these that matters, but rather the pollution of conscience that comes from deliberately and knowingly eating;[[77]](#footnote-77) from fornication which strikes at the heart of the marriage sacrament; from strangled meats which necessarily have most of the blood remaining in them; and from drinking blood. The gist of this is that Christian life is to be kept simple, not cluttered up by lists of rules: for obedience to the law by faith exists because of Christ dwelling within us, not because of works of righteousness, but by the Spirit who guides our consciences in the right way. In due time, the Spirit will teach the Gentiles what they need to know: not by coercion of the body, or even of the thought process; but, by the gentle suasion of the conscience… the softening of the heart to the things of God. Thus, I become a doer of God’s will; not because I must; but, because I desire it: The Spirit has brought my will into conformity with God’s will by such gentle suasion.
* The term, brethren, is mentioned five times; assembly, twice; multitude, once; unanimously, once: instructing us that no decision of The Church can be made without the complete assent of the whole existing body. The Gentiles do not yet vote, since this vote in some way affects their reception into The Church.
* This principle of unanimous decisions rests on the fact that all believers are priests, there is no hierarchical priesthood in The Church.[[78]](#footnote-78) Such priests as are designated today, are in all reality, bishops or elders assistants: the real priesthood of The Church resides in the laity. The fact that all believers are priests flows necessarily from the fact that Christ, our Head is our High Priest, while we are His Body.

Sound doctrine is the outcome of simplicity, universally agreed by the whole Church on earth, and canonized by the Spirit.

Kings

The heresy of the Divine Right of Kings is not found in Scripture. Jesus, in requiring that we render to Caesar[[79]](#footnote-79) is in toleration of the existing human government as the will of God: he says nothing about the perpetuity or succession of such government. We know from Daniel that God’s will is that the Roman government not be perpetual: it will decay, dissolve, and finally be overthrown by the Church.[[80]](#footnote-80) If the very Roman government, which Christ Himself addresses, has no Divine Right of perpetuity or succession; then, neither does any other kingdom. Daniel, in fact indicates that The Church will one day rule over all the kingdoms of earth. However, this cannot be interpreted in terms of the Roman Papacy either; or any other form of hierarchical government, for that matter.

Everywhere in Scripture, the form of government preferred is patriarchal. God clearly despises human domination, as should be evident from the empire(s) of Nimrod.[[81]](#footnote-81) If we fail to be persuaded by the turmoil of Genesis 10, which ultimately divides Mesopotamian civilization; we should be convinced by Exodus 20: where the heart of the whole law is that God hates bondage, domination, and slavery in any form. We cannot blindly read permission of slavery back into the New Testament. Christ is the complete embodiment of the Law; He has come to set us free.[[82]](#footnote-82) Those that govern are the servants of the people.

So, whenever Christianity came to a new nation, it tolerated the existing government in the interest of peace: however, the rulers then in power quickly learned, as their consciences instructed them, that they were the servants of the people, not the other way around. Thus, the Spirit gradually overthrew the government by love shed abroad in the heart, not by force or might of arms.[[83]](#footnote-83)

In actual practice in Europe the regal class was a farce, having little to do with national interests or leadership. Royalty wanted only to maintain power and wealth, with little regard for anything else. Henry Ⅷ was a notorious playboy, mostly interested in the luxuries and pleasures of court. Intermarriage exclusively with royalty, meant that leaders had little in common with their subjects: rule over a foreign people could be inherited. The Dutchman, William of Orange became William Ⅲ of England and William Ⅱ of Scotland, through the subterfuge of marriage to Mary Ⅱ, even though he had no personal ties to the English people: in function, their marriage, was instrumental in a well-organized coup of Protestants to overthrow that extant Catholic Monarchy. In any case, without regard for English politics, it disproves any notion of a Divine Right of Kings.

Leadership in Europe is being gradually replaced by parliaments. As far as the Roman Empire is concerned: even they had the good sense to proclaim Senatus Populusque Romanus (SPQR): for even Caesar was supposed to rule at the pleasure of the Roman Senate and People. The word, Imperator, means captain or commander as head of a military unit of varying size: it only came to mean Emperor by use. The succession of the early Emperors was by election, not by birth; the successor was titled the son of Caesar after he was chosen: the early Emperors came from the Julio-Claudian families, but were not truly a dynasty. After the Julio-Claudians, the Flavians formed the first real Roman dynasty. That being said, the Divine Right of Kings is not supported from Roman law, or from the Greek law, before it.

Genuine theology is not founded on dictatorship or hierarchy: our King came to us as our Suffering Servant, meek and lowly, riding a donkey.[[84]](#footnote-84)

Patristics

If anyone should claim that the Fathers of The Church do not agree with this, we note that everywhere the Fathers are the servants of Scripture, even the magisterium is declared to be the servant of Scripture: so, if disagreement should occur, it rests in our improper understanding: the Fathers may have erred; our dogma may need better statement; but, it is not the book Scripture reported in Revelation 5 that has erred.

The Quest

Theology is, of first importance, a living relationship that God establishes with us; this relationship is built on the authority of the blood of Christ, and nourished by the power of the Spirit: as soon as we attempt to substitute dogma for relationship, we have stepped off the deep end of the dock into the eternal abyss. We must strive to keep our relationship fresh: this is why Communion is so central to our worship. Our part of this relationship is the pursuit of the love of God.

Theology is One. Some spout off about a Johannine versus a Pauline theology. Both John and Paul are infected with the life of Christ. They can no more be different in their core theology than a normal DNA strand can differ from liver to eye; the functions of liver and eye are different: but, the DNA remains identical. John and Paul have very different tasks to perform within the Body of Christ: but, the same life of Christ empowers them both. Theology must be about that living relationship indwelling us: never about our unique individualities. Still, our part of this relationship is the pursuit of the love of neighbor; we cannot chose between the love of Paul and John; we must even love our enemy, turning the other cheek[[85]](#footnote-85) to him/her: for, if we fail to love our neighbor, how can we claim to love God?[[86]](#footnote-86)

The differences and discussions of theology may seem important to us: but, at the end of the day, we must all eat the same bread and drink the same cup.[[87]](#footnote-87) Which of our differences is more important than that?

We must attend to Luke 11:13 in our theology: no faithful theology can be built without the Spirit’s express power and leadership.

We must attend to Luke 24:13-53 in our theology: since faithful theology must be worship centered, we observe the rudiments of Divine worship outlined here. First, Jesus reveals Himself to us throughout the Old Testament (verses 27, 32, 44). Second, Jesus reveals Himself to us in the breaking of bread (verses 30, 31, 36). No faithful theology exists that is not built on these two pillars.

The emphasis of Christ’s teaching is on the Old Testament Christology. If we are to live a faithful theology, we must do all we can do to recover that Christology. The Apostles, and the early Church fathers are our best human sources of Old Testament Christology: we must give ourselves to the study of Patristics[[88]](#footnote-88).

Our pursuit of theology must in turn seek our relationships in Patrology, Christology, and Pneumatology.

We do not leave you with a Theology Proper. Rather, we hope to have suggested a starting place. It is up to you to strive for unanimous agreement until Christ returns, and exposes our errors.

Be well!

[[89]](#footnote-89)

1. The name, Jezreel (יִזְרְעֶ֑אל) means God spreads or scatters; in its positive connotation, it paints a picture of God sowing seed on the earth. In its more negative meaning, it suggests that God is dispersing a gainsaying, wicked people. Perhaps, these are not necessarily two different and distinct things. Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8; Ecclesiastes 11:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 1 Timothy 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Matthew 3:16-17; 6:9; 28:19; Mark 1:10-11; Luke 3:22; 11:2; John 1:32; 5:43; 10:25; 12:28; 14:13, 26; 15:16; 16:23, 26; 17:11; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 5:20; and more. Someone has quipped that over two hundred New Testament verses bear witness of the Trinity: we didn’t try to count them. Actually, we have around two hundred fifty verses on the Spirit alone; so two hundred must be a gross understatement. The doctrine of the Trinity is so clearly taught in Scripture that it cannot be rationally disputed. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The word, εὐσεβείας, or godliness in some translations, means good-worship or piety; it is indeed a mystery: Paul continues, teaching us that good-worship is Christ centered: for it was Christ displayed in flesh, as well as all that follows…. Everywhere, Christ honors the Father in the power of the Spirit. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The older meaning of worship is worth-ship, meaning that the worth of anything must be applied appropriately; the contemporary meaning of worship tends to be exclusively applied to Deity. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Not ἐκ, ἐξ, but ἀπό: we must be careful in this verse never to avoid the fact that the Bible, Prophecy is the recorded word of God, like no other book. Nevertheless, the Bible is indirectly sourced from God, not directly or intimately sourced out of God. Prophets of old were able to hold conversations with God and make faithful reports of those conversations: the reports are true; this does not make them inerrant or magical; they are certainly not to be worshipped as God Himself. Nor does this verse claim that the Spirit spoke; rather, Spirit carried humans spoke: this is a great mystery. Every Christian receives the Spirit of God in some measure; yet, none of us is error free: we strive after truth with all our might; we still make mistakes. We have no assurance from Scripture that any Prophet, other than Christ, was error free. It is enough that we believe that the prophets strove always to tell the Truth; in that sense the Bible is the word of God: but, Jesus, alone, is the Word of God (Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. It, singular: the word is the antecedent, not the scriptures. What word might this be? More specifically than the evangelism messages: they preached Christ, the Word, from the Old Testament. NB that the Word is primary, over the Scripture or writings. Luke 24:27, 44-48 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Some interesting discussions of contemporary Christian issues can be found among the publications of Vladimir Moss, including:

<https://www.academia.edu/32934078/AGAINST_ROMANIDES.docx>

<https://www.academia.edu/26974348/_THE_RIVER_OF_FIRE_REVISITED>

We reject the theology of both Kalomiros and Romanides; yet, they cannot be wrong all the time: it is just too easy to tar their errors. On the other hand, we cannot agree with Moss at every point: nevertheless, Moss has sharpened our thinking considerably. When we fail to agree with Moss it is probably due to the fact that we have just grasped the bottom rung of Jacob’s ladder (Genesis 28:10-19), while Moss is far above us. We treasure Moss as brother and friend. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Contrast θεῖον with θειώδεις. Acts 17:29; Luke 17:29 (sulfur?); Revelation 9:17 (sulfur?)

Romans 1:20 has θειότης. Colossians 2:9 has θεότητος. Evidently, θεῖον, the adjective, is some sort of contraction from the noun, possibly of θειότον or θεότον. In both Romans and Colossians, this Divine nature is clearly ascribed to Christ as well as to the Father: it is no stretch to believe that θεῖον, θειότης, θεότητος apply equally to the Spirit. Note the alternate spellings, with and without, ι. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Θεῖον, the God-essence, the Godhead or Godhood, turns out to be a very profound word. We are surprised that it is not more greatly employed. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. We deny that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; we cannot find reference to this in Scripture: especially offensive is the claim that the mutual love between the Father and the Son results in the Spirit as the offspring of love: this comes dangerously close to beastly blasphemy. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. John 8:42; 15:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9 — such high Christology is also found in Paul as in Titus 2:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The fact is that such information is not as sparse as it first seems; the problem is that the names and terms for Deity appear so frequently that we take them for granted, reading right past them without noticing. When we set such instances aside by themselves, we discover that there are veritable mountains of Scripture about God. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Of course, the older meaning of prove is to test; yet, moderns only use it in the absolutist sense (P = 1, or P = 0): such absolutist probabilities are unknown in real science. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν. 1 John 4:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higgs_boson>

<https://home.cern/science/physics/higgs-boson>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_matter>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_hole> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. None of these would exist as human categories or topics if man were not created in the image of God. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This is especially true for the atheist: for in the concept of atheism, only man is left to be ignorant. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. God also gives eternal life, which would not be possible, where He Himself not also eternal. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. 1 Corinthians 1:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The problem is that our taste buds are not yet perfectly developed; our vision is at best myopic in the extreme; we are only able to see clouded dim reflections in a poorly polished mirror: the Truth is absolutely and fully present (1 Corinthians 13:12), even though we fail to recognize it. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Neither is Neo-Orthodoxy correct; the eschaton does not touch the temporal at a single point, the life of Jesus: rather, in Jesus and His eternal work, the eschaton touches the temporal at every point of time, and beyond time: in an infinity of places. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Apostles Creed; 1 Corinthians 15:4, 12-17, 20-22, 32, 35, 39-54 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Come to think of it, this is a really absurd question…. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. As also does multiplication if we ask the question, what numbers multiplied by zero equal zero: all of them do. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. There is little evidence of this: is the star, just recently observed, a fresh creation; or was it created seven thousand years ago, so far away that its light just now reaches us… seven thousand light years later. Science has no evidence outside of its event horizon: but, we have no evidence that God is not there, outside of the event horizon. The statement that nothing exists outside of the event horizon is pure unscientific speculation. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. If there is such a sin as Bibliolatry, the worship of the Bible; is there also a sin of Theolog-olatry, the worship of our own, manmade, theological systems? We think there is such a sin of Theolog-olatry, running rampant upon the earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The term is not often used biblically; yet, it is very often abused popularly. John takes accurate and precise aim at Judaism’s denial of Christ, and Greek philosophy’s claim of foolishness. How do we miss such a specific condemnation of Judaism as a religious system? 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. 1 Samuel 4:21-22 is prophetic; Ezekiel 10:18-19; 11:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. John 1:11; 5:43 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Shəkinah means the Divine Presence. Exodus 25:8; 29:46; Numbers 16:3; Deuteronomy 23:14; Psalm 67:18-19 LXX [68:17-18]; Hosea 11:9; Joel 2:27; Zephaniah 3:17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Revelation 7:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. If Hosea 3:4-5 LXX means anything, it means that Israel will be bereft of the Shəkinah, until they find repentance in Christ. There is no Shəkinah in Judaism. David their king is named in Psalms 15:10 LXX [16:8]; 109:1 LXX [110:1]; Matthew 22:44; Acts 2:25, 29-36; Hebrews 1:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. <https://www.academia.edu/36854575/CAPITALISM_CALVINISM_WAR_AND_JEWISH_BANKERS> [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Romans 11:28 notwithstanding: how can we build such elaborate theological hypotheses of election from such a weight of verses; yet, miss the fact that The Church is the Chosen People of God? No person can be grafted in again, once they are cut off, except they be grafted into Christ. Isaiah 42:1; Hosea 2:25 LXX (2:23 MT); Matthew 12:18; 20:16; 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31; Mark 13:20, 22, 27; Luke 18:7; 23:35; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19; Acts 1:2, 24; 9:15; 10:41; 15:22, 25; 22:14; Romans 8:33; 9:11, 25-26; 11:5, 7; 16:13; 2 Corinthians 8:19; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:4, 10; Titus 1:1; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:2; 2:4, 6, 9, 10; 5:13; 2 Peter 1:10; 2 John 1:1, 13; Revelation 17:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The verb, ἄφετε, means to send away as a deliberate positive act (get rid of them); to release, especially from a moral debt or obligation (forgive them); to cast out (as with demons).

“But the children of the kingdom will be cast out (ἐκβληθήσονται) into outer darkness: there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” — Matthew 8:12

We altered the standard translations to assault our senses and grab our attention concerning the active force of this word. Both Jesus and Stephen prayed fervently, against all hope, for the forgiveness of their adversaries, even when they had finally and utterly turned against God (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:59-60).

“Cast them out! Get rid of them! Forgive them! Blind they are, leaders of the blind; if blind should lead blind, both into a hole will fall.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Present in the Byzantine manuscripts. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The obvious reference is to the Oracle, the Most Holy Place, which was consecrated each year by blood on the Day of Atonement: this, in turn, looks prophetically at the death and resurrection of Christ (Hebrews 9:7, 12). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The accusation is that the Pharisees acquired their wealth by crime. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The accusation is that the Pharisees murdered their adversaries and kept trophies. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Matthew 13:30, 40 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. This is not to say that sound doctrine is unimportant. Sound doctrine is essential to Christian living; but, there is no sound doctrine outside of the fellowship of the blood of Christ; just as, there is no sound worship that does not include both the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of Communion: truly, “you can’t have one without the other”. Luke 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Acts 15 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. The distinction between sound doctrine and dogma is simply this: dogma must be believed, at least according to the dogmatist; sound doctrine toils under the teaching of the Spirit to embrace Truth, yet there is still room for discussion, there is space and time for the young to grow into doctrine, there is open confession that perfection has not yet been attained. If theology is entirely disputatious, none of this matters. But, if theology is relational, then argument alone yields unsatisfactory results. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. NB that these promises are actual, real, and true; they are not mere words: they beget or give birth to the fellowship relationship between θείας and φύσεως. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. This is the same word we encountered in the discussion of Godhead. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The change in word order and omission of τῷ in some manuscripts has absolutely no effect on these conclusions.

For the purposes of this discussion there is very little difference between the nuances of μονο and μία.

If this single theological error, Dyophysitism, is ever admitted and faced, we will be forced to rethink all of theology: so pivotal is this one issue. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. From the song lyrics, “Never ever have I ever felt so low….”, sung on the TV series Doc Martin.

<http://www.songlyrics.com/all-saints/never-ever-lyrics/> [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Matthew 13:25-30; 36-40 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Matthew 13:7, 22 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The interweaving and close proximity between the conflicts with the Pharisees and the parable of the tares in Matthew is likely to be more than a subtle hint that the Pharisees are tares, sown by Satan; while the disciples (Christians) are wheat, sown by Christ. Matthew is about the belief-focused, kingly family of God, with Jesus as the key Son: descended from both Abraham and David. Within this kingly family of God, forgiveness is the single most important key in holding the family together. By far, Judaism in general, and the cold-blooded, hard-hearted Pharisees in particular, are the great disrupters and dividers working to tear this belief-centered, kingly family of God to shreds: thus, reaching the world for Christ in the Great Commission is severely hampered. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Relational theology is possibly best described by John 16:13; the Spirit guides us into all Truth. He guides; it’s a process; it takes time; truth does not simply fall from the sky like a golden brick. We will discover that it requires unanimous agreement; it takes a long time in Spirit led Bible study to develop consensus; it takes even longer to reach unanimity. The use of force, persecution, and murder to coerce agreement is destructive to the Spirit’s process. We cannot believe that the Spirit is very pleased with the human race right now: it’s just possible that He is abandoning us as we write. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. This is the single great lesson of Romans 11. Judaism is cut off; the hubris (pride) of churches will result in them being cut off, as well; humility is essential to survival. Humility is equally essential to the development or growth of relational theology: we must be submissive to the Spirit and His leadership (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Peter 1:22). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The principal evidence consists of a corpus known as the Amarna Letters: nearly four hundred extant documents, mostly diplomatic correspondence, written in Akkadian cuneiform (1360-1332 BC).

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amarna_letters> [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. The Church with her Head are fully defined in Hebrews 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Sherlock Holmes frequently claims to deduce, when in fact, he induces. The TV show, *Bones*, loudly proclaims that we don’t speculate, when in fact, science is the systematic evaluation of speculation. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The older notion was that there could only be one variable and one outcome. This limit may have been imposed by a two-dimensional myopia: solutions were often evaluated with flat paper graphs. Three-dimensional solutions were very difficult, multivariate work was practically impossible. The age of digital computers has changed all that; multivariate experimentation in three, seven, fifteen, and more dimensions are a piece of cake: the outcomes are vastly superior. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superconducting_Super_Collider> [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Radioactive decay and drug metabolism aren’t the only things that exhibit half-life behavior. Most things around us involve exponential growth or decay; thus, doubling time and half-life are essential concepts: in cooking, bacterial growth, economics, electronic circuits, fatigue and wear failure, finance, government, population growth, sales… there are hundreds of practical applications. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. This includes much of the TV work of Stephen Hawking, which was mostly drama, showmanship, and razzle-dazzle, with very little science thrown in. If it’s on TV, it’s unlikely to be science. This is the Barnum and Bailey version of science: “there is a sucker born every minute”… with inflation due to exploding population, now suckers are born every second or faster. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. There is no evidence or statistical finding that support the general evolution hypothesis, would be an example of negation of a null hypothesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence for special relativity, as well as for variation within species. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. J. Robert Oppenheimer was marginalized by Edward Teller. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Obviously, both contentions cannot be absolutely true: the egg scientists, and the anti-egg scientists both hedge their bets. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Obviously, untrue: yet, DDT continued in use for decades. The damage done to the Great Lakes is nearly irreparable. The damage through human exposure cannot be undone. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Much of this discussion finds its roots here:

https://www.academia.edu/32934078/AGAINST\_ROMANIDES.docx [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. The theological blunder of Chalcedon, Chalcedon the Ominous, should be enough to convince us that both Popes and Councils err. This is not a feather in Luther’s cap: for his blunders are as notorious as any other. Leo’s *Tome* must not have been ex-cathedra: for if ex-cathedra, then we have proof of papal error, and conciliar error at the same time. The Coptic Church deserves some credit for sticking to its guns. Churches are composed of people and all people, without exception, err. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Their error consists in the false confidence that their unwavering commitment to changelessness protects them from error; but, they always were a floating island of implacability: genuine repentance becomes an impossibility because of their rigidity. 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. The separatist side usually claims that they are the sole surviving church; they do so by closing their eyes, and throwing their Christian adversaries overboard: thus, by an act of pure self-will, they become blinded by the same mechanism that blinded the Pharisees: namely, pride filled obstinacy. However, the other church remains, denial is in play: only the Spirit determines who has left the faith, how, and when. In Acts 5, do we really believe that this is Peter’s action; or, is Peter nothing more than a spokesperson and witness of the Spirit’s action, when people lie to Him? Consequently, the human division is forbidden and illegitimate: we are not permitted to root up the tares. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Genesis 15:5; 17:9; 18:18; 21:12; 22:18; 26:3, 4, 24; 27:29; 28:4, 13; 35:12; Exodus 32:13; 33:1; Deuteronomy 1:8; 34:4; Joshua 24:3; 2 Chronicles 20:7; Psalm 72:17; 105:6; Isaiah 41:8; Jeremiah 33:26; Malachi 3:12; Micah 7:20; Matthew 3:9; 8:11; Luke 1:55, 73; 3:8; 13:28; 19:9; John 8:33. 37; Acts 3:13, 25; 13:26; Romans 4:9, 13, 16; 9:7; 11:1; 2 Corinthians 11:22; Galatians 3:6-8, 9, 14, 16, 18, 29; Hebrews 2:16; 6:13; Revelation 5:9; 14:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Luke 11:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. This term brethren, invariably includes both sisters and brothers. Peter follows a similar form as that in use today: he addresses the leadership of apostles and elders, “Men”; then he addresses the broader audience, “Brethren”. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Acts 10:34-35 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Romans 8:9-11 [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. The Spirit brings Christ into the worst of churches. Revelation 3:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. The shambles is no place for a Christian to shop for meat; yet, pagans shop there without Christian scruples, and without guilt due to their ignorance; the Christian guest is not obliged to make an issue over the pagan host’s meat source: but, if the pagan host brings up the subject, the Christian must act immediately to protect his hosts conscience. 1 Corinthians 10:25-28 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:1-10; 6:20; 7:1-28; 8:1-4; 9:6-25; 10:11, 21; 13:11; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Daniel 2; 7; and more [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Nimrod is a mighty hunter against YHWH; the situation is clearly adversarial (ἐναντίον Κυρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἐναντίον: our word anti-, against). Genesis 10:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. John 8:32-36; Romans 6:7, 18, 22, 22; 8:2, 32; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Galatians 4:30, 31; 5:1; 1 Peter 2:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. There was not guarantee in this that the king or his heirs would continue at all. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. The Triumphal Entry, Palm or Willow Sunday — Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:5… 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Willingness to accept abuse at the hands of our enemies is part of the reconciliation process, which we are compelled to endure. Matthew 5:39 [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. 1 John 4:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. This fact remains, no matter what our belief may be about the meaning of Communion. 1 Corinthians 10:15-17 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Not to be confused with Patrology: we distinguish Patrology as the study of God the Father; Patristics is the study of the writings of the early Church Fathers. Although, it would be fair to say that most authorities treat these words as synonyms. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. If you have been blessed or helped by any of these meditations, please repost, share, or use any of them as you wish. No rights are reserved. They are designed and intended for your free participation. They were freely received, and are freely given. No other permission is required for their use. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)