

The Origin of Sin – briefly stated

While doing research on what various Christian denominations and groups believe about the origin of sin, I ran across the following article "[Where Did Sin Come From?](#)" which explored the question of the origin of sin. The summation of the article did not answer the question at all, but left the reader with the following questions:

To answer our question, 'Where did sin come from?', we make the following conclusions:

- 1. Although Lucifer spawned the first sin, he was not the creator of the concept of sin.*
- 2. The concept of sin has always been known to the all-knowing God.*
- 3. Sin exists because—either it is a created concept of God brought about by God's decrees, or, it has always co-existed as the eternal antithesis of everything that God is.*
- 4. Sin could only experientially exist because, although God cannot sin, He made creatures who could.*

I could not bear it, and emailed the webmaster with the following question:

Who wrote this nonsense? Give me a name please.

And listed the questions above. I then finished with the following statement:

This evidences a complete and total lack of understanding. Whoever wrote this, missed the mark.

The gentleman who wrote it answered back, and was gracious

(considering my initial contact email) and stated that I had contested, but gave no reasons for disagreement. Moreover, he would be glad to address my concerns.

Fair enough. After all, had he been less than gracious, I would have deserved it. I thanked him for being gracious, and sent the following reply:

Sin has a cause, and that is transgression, which is brought about because of iniquity:

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. (*Jeremiah 33:8*)

Iniquity leads to transgression, which immediately results in sin.

Iniquity is the property of being unequal in any of one's ways:

Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (*Ezekiel 18:29-31*)

When the LORD states that the ways of the people of Israel are unequal, and He then calls them to turn so iniquity will not be their ruin, He is defining what iniquity is. To help in our understanding, we can use the analogy of a math equation (which is an equality):

In thinking about equations: If we introduce into it any element that makes it unequal, what are our chances of making it equal if we don't realize what we did? What are our chances of actually realizing we introduced an inequality? Moreover, if our understanding is not accurate because we perceive the equation wrongly (unequally – that is, not as it actually is), what are our chances of self-correction?

When a mistake is made working an equation, generally the person does not realize they erred, else they stop immediately and correct the error. However, the divergence with righteousness and iniquity here is that once a thought exists, it cannot be unthought or taken back. Since it is that the LORD judges the thoughts of the heart, once Lucifer had that one thought of being more glorious than the LORD on the throne, he committed an iniquity. Due to the very nature of inequality, he could not go back, nor find his way back. Because of this iniquity, pride arose, and Satan viewed himself to be better than the LORD God in numerous ways. Hence, he rebelled.

Now to look at righteousness: Being righteous is being equal in all one's ways (which only the LORD God is):

Before the LORD; for he cometh to **judge the earth: with righteousness** shall he **judge the world, and the people with equity**. (*Psalms 98:9*)

Here, like in Ezekiel, the LORD defines another term. Only in this case, it is righteousness. Putting the two together: Righteousness is the property of being equal in ALL one's ways, and iniquity is the property of being unequal in ANY of one's ways. It is of necessity true that if righteousness requires for all ways to be equal, that being (or becoming) unequal in any of one's ways, means that one has iniquity. Moreover, like the math equation, being unequal in one part,

spreads to every other part – and it grows.

Once one cannot perceive correctly because of being unequal (iniquity), the determination of what is the right thing to do is clouded and misperceived. It is easy to see then how we can transgress the bounds if we have difficulty perceiving where the bounds are. As soon as we transgress, we have missed the mark (sinned).

Briefly, to answer the final points you put forth in the article:

To answer our question, 'Where did sin come from?', we make the following conclusions: [My answers are in square brackets – italics for the web]

1. *Although Lucifer spawned the first sin, he was not the creator of the concept of sin. [There is no "concept of sin." Sin is not a concept. Rather, is a direct result of transgression (which is exceeding the bounds – thus missing the mark), which is brought about because of iniquity. Satan exercised iniquity because he thought in his heart that he was better than the LORD sitting on the throne he was covering (the descriptions of both the LORD and Satan are in the Scriptures, and that difference is significant). The "problem" is that the LORD gave both angels and men freewill and the ability to judge, but they were not given omniscience. Hence, perception and understanding were limited. Satan lost sight of who created him and gave him all that he had. To man, Satan is beyond genius. But he lost sight of the fact that he was GIVEN that. Just like his beauty and musical ability, his intelligence was given him by the LORD God. However, once he lost sight of that, it was a mere thought of the heart to become unequal – which slipped him into iniquity. Now Satan can never return from that, but only gets more and more unequal over time.]*

2. *The concept of sin has always been known to the all-*

knowing God. [No, the fact that creatures with free-will and the ability to judge, yet not having omniscience would have the potential to slip into iniquity, was known to the LORD God. Nevertheless, He chose to create them that way, and would deal with the consequences. The LORD God already knew what those consequences were, but He desired to create beings that would love Him of their own volition. The very nature of free-will, combined with the ability to judge, creates a situation in which the potential for iniquity exists. However, for love to be genuine, the will must be free, and to actually choose freely, one must be able to judge independently – that is, of oneself, given the facts to make a determination.]

3. Sin exists because—either it is a created concept of God brought about by God’s decrees, or, it has always co-existed as the eternal antithesis of everything that God is. [This is a false choice. We are to choose between the LORD God being the ultimate author of sin, or the core of Taoism? This is expressly man’s view, which lacks understanding of iniquity and righteousness.]

4. Sin could only experientially exist because, although God cannot sin, He made creatures who could. [Here you are closest to being right, but answer no questions. You would have to explain what you mean by “He made creatures who could.” How, and in what way?]

You are getting the essence of the doctrine. This is by no means extensive in addressing the ramifications of iniquity. But, it should briefly explain where sin came from. Of course, if you are of Calvinist or Reformed persuasion, you will likely reject everything I say.

In Christ,

Paul W. Davis

Why and How is the LORD God Able to Maintain His Righteousness

Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. (*Ezekiel 18:29-30*)

Why is it that the LORD God is able to maintain His righteousness, or the equality of all His ways in and of Himself.

To begin with, the LORD God is omniscient, that is, He knows all things. This is not merely having all knowledge, (which we typically think of as mere information) but includes all understanding of that information, and all wisdom to properly apply that information.

We must understand that having knowledge, which is information, is not merely enough, but one must know the significance of that information, which is understanding. One must also know how to apply the information to everything that concerns them. The ability to properly apply the information and understanding one has, is called wisdom. The Scripture is express that the LORD God's understanding is infinite, which of necessity, means that His knowledge is infinite, or omniscient.

Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. (*Psalms 147:5*)

Understanding in itself is a kind of knowledge. It does not simply deal with information, but deals with the significance of that information: that is what that information means and how it relates to everything else. Understanding is essential to wisdom, for without understanding, there is simply no way to determine the weight, or significance of one thing versus another: whether something is to be of concern, or whether it can be ignored, or is of lesser significance.

Hence, we are led to wisdom, which is essential for the construct of things. Wisdom in itself is a kind of knowledge. It is the knowledge of how information is to be applied and how it will work out as things interact. Without it, it would have been impossible for the LORD God to create anything that worked. And yet, so wise is the LORD in His creation that even in a corrupted state, it still is a wonder to behold and works quite well.

To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (*Psalms 136:5*)

The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. (*Proverbs 3:19*)

Thus, when we say the LORD God is omniscient, it, in practical terms, means that the LORD God knows all that exists, and knows all the significance of everything, and is able to properly weight that information and thus apply it properly and correctly to every situation that exists or could exist, for all eternity.

In sum, the LORD God knows all things, and all out-workings that are and can be of those things and their interaction with all other things, for all time and eternity. Moreover, He knows that He knows all things which are, and knows that He knows all out-workings that are and will be. Additionally, the LORD God knows there is nothing else to know that can be known.

Without this knowledge and understanding, maintaining His righteousness would be impossible as He must know the end, and possible ends of everything that is or could be. Else, there exists the possibility of any action made by the LORD God that would be unequal in its end. This would yield unrighteousness, which is impossible with the LORD God.

But omniscience is not enough to maintain righteousness. It is not sufficient to merely have all knowledge so that in all workings accomplished, the end of all is known. Rather, one must also love equity or equality:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that **I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight,** saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The LORD trieth the righteous: **but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.** Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: *this shall be* the portion of their cup. **For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness;** his countenance doth behold the upright. (*Psalms 11:4-7*)

(Here I speak as a man, from man's perspective): Without a love for righteousness, there is no motivator to be righteous, though one may know all things which are, or could be, and the outworking of them all,

The LORD God delights in equity in all things, and in all His ways. It is His greatest pleasure to see things which are equal, balanced and true. Whether that equity, which is righteousness, is from the things He makes directly, or from

His creatures, it is a delight to His soul to behold them.

Without this love for equity, righteousness and truth, which is in and of Himself, coupled with His omniscience, which is in and of Himself, righteousness would not be maintained.

This post updated and expanded – 07/21/2014

How Very Rich, How Very Ignorant

Today, the [New York Times ran an article about one Michael Bloomberg](#), former mayor of New York City and a very wealthy man. Unfortunately, Mr. Bloomberg has decided that he can play nanny to everyone and decide for them what is best for them. To that end, Mr. Bloomberg opposes firearms ownership, the use of tobacco, and the consumption of certain foods, holding that all are bad for the rest of us.

In the final paragraph of this puff piece, Mr. Bloomberg had this to say about the end of his efforts:

But if he senses that he may not have as much time left as he would like, he has little doubt about what would await him at a Judgment Day. Pointing to his work on gun safety, obesity and smoking cessation, he said with a grin: "I am telling you if there is a God, when I get to heaven I'm not stopping to be interviewed. I am heading straight in. I have earned my place in heaven. It's not even close."

Let it never be said that Michael Bloomberg runs short on pride. However that may be, Mr. Bloomberg missed the standard by which one gains entrance into heaven:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (*John 14:6*)

The reason it is by the Lord Jesus Christ and Him alone, is because He, and He alone meets the standard of righteousness the Father demands. Hence, through the Lord Jesus Christ and His work of redemption, salvation is, always has been, and ever will be by grace, and grace alone:

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

And again:

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (*Romans 11:5-6*)

Thus, the Scripture is quite plain that you will do it by grace and grace alone, as works and grace are mutually exclusive. But, it is quite evident Mr. Bloomberg has chosen works for his justification before the LORD God, which is to his condemnation:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 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. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

(Revelation 20:11-15)

Moreover, poor Michael misses the boat altogether in that he thinks being wealthy and powerful are what might qualify him in the first place. However, had he read the following, he would have known the LORD God has no use for him in his present state:

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. (*I Corinthians 1:26-29*)

And he compounds his error in that he stated "I am telling you if there is a God,..." which is a blatant insult to the LORD God, and shows how very far away Mr. Bloomberg is from ever pleasing the LORD:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

Pray for the poor man. He needs all the help he can get. He is wretched, naked, poor and blind, and doesn't even realize it.

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (*Mark 8:36*)

Changes

Back in 2003-4 time frame, I penned a statement of faith that was based upon the statement of faith of the first true New Testament church I was in. What I did was essentially corrected and amended their statement as there were (and to this day still are) typographical errors, citation errors, and statements which were either nonsense, or were arcane enough so the average person could not actually understand what was expressed. Primarily, I did this to more fully express what I believed, and to solidify in my own mind how best to do that. Nothing accomplishes those purposes quite like writing.

In 2009, Ebenezer Baptist mission undertook the task of writing its statement of faith, which resulted in some changes to my statement, as I am under the authority of the mission. Most of the changes were not significant or substantial, but clarifying of held doctrines. A couple of articles were split for clarification, and one new was added ([Of Liberty of the Conscience](#)). With those basic changes the statement of faith was pretty much complete.

However, that was four years ago, and much teaching has gone on since then. There is a far better understanding of certain doctrines, and for the first time, an valid, defined, testable understanding of iniquity, transgression and sin. There is also a far better understanding of how man is made in the image of God. These things and others warranted looking again at the statement of faith to see what needed to be changed and/or clarified. This time, there are significant changes.

Do these changes alter the doctrine? Actually, no, they do not. What they do is clarify the foundations of the belief and add significant information to the doctrine, which strengthens

the doctrine. Additionally, gaps and ambiguities are removed so there is no misunderstanding as to what is believed. To illustrate what I mean, article six (VI) is set forth below. First is the statement from 2009, and below it is the newly agreed to statement.

VI. Of The Creation (5/31/09)

I believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness. I hold that all of creation was not, and is not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was and is, that they should bring forth only "after their kind." Moreover, that the earth is approximately 6000 years old, and that the creation of the entire physical universe occurred in six, twenty-four hour days, and that on the seventh day the LORD rested.

Some things to note in the original statement from 2009 are a lack of specificity as to where everything came from, and whether the twin errors of the Gap theory and day/age theory are allowed. Moreover, only the minimum is mentioned about the creation of man. Since the majority of the rest of the statement of faith deals with man and the LORD's provision of salvation in Christ, it is rather odd that so little is mentioned about man and how he was created, and why he is accountable.

You are free to judge, but I believe that is fixed with the following statement:

VI. Of The Creation (9/25/13)

I believe in the Genesis account of the creation of the physical universe; that it is to be accepted as factually and

literally true: That all things which are, were created ex nihilo, or out of nothing, by the infinite knowledge and power of the LORD God. I reject any assertion that the account is allegorical or figurative as pertaining to the events of creation and their sequence. I reject as spurious both the "Gap" theory and "Day/Age" theory of the creation account. I hold that all of creation was not, and is not, a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms. I believe, as Scripture plainly expresses, that all animal and plant life was made directly, and God's established law was, and is, that they should bring forth only "after their kind." I believe that all of creation was formed fully functional, or "in-process," as if it had always existed; that all life was created in a mature state. I hold, in accordance with the Biblical timeline, that the earth is approximately 6000 years old; that the creation of the entire physical universe occurred in six, twenty-four hour days, and that on the seventh day the LORD rested.

I hold as true, that man was created directly by the LORD God, and in the similitude of God. That this likeness is found in five distinct aspects: That man is a tri-unity of parts: soul, spirit, and body; That man has the innate ability to judge; That man has free-will within the parameters of his given existence; That man is creative, being able to bring forth out of that which exists; That man has the moral imperatives of mercy, compassion, forgiveness, grace, and love. Accordingly, man is the pinnacle of the LORD's creation. I believe that the LORD God, having bestowed upon man such attributes, holds every individual accountable for the conduct of his existence.

It is my prayer that the updated articles in the statement of faith are a benefit and a blessing as they are intended to clarify and answer why certain things are as they are. Additionally, there are three (3) new articles which are

identified as necessary:

[Of Righteousness and Iniquity](#)

[Of the Penalty for Sin](#)

Of the Father

Two have already been added, and the third will be shortly. These articles are necessary as these subjects are prone to error and very little is taught and/or understood about them.

May you be blessed,

Paul W. Davis

When We Reference Verses. . .

One of the problems I see among those who decide to adopt Statements of Faith, or write articles in which Scripture is referenced and quoted, is a decided lack of care about who said what in Scripture. What I mean by this, is when a verse is needed to support a point, frequently little care is taken about which verse is used, so long as it supports the point the author or church wants supported.

For instance, my personal Statement of Faith, and consequently Ebenezer Baptist's Statement of Faith were adopted, corrected (duplicate and obviously incorrect verse references) and then modified to accurately reflect what is believed. However, at the time this was done, there was not extensive study done about what certain books of the Bible were about (specifically Job and Ecclesiastics) other than what was immediately obvious.

Hence, verse references were retained from those two books in the Statements of Faith, and not properly vetted as to

applicability. The verses seemed to make the point that was desired to make, and that was the “end” of it, so to speak.

But, it is not the end of it. Rather, it is entirely unsuitable to reference someone in Scripture who said something that was correct, but nonetheless had wrong doctrine, to support a point of right doctrine. You are, or will be, shooting yourself in the proverbial foot.

For instance, in making the point about Justification in Christ, the very first passage referenced came from the book of Job and stated this:

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places. Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise? How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm? (*Job 25:1-6*)

Because the passage speaks of man’s justification (or lack thereof) before the LORD God, it was used in the original Statement of Faith to support the point that man cannot justify himself before the LORD by his own power. Seems fair enough, and was retained as scriptural support. However, as we read further on in Job, perhaps that is not the wisest position to take:

And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, **My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right,** as my servant Job hath. (*Job 42:7*)

As the LORD God makes clear here, Bildad the Shuhite did not speak the things that were proper doctrine concerning the LORD, as Job had. Specifically, the LORD is here referring to

the salvation that is in Christ. Job argued for justification by faith in the Redeemer to come – which is Jesus Christ. Eliphaz and his friends, one of which is Bildad the Shuhite, did not. Rather, they argued for *quid pro quo* with the LORD, or what is better known as the “Prosperity Gospel.”

Not exactly a sterling reference. Also, not someone I would want to lean on to prove my point about a doctrine that he, Bildad, obviously rejected.

Suffice to say, when the article on Justification was updated, that verse reference was removed.

The Hour is Late

In case you haven't noticed, the hour grows very late. Whatever ministry things the LORD God has laid on your heart to accomplish, get them done.

Even if the hour weren't late, consider your age and how much time you have left to fulfill your ministry. For me, I have many things to write and document before that time is shut off. I would like to be able to stand before my Lord and know that they were accomplished.

Thank You for Your Service? –

An Open Letter to Laurence Vance

The following is in response to a column by Laurence Vance, dated 19 July 2011, and titled "[Thank You for Your Service?](#)" in which Mr. Vance excoriates the U.S. Military and those who support them and thank them for their service to America. This response is written and published publicly because of one outstanding feature of the column: overt and blatant bitterness.

And four, what is a Vietnamese man – who most certainly has relatives, or friends or neighbors of relatives, that were killed or injured by U.S. bombs and bullets during the Vietnam War – doing joining the U.S. military where he can be sent to shoot and bomb foreigners like the U.S. military did to his people?

And aside from these four things, I'm afraid I must also say: Sorry, soldiers, I don't thank you for your service.

- *I don't thank you for your service in fighting foreign wars.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in fighting without a congressional declaration of war.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in bombing and destroying Iraq and Afghanistan.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in killing hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in expanding the war on terror to Pakistan and Yemen.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in occupying over 150 countries around the world.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in garrisoning the planet with over 1,000 military bases.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in defending our*

freedoms when you do nothing of the kind.

- *I don't thank you for your service as part of the president's personal attack force to bomb, invade, occupy, and otherwise bring death and destruction to any country he deems necessary.*

*Thank you for your service? I don't think so.
((<http://lewrockwell.com/vance/vance250.html>))*

Everyone needs to know: This is not a Christian spirit and attitude. It is not a Scriptural spirit and attitude.

Mr. Vance,

Have we just a bit of bitterness? I see NO justification for your attitude and spirit anywhere in the New Testament.

I don't find it in John the Baptist:

And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.
(*Luke 3:14*)

I don't find it in the Lord Jesus Christ:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, ((An officer in the Roman military.)) beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say

unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour. (*Matthew 8:5-13*)

I don't find it in the apostle Peter:

And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius ((Cornelius was a Centurion in the Roman Army.)) met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel,

preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. (*Acts 10:25-48*)

I don't find it in the apostle Paul:

But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail

with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. (Acts 27:21-36)

In fact, I do not find your attitude and spirit among any of the apostles, or in Christ, or in John the Baptist. Your spirit is bitter and hateful and not conducive to ministry or presenting the gospel to anyone, let alone a member of the military. What? Are members of the military not worthy to be presented the gospel? Instead of trying to reach them, you preach hate. Are you kin to Fred Phelps? You must be spiritually, because you share [a common spirit](#). ((Note: Phelps use of the passage is out of context. However much he would like it to be so, America is not ancient Babylon.))

Wouldn't it be so much better to have the spirit and attitude

presented in the following passage?

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (*I Timothy 2:1-6*)

Next time you see a member of the military, present them with the gospel. I guarantee you – they need it. Unless of course, you hate them so much that you want to keep them on the road to Hell. But what kind of person would that make you?

In Christ,
Paul W. Davis

Maintaining the Truth

This message is located at Ebenezer Baptist Church's [Lessons and Messages](#) page, or by the direct link: [Maintaining the Truth](#)

Leaving the Amish

If you at all viewed the BBC documentary "Trouble in Amish Paradise" then you know that the "simple, pastoral lifestyle"

of the Amish masks an egregious doctrine and the active suppression of the truth of the Scripture to maintain the doctrine the Amish hold. The BBC also produced a follow-up documentary that traces the journey of the families who were cast out of the Amish community and church for daring to read the Bible in English and witness to those around them of the grace that is in Christ.

The follow-up documentary also highlights the dangers of learning that you are involved in a system that teaches and promotes a lie, and upon leaving that system, having no one to actually teach you the whole counsel of God and explain the Scripture to you. It is frequently the case that individuals who leave such systems, end up being snared by other belief systems that are also wrong, just in a different way. Though there is a church in that community which ministers to those leaving the Amish doctrine, it also has errors which lead astray those involved in it.

If the Devil can't get you one way, he will surely have another way to prevent you from having the truth.

There is something of note here: Believing in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is not, as the commentator states that born-again Christian's teach, a way to avoid going to Hell nor should any true child of God teach that. ((It is unfortunate that most all "evangelical" Christians believe and teach this as it is egregious error.)) Rather, if that is the reason why you have believed in Christ for your "salvation," then I will submit to you that you have believed out of an improper motivation. Salvation IS NOT "fire insurance." Neither should it be viewed as such.

If you have not come to know the Lord Jesus Christ personally to the point that you have learned of Him enough to TOTALLY trust Him with your life, then you have not reached salvation. Contrary to popular belief, salvation is not "letting Christ

into your heart.” Rather, it is placing your life, your destiny into Christ’s hands without reservation. One does not do this out of a base desire to avoid suffering in Hell, but does so because they have come to know the LORD and have found that He is “altogether lovely” as the Scripture states. Hence, belief and trust in Christ for salvation comes from a overwhelming desire to spend the rest of your existence with Him. To reach this point, repentance (and it must be the repentance the LORD God grants) is utterly necessary.

There is simply no way to address every error presented here. However, things like tearing a house down because the Old Testament law states that is what must be done for a “fretting leprosy” indicates a lack of understanding about the reason for the Old Testament law given to ancient Israel. This problem is not limited to Charity Church or any particular denomination, but is found throughout every group that claims to be “Bible-believing.” I have had Independent Baptist brethren try to tell me the Ten Commandments are still in effect as commandments we, as Christians, must abide by today, when the reality is that the Ten Commandments were the covenant the LORD God made with ancient Israel. ((The following are the passages from the Old Testament that state plainly that the Ten Commandments are the Covenant the Lord had with Israel. This does not change the fact that the Ten Commandments are a reflection of the nature and character of God, and thus are always in effect. Nonetheless, they are not part of anyone’s covenant today, but are fully encompassed by the first two commandments of the law.

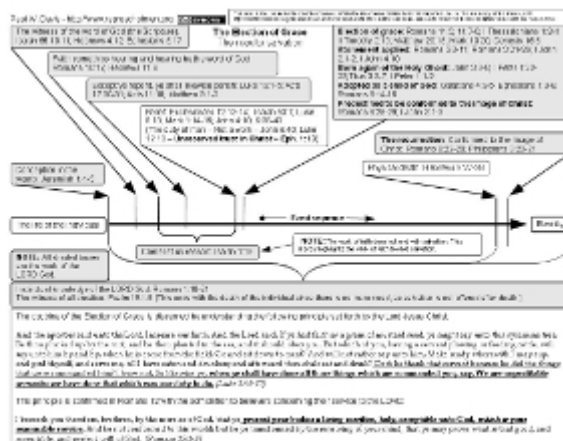
And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. (Exodus 34:27-28)


And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. (Deuteronomy 4:13)

Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you. When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water: And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image. Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they. So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands. (Deuteronomy 9:8-15)))

The Election of Grace: The road to salvation

Beyond doubt, the doctrine of the election of grace has been hijacked and misconstrued by certain persons into a false doctrine of "election to belief." An honest study of the Scriptures demonstrates clearly that there exists no "election to belief," but a very clear election of grace by the LORD God. The following graphic, and Adobe Acrobat link below the image, illustrate the path which one walks to salvation in which, if one ultimately believes, the LORD God will of His own volition, elect them to salvation by bestowing grace upon them in Christ Jesus.



[The Election of Grace: The road to salvation](#) – Adobe Acrobat  document.

I pray you find it profitable in Christ.