

# Answering False Doctrines From Ephesians

Intro: I have four false doctrines I have been asked to discuss at this time.

- I. **SINCE PAUL WAS COMMISSIONED TO PREACH TO THE GENTILES, WAS THERE A “PAULINE GOSPEL,” AS DISTINGUISHED FROM A “PETRINE GOSPEL,” THAT WAS PREACHED TO THE JEWS (A LA MODERNISM)**
  - A. **Modernism attempts to explain everything about God and the Bible by naturalistic forces.**
  - B. **The German philosopher, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), was one of the heros of modernism.**
    1. After his death three groups arose from his teachings.
    2. They are called the right, the left, and the center.
      - a. The right represented supernaturalism.
      - b. The left represented naturalism.
      - c. The center had a mediating tendency.
      - d. Some of those on the left were: Strauss, Ludwig, Feuerbach, Bruno, and Ferdinand Christian Baur.
    3. Baur was the originator of the modernistic doctrine we are considering and the founder of the Tübingen school of theology.
  - C. **Baur’s doctrine:**
    1. The only difference between the Jews and early Christians was the Messiahship of the crucified Jesus.
    2. The early apostles and their followers had forgotten the elements of the new religion. When Stephen tried to enforce those elements, he was put to death.
    3. Paul “rediscovered these elements of universality and freedom, [yet] the Church stood suspiciously aloof.”
    4. There was a section of the church that remained hostile to Paul which led to two parties or factions in the early church: Jewish Christians (Petrinists) and Gentile Christians (Paulinists).
    5. Paul was **always** prepared for combat.
      - a. Any epistle that presented Paul in any other way was automatically rejected as authentic.
      - b. The only letter accepted as authentic were Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Romans; he also rejected Acts.
    6. The Petrine party:
      - a. “The Petrine party was very strong until the middle of the 2d century, when it was obliged to yield to, or rather harmonize with, the Pauline.” (John McClintock and James Strong, “Tubingen School,” *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1970), 10:573.) However, the Tübingen school “believed itself able to prove...that no accommodation took place in the apostles’ lifetime.” (J. Haussleiter, “Baur, Ferdinand Christian, and the Later Tübingen School,” *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, editor-in-chief Samuel Macauley Jackson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1972), 2:9.)
      - b. The Petrine party was Jewish both in origin and thinking.
        - (1) “Judaism was the cradle of Christianity; and the latter was only an earnest, restless, reformatory branch of the former. But it was not an offshoot as yet, for Christianity was essentially Jewish all through

its first historic period.” (John McClintock and James Strong, “Tubingen School,” 10:573.)

- (2) “Peter and the other apostles were held fast in the grip of the legalistic conception of Christianity, a sort of Christianized Pharisaism. Paul, when converted, had reacted violently against this view, and became the exponent of gentile freedom. Christianity was divided into two factions, Jewish Christians (Petrinists) and gentile Christians (Paulinists).” (A. T. Robertson, “Paul, the Apostle,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983) 3:2269.)

7. This supposed conflict lead to the conclusion that Paul and Peter preached a different gospel to different people (Paul to the Gentiles, Peter to the Jews).

**D. Evidence for such a doctrine.**

1. Absolutely none.
2. It was an invention in the mind of Baur.
3. “This theory, which found influential support in the scholarship of the time (Schwegler, Zeller, etc), could not stand the test of impartial investigation, and is now on all sides discredited.” (James Orr, “Criticism of the Bible,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* 2:752-753.)

**E. Eph. 3:8** “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;”

1. Baur:
  - a. He would not have used this passage because he rejected Ephesians as canonical.
  - b. He viewed it as a work of the second century which was *mediating theology*.
  - c. Concerning the books Baur rejected, “He called them [Paul’s rejected books] ‘tendency’ writings, designed to cover up the strife and to show that peace reigned in the camp.” (A. T. Robertson, “Paul, the Apostle,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, 3:2269.)
2. Others would find some supposed evidence of this diversity.
  - a. Since Paul preached among the Gentiles that he must be teaching something different than those preaching among the Jews.
  - b. The difference here is not the **message** but the **audience**.

**F. Refutation:**

1. Paul’s collection for Jewish saints from Gentiles.
  - a. Acts 11:27-30 “And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. <sup>29</sup> Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: <sup>30</sup> Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”
  - b. This shows there is not the supposed conflict.
2. Context of Ephesians 3.
  - a. “The unsearchable riches of Christ.”
    - (1) Deals with that which Christ gives—salvation.
    - (2) Heb. 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; <sup>9</sup> And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”

- (3) Peter's preaching of salvation.
    - (a) Consider Acts 2.
    - (b) Peter proved that Jesus was the Son of God; Acts 2:22 "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:"
    - (c) The Jews had sinned in crucifying Him; Acts 2:23 "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"
    - (d) Peter developed faith in the Jews that Jesus is Lord and Christ; Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
    - (e) They needed to repent and be baptized; Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
  - (4) Paul preached that salvation to the Gentiles.
    - (a) Consider the Philippian jailor in Acts 16.
    - (b) The jailor's question; Acts 16:30 "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"
    - (c) Paul's response, his need for faith; Acts 16:31 "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
    - (d) After preaching to him and instilling that faith we observe the jailor's response; Acts 16:33 "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."
  - (5) Both Peter and Paul preached the same plan of salvation for all individuals, Jew or Gentile.
- b. Earlier in Ephesians 3 Paul had discussed how he received by revelation the mystery of Christ then explains that mystery; Eph. 3:6 "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"
- (1) The promise refers back to the promise God made to Abraham; Gen. 12:1-3 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: <sup>2</sup> And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: <sup>3</sup> And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**"
    - (a) There is no distinction made between Jew and Gentile (a distinction which did not exist when God made this promise).
    - (b) Gal. 3:26-29 "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
  - (2) Jew and Gentile are fellowheirs of the same body.
    - (a) If Paul and Peter preached different gospels, they would not be **fellowheirs** (heirs together with).

- (b) They would not be members of the **same** body but different bodies.
  - i) cf. Eph. 4:4 “*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;”
  - ii) If different doctrines were taught, there would be two bodies—one for the Jews another for the Gentiles.

**G. Gal. 1:6-9** “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: <sup>7</sup> Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup> But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup> As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

## II. ARE CHRISTIANS WHO HAVE LIVED SINCE THE END OF THE MIRACULOUS AGE STRENGTHENED INWARDLY BY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SOME DIRECT WAY (IN ADDITION TO HIS WORD)

**A. Eph. 3:16** “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;”

### **B. Denominationalism:**

1. One of the major doctrines of denominationalism is the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people.
2. Calvinism’s teaching.
  - a. Man is totally depraved without any capability of doing anything good.
  - b. If man was to be saved, God had to do it.
  - c. God would send the Holy Spirit directly into the heart of man to convict him of sin and then save him.
  - d. The Spirit continued to act directly upon the heart of man to make sure he lived in such a way as to be saved eternally in heaven.
  - e. The Spirit would always act in conjunction with the Word of God and never contradictory to it.

### **C. Some of our own are now teaching a form of this Calvinist doctrine.**

1. Most do not teach this regarding conviction and conversion, but in the area of Christian living (sanctification).
2. Liberals like Rubel Shelly, Terry Rush, K. C. Moser, Furman Kearley, and many others are teaching this and also saying that they Spirit directly leads the Christian today.
3. Roy Deaver, Mac Deaver, Thomas Warren and a few others are teaching that the Spirit strengthens the Christian in Christian living. They do not hold to the leading of the Spirit directly.

### **D. What we are not discussing.**

1. Providence and what the Spirit might do in that realm.
  - a. We know God does work providentially for His children.
  - b. What the Spirit does in that providence, we cannot say.
2. The indwelling of the Spirit in the Christian.
3. We are discussing the work of the Spirit and how He works today in the Christian.
  - a. Does the Spirit work directly on the Christian (in conjunction with and never separate and apart from the Word)?
  - b. Does the Spirit work indirectly, through the Word?

**E. Refutation:**

1. God would be responsible for the Christian living a life without sin.
  - a. With Calvinists we have pointed out that if God must send the Holy Spirit into the heart of a person to convict and convert him, then if a person is lost it is God's fault.
  - b. If the Spirit strengthens the Christian directly today, then how could a Christian commit sin?
  - c. Winfred Clark wrote: "This is Paul's prayer. Does this mean a direct operation upon the inner man or the heart? Is that the way they are to be strengthened? If so, such would be an operation of God in answer to Paul's prayer apart from the exercise of their own wills. If they were therefore not strong, whose fault would it be? Would it not be the Holy Spirit's if he didn't make them strong by the direct operation?" ("Paul's Prayer For Gentile Saints (3:14-19)," *The Book Of Ephesians*, ed. Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren (Memphis, TN: Getwell Church Of Christ, 1984) p. 73.)
  - d. Instead of being judged by ones actions, we should be judged upon what the Spirit has done or not done for us.
    - (1) 2 Cor. 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
    - (2) Rom. 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
    - (3) Rev. 20:12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
    - (4) We should not be judged.
    - (5) Why should we be judged for what the Spirit does or fails to do for us in directly strengthening us?
2. We do not need the Bible.
  - a. Rom 1:16-17 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
    - (1) Salvation is both from past sins but also salvation in heaven.
    - (2) To be saved in heaven, we must live according to the Scriptures.
    - (3) If one must have the Spirit directly strengthening him, then the gospel is not able to save.
  - b. 2 Pet. 1:3-4 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: <sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
    - (1) In God's Word we have everything that pertains to life, godliness, and escape the corruption in this world.
    - (2) If this doctrine is true, the Bible is not sufficient to do this.
  - c. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
    - (1) The results of using the Bible properly are: making us a man of God, complete, and equipped for every good work.

- (2) This view says the Scriptures alone cannot do these things, we need the direct strengthening of the Spirit within us to accomplish this, thus the Scriptures are not sufficient.
3. Context shows the Spirit's strengthening is done through the medium of God's Word, not directly.
- a. Paul had received the revelation of God; Eph. 3:3-4 "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, <sup>4</sup> Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)"
- b. The Spirit is the one revealing the message.
- (1) Eph. 3:5 "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"
- (2) 1 Cor. 2:10-13 "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. <sup>13</sup> Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
- (3) Paul wrote the message down for these and us to be strengthened by the Spirit's message.
- (4) After quoting Ephesians 6:10-11, 13-17 Winfred Clark writes, "It becomes obvious that such a person would be made stronger by doing what the Spirit through Paul admonishes him to do, wouldn't he? Now, does this differ in effect from the prayer he prays in Ephesians 3:16? Surely not. The inner man is strengthened by the Spirit as he learns from the Spirit's teaching how to be stronger. His convictions are made stronger leading to stronger determination (Col. 1:10-11)." ("Paul's Prayer For Gentile Saints (3:14-19)," *The Book Of Ephesians*, ed. Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren (Memphis, TN: Getwell Church Of Christ, 1984) p. 74.)
- c. When Paul spoke to the Ephesians elders he tells them how they would be strengthened.
- (1) Acts 20:32 "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
- (2) They would be built up, strengthened, by the Spirit, by the Word of God.
4. The Spirit works in the Christian the same way He works in the non-Christian.
- a. In both cases the Spirit uses a medium, working upon man indirectly.
- b. Jesus promised to send the Spirit upon the apostles.
- (1) John 16:8-11 "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> Of sin, because they believe not on me; <sup>10</sup> Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; <sup>11</sup> Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."
- (2) The Spirit reproves or convicts the non-Christian of sin by means of the Word of God (an indirect manner)—see Acts 2.
- (3) Why would we think that the Spirit would convict men of sin in one way, but then convict men of righteousness in another?

- (4) As one reads Acts he also observes that the Spirit used the Word to convict men of righteousness.

### III. IS THE “ONE BODY” THE “CHURCH UNIVERSAL” WHICH ENCOMPASSES ALL THE DENOMINATIONS

#### A. There is one body.

1. Eph. 4:4 “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*”
2. Paul use *body* nine times in Ephesians.
  - a. One other time he uses “one body;” Eph. 2:16 “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”
  - b. He uses “same body” to connect the Gentiles with the Jews; Eph. 3:6 “That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:”
  - c. The body of Christ; Eph. 1:23; 4:12; 5:30 “Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all...For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:...For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones”
3. This one body is the church.
  - a. Eph. 1:22-23 “And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all”
  - b. Col. 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.”

#### B. A body indicates a head.

1. Headship denotes leadership and authority.
2. Jesus is the head of the body.
  - a. Eph. 1:22-23 “And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all”
  - b. Col. 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.”
  - c. A body only has one head.
  - d. Jesus does not share His headship with anyone else.
3. Jesus built His church; Mat. 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
4. He is the only one with the right to command and expect obedience.

#### C. Important words

1. Denomination.
  - a. It means name, or a naming, or to designate.
  - b. Two other words are important in this discussion.
2. Heresy or sect.
  - a. From the Greek word αἵρεσι" (*haireisis*) and means a choosing or choice.
  - b. Vine says, “Denotes a choosing, choice; then that which is chosen, and hence an opinion, especially a self-wiled opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth and leads to division and the formation of sects.” W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, n.d.), p. 303.
  - c. Thayer writes, “3. that which is chosen, a chosen course of thought and action; hence one’s chosen opinion, tenet; according to the context, as opinion varying from the true exposition of the Christian faith. 4. a body of men separating themselves from others and following their own tenets. 5.

dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims.” Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Associated Publishers, n.d.), p. 16.

3. Schism or division.
  - a. From the Greek σχίσμα (*schisma*).
  - b. It means a division or rent.
  - c. Vine writes, “metaphorically of the contrary condition to that which God has designed for a local church in ‘tempering the body together’ (v. 24).” (Vine, p. 550.)
4. A denomination comes as the result of the other two.
  - a. There is first a choosing of some belief or tenet (generally false) by a group making themselves a heresy.
  - b. From this heresy there is a division that occurs making the group a schism.
  - c. Last, there is a naming of that schism to designate them according to that particular tenet making a denomination.
5. Thus, all denominations cannot make up the one body, and no denomination is a part of the one body.

**D. Jesus has the right to command and expect our obedience.**

1. He has that right as the head of the body, the church.
2. A denomination has rejected Christ’s headship by choosing their own doctrine(s).
3. By rejecting Christ’s authority they are not a part of His body.

**E. Notice some doctrines denominations have rejected.**

1. Mat. 15:3,6,9 “Ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition... <sup>6</sup> ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition... <sup>9</sup> But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
2. Regarding the worship of the church.
  - a. Jesus authorized five acts in worship to God.
    - (1) Congregational singing; Eph. 5:19 “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
    - (2) Partaking of the Lord’s Supper on the first day of every week; Acts 20:7 “And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”
    - (3) Prayer to the Father through Christ; Acts 2:42 “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
    - (4) Giving or the contribution 1 Cor. 16:1-2 “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. <sup>2</sup>Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
    - (5) Preaching God’s Word Acts 20:7 “And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”
  - b. Denominations have changed every aspect.
    - (1) To congregational singing.
      - (a) Choirs, choruses, and solos.
      - (b) Mechanical instrumental music.
    - (2) To the Lord’s Supper.
      - (a) Changed the elements—some have used Coke and hamburgers to please the taste.

- (b) Changed the frequency.
        - i) First they changed it to yearly, quarterly, or monthly.
        - ii) Then they changed it from Sunday to any day of the week.
      - (3) They have changed to whom we are to pray, teaching we may pray to Mary, Jesus, the apostles, a departed saint or some loved one.
      - (4) To receive its funds denominations have:
        - (a) Gone into business.
        - (b) Have cake sales, garage sales, etc.
        - (c) Hold gambling parties under the guise of Bingo.
      - (5) Regarding the Preaching
        - (a) Changed what we do and substituted drama presentations and puppets instead of preaching.
        - (b) Changed the substance of the preaching: preaching a social gospel, making people feel good, after-dinner speeches, along with a host of false doctrines.
      - (6) Denominations who have changed the worship of God in such ways they cannot be a part of that one body, the church.
  - 3. Regarding the plan of salvation; how one becomes a member of the body.
    - a. God's plan.
      - (1) Man must believe.
        - (a) In God; Heb. 11:6 "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
        - (b) In Christ; John 8:24 "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."
        - (c) In the gospel; Mark 16:15-16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"
        - (d) Faith comes by hearing God's Word; Rom 10:17 "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"
      - (2) Repent; Luke 24:46-47 "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"
      - (3) He will confess his faith; Rom. 10:10 "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
      - (4) Baptized, immersed, in water for the remission of sins; Mark 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"
    - b. Those who reject this plan never enter into the body of Christ.
      - (1) 1 Cor. 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit"
      - (2) Baptism, which places one into the body, is the act which denominations have rejected.
4. By choosing their own doctrines they do not have God.
  - a. 2 John 9 "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son"
  - b. They are now in opposition to the one body or church Jesus established.

## F. Misused Passages.

1. John 15:1ff
  - a. Denominations claim that Jesus is the vine and the branches are different denominations.
  - b. The branches are individuals.
    - (1) John 15:5 “I am the vine, **ye** are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”
    - (2) John 15:6 “**If a man** abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.”
2. Rom. 12:4-5 “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: <sup>5</sup> So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”
  - a. Denominations claim that the many members are denominations.
  - b. Context shows it is a discussion of individuals not denominations.
    - (1) Taking to brethren; Rom. 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, **brethren**, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.”
    - (2) Individuals are to be transformed from the world; Rom. 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
    - (3) It is every man; Rom. 12:3 “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to **every man that is among you**, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”
    - (4) After he discusses the different gifts given to men, not conflicting denominations; Rom. 12:6-8 “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given **to us**, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; <sup>7</sup> Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; <sup>8</sup> Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”
3. 1 Cor. 12:12-27
  - a. The membership at Corinth constituted the body, not denominations; 1 Cor. 12:27
  - b. When all the members are taken together, you have the body.
  - c. 1 Cor. 12:25 “That there should be no schism in the body.” Denominations are divisions or schisms, thus they could not be the members of this passage.
4. These passages could not refer to denominations, because no denominations existed at that time.
  - a. They did not come into existence until centuries later.
  - b. Jesus built His church, not denominations; Mat 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
  - c. The seed principle is contrary to denominations.
    - (1) Seed produces after its kind.
    - (2) Christ is the vine—the branches must be Christians.
    - (3) Christ is the head—the members of the body must be Christians.
    - (4) Christ does not produce denominations; He produces His church—the church of Christ; Rom. 16:16 “Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.”

#### IV. DOES THE “ONE FAITH” REFER TO THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST (A LA KETCHERSIDE, SHELLY)

**A. Eph. 4:5** “One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”

**B. The “one faith” does have reference to the atonement of Christ.**

1. Acts 15:9 “And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”
  - a. The purification of the heart takes place by the blood of Christ.
  - b. Rev. 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”
  - c. 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
2. Gal. 3:14 “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”
  - a. The promise comes through the faith (definite article is in the original).
  - b. Thus, salvation to all (Jews and Gentiles) comes through the “one faith” and thus the “one faith” does refer to the atonement.

**C. Ketcherside’s and Shelly’s usage of “one faith.”**

1. Their belief is that the “one faith” **only** deals with the atonement and our response to it.
  - a. Ketcherside writes, “The faith relates to the life and death of Jesus...The faith portrays what Jesus has done and will do for us, and we accept it.” (W. Carl Ketcherside, *Mission Messenger* October, 1965.)
  - b. Shelly writes, “The ‘one faith’ has nothing to do with our methods and procedures of doing God’s work; it has to do with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and our response to that once-for-all act of atonement.” (Rubel Shelly, *I Just Want To Be A Christian* (Nashville, TN: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christian, 1984), p. 82.)
2. Once someone starts compromising in one area, he will make concessions in others areas.
  - a. They have no respect for the Word of God.
  - b. They then moved to give up the purpose of our response, teaching one did not have to understand that baptism was “for the remission of our sins.”
  - c. He has now given up completely regarding our response and settles just on the atonement, and as long as someone believes Jesus died for him.
  - d. The atonement is the “core Gospel” or “Bulls-eye Gospel,” everything else is peripheral.
3. Advanced by Ketcherside and Garrett in the 1960s in teaching a separation between gospel and doctrine.
  - a. Gospel was to be preached only to those outside of Christ.
  - b. Doctrine could only be preached to those who were members of the church.
  - c. They taught fellowship was based only on gospel, doctrine did not affect fellowship.
  - d. It was called “unity in diversity” or “fellowship without endorsement.”
4. Shelly taught essentially the same idea but used the terms “Big F” (or upper-case) fellowship and “little F” (lower case) fellowship.
  - a. He also referred to this as “levels of fellowship” or “limited fellowship.”

- b. What Ketcherside taught about gospel, Shelly meant by Upper-case (F) fellowship; what Ketcherside meant by doctrine, Shelly meant by lower-case (f) fellowship.
- 5. They teach that fellowship is based completely upon the seven ones; Eph. 4:4-6 “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> One Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*”
  - a. They must redefine “one faith” to be limited to the atonement.
  - b. If “one faith” has reference to anything other than the atonement, their doctrine falls.

#### D. The “one faith” corresponds to the entirety of the New Testament.

1. Acts 13:7-12 “Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.”
  - a. Elymas sought to turn Sergius Paulus from “the faith”
  - b. Barnabas and Saul were teaching “the word of God.”
  - c. Elymas was trying to pervert the “right ways of the Lord.”
  - d. Sergius Paulus was astonished at the “doctrine of the Lord.”
  - e. “The faith” is also the “word of God,” the “right ways of the Lord,” and the “doctrine of the Lord.”
2. Other parallels
  - a. The truth
    - (1) Tit. 1:13-14 “This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.”
    - (2) 2 Tim. 3:7-8 “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”
  - b. Sound doctrine; Tit. 2:1-2 “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: <sup>2</sup> That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.”
  - c. Gospel; Acts 14:21-22 “And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and *to* Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”
3. 1 Tim. 4:1,3,6 “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;... <sup>3</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.... <sup>6</sup> If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of [*the is in the original*] faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”
4. 1 Tim. 5:8 ““But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel”
5. 1 Tim. 6:10 “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

6. 2 Tim. 2:17-18 “And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; <sup>18</sup> Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”
7. We are to contend for the entirety of the New Testament teaching, not just the atonement; Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

**E. Reason for limiting the “one faith” to the atonement.**

1. They wish to fellowship the denominational world.
2. Denominations do not teach the truth (plan of salvation, the worship, work, organization of the church, etc.).
3. They had to find some way to overlook these errors.
4. They erroneously claim to have found it by limiting the “one faith” to the atonement.

**Conclusion:** Let us always obey Jude’s admonition to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”