



Australia

Diakrisis

A Ministry of Teaching

*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age...to discern (diakrisis) both good and evil (Heb. 5:14)
Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine?... (Is.28:9)*

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry, *teaching, informing and equipping* the church.

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The editors may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments and articles contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

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Editors Comments

Ask Christians today what they think of the state of the Church and it would appear that there are two very different mindsets. Many will say the church is in a healthy state and there are 'revivals' occurring around the world; that the Holy Spirit is moving with signs and wonders and many souls are being won; that the likes of Rick Warren and the Church Growth Movement have brought a new awakening to the church;...Yet others say the modern church is rapidly falling into apostasy and from the 'faith once delivered' - that it no longer teaches what it taught at the Reformation and beyond; that it has lost it's holy testimony as salt to a dying world; that the Gospel has been diluted; that false teaching, false signs and wonders are now prolific...

How can it be that Christians have two different views on such things? How can Christians have the *same* indwelling Holy Spirit, yet have two entirely *different* views of the condition of Christ's church? The answer is that many professing Christians might not have the indwelling Holy Spirit...or they are just not listening to His voice...or there is a massive deception!

Not too many decades ago many churches were aware of the last days apostasy and the dangers of the ecumenical movement. Today, that discernment is rapidly vanishing!

How do we discern truth from error here? What does Christ say? What does God's Word say about the state of the church in the end times? Will we listen to his warnings; or will we ignore them because they are so 'negative'? Let the truth of God's Word encourage us!: *'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; speaking lies in hypocrisy:... (1Tim.4:1)...that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first...(2Thess.2:3); For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...and they shall turn away their ears from the truth...(2Tim.4:3,4).* The Bible clearly predicts false Christs and false prophets (Matt.24:11,24); *false* or *lying* signs and wonders (2Thess.2:9,10; Matt.24:24); increasing deception (2Tim 3:13; Matt.24:11,24; Rev.6:4); and iniquity (Matt.24:12).

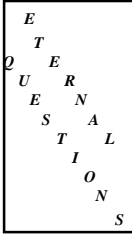
With such *clear* warnings and descriptions, should there be any excuse for Christians to be polarised on what will happen to the church in the end times? Sadly, because the desire of the age is to see what is 'positive', 'loving' and self satisfying, many see revival where there is no revival; signs and wonders where there is deception; and the apparent success of God where it is rather the success of man. Such deception and blindness is the reason why we in this ministry advocate strongly the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* - the all sufficiency of Scripture as our only guide for doctrine and the spiritual life.

Just as the prophet Samuel warned Israel to *'fear the Lord, and serve him in truth'* (1Sam. 12:24), so the Holy Spirit lovingly now warns and encourages us through the truth of His written word to *discern the state of the church!*

Terry Arnold

BOOKS Books/Videos - *Sell Out Specials* VIDEOS

Free Booklet - *'Eternal Questions'*



1 copy Free with any product ordered.

This attractive 22 page booklet with full colour cover is widely used throughout Australia as a fruitful soul winning tool.

This booklet has been carefully designed to prepare the heart for a true understanding of the Gospel. It concisely looks at who God is; the problem of evolution; how God speaks to us today; who is man; sin and its consequences; religion and works;...and the good news! This is primarily a book for the unsaved but it is also useful to Christians in checking foundations for assurance.

'To Catholics Whom I Love'

By Terry Arnold: (110 pages) **Was \$8/90 now \$3.90** - (to clear stock and make way for a new revised edition coming later this year).

A proven soul-winning tool used by Christians around the world. This is a detailed but concise comparison of the teachings of the Roman Catholic religion with the Bible. Excellent reference for Christians wanting to understand, and minister to Roman Catholics.



'Finding the Balance'

This early book by Terry Arnold concisely looks at both sides of such topics as spiritual gifts; Tongues; 'falling in the spirit'; discernment; the 'Toronto Blessing'; unity; ecumenism; apostasy... Useful reference book. **Was \$8/90; Now \$2.90**

'Debating Calvinism' by Dave Hunt & James White
Five Points/Two views. 428 pages. **Was \$29/50 Now \$14**

'Signs & Wonders Movement-Exposed'

(3 Videos): Part 1: *Miracles*; Part 2: *Money*; Part 3: *Music*. **Was \$29/50 each, Now 15.00 each or only \$35 for the set of three videos!** These hard hitting videos expose the ministries of certain evangelists, including Benny Hinn, (Part 1). They document irrefutable evidence of the fraud, false claims and charlatanism of some of the Faith leaders of today. The viewer will be left in no doubt as to the deceptions exposed.

'Does The Truth Matter Any more?'

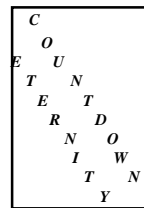
This is a set of 2 videos containing five 1 hour messages featuring speaker John MacArthur.



These two videos are gripping and scriptural presentations of a serious malady that exists in the church today and spoken of by Spurgeon over 100 years ago; and the solution to restore the power of the church to a lost world.

In each episode, MacArthur explores the user-friendly, end-justifies-the-means pragmatic philosophy and its fruit in today's church. The power of the Word of God is demonstrated through Scripture itself. This is a must for all churches to show their flock and to encourage them to stand on the Word of God.

Cost: **Was \$49/50; Now only \$25** (2 videos\5 hours).



'Countdown To Eternity'

This graphic and fast moving video looks at several areas in the context of Bible prophecy - moral decay; Israel; technology, etc. Speakers include Chuck Missler, Roger Oakland and Chuck Smith. A great icebreaker to non Christians.

Was \$29/50 Now only \$15.00

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Tolerance Rethought

For many years now a seismic shift has been occurring, in which the meaning of many words in common currency have been dramatically altered and then taught as 'truth'. One of the most glaring examples is the word 'Tolerance'. Traditionally, as defined by Webster's Dictionary, it means to: *'recognise and respect [others] beliefs, practices, etc] without sharing them...to bear or put up with someone or something not especially liked'*.

You can be well assured nowadays that when you hear the word 'tolerance' used, especially by educators, media personalities, and those around us in the workplace - it is being used in its *new* context. Very few people have a sense of history - and are therefore quite incapable of discerning this not too subtle change. Traditional 'Tolerance' valued, respected, and accepted the individual without necessarily approving of, or participating in their beliefs or behaviour. Traditional 'Tolerance' differentiates between what a person thinks, believes or does, and the person himself.

The 'new' tolerance may well, initially, sound like the 'traditional' tolerance - but beware, it is not. The new meaning put upon the word is this: 'every individual's beliefs, values, lifestyle, and perception of truth are morally neutral...there is no absolute truth. The beliefs of others are equal and all truth is relative. If it is truth to someone else then it is simply a 'truth' to them, and should not be questioned as anything otherwise. To do so would be 'intolerant'.

But is that what the Apostle Paul meant when he penned these words: *'Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things'*, (1Cor.13:7)? Many today are quoting him here in defence of their newfound acceptance of practically anything that anyone holds as a personal belief, as necessarily a 'truth'.

This phenomenon poses a grave threat to you, your family and the Church. The likes of Rowan Williams, Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Pope Benedict XVI, and the leadership of denominations such as the Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Methodists have adopted the new meaning of the phrase with alacrity. It has been the glue with which they have cobbled together a 'union' of widely disparate beliefs that often leave an outcome that is simply self-contradictory.

Now it appears we can have a universal 'church' to which all may belong in harmony by applying this new creed to a statement of faith. To be Christian now means to shun 'intolerance' just as Christ would supposedly have done. We are never to be so arrogant as to suggest that any one religion has all the answers. By means of this vehicle everyone, no matter how they choose to live, are welcome to worship and pray with us, and they are rushing in to do just this!

It has much wider implications though. If we are to accept that beliefs held by others, albeit diametrically opposed to ours, are equally valid and truthful, we have surely cast off our Christian moorings? It has always baffled theologians down the running centuries as to exactly how world religions could finally unite under one banner as they will according to Revelation chapter 13. It didn't seem to dawn on them that the only possible way that could occur, was if everyone accepted what each group believed was a 'truth'! And now such a system is rapidly developing before

our very eyes.

Christian luminaries now openly teach that adherents of Christianity, Judaism and Islam worship the same God. That they are Abrahamic and Monotheistic religions and each therefore provide a way to salvation. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism have their 'truths' too...all are given unquestioning approval - with one proviso - no one is to be so 'intolerant' as to suggest that one belief system is less efficacious than another.

This conveniently does away with the exhausting process of holding interminable 'ecumenical' convocations, trying in vain to hammer out a common doctrine on 'Justification' and other such trivial and irritating matters. (Mind you, against all odds, Roman Catholics and Martin's Lutherans have deluded themselves into producing a document that seems to satisfy both parties on that subject!). No longer do we need to 'agree to disagree'...all that is required is the notion that all of earth's spiritual movements hold truth, and are headed in the right direction.

Yet, the Bible makes it clear that not all values, beliefs, lifestyles and truth claims are equal. Scripture teaches that the God of the Bible is the one and only God (Jer.10:10) that all His Words are true (Ps.119:160) and that anything not right in His sight is WRONG, (Deut.6:18). This is never just the view of Christian, Hebrew or Western culture - it is the Truth of the God who rules over all cultures...no matter what they personally believe!

The 'Live and Let Live' philosophy back of this new thinking has been rapidly expanded to embrace the unbiblical belief that mankind is not fallen and thoroughly evil - but fully able to seek, find and apply God's eternal truth. One can easily now see emerging the final world religious system that will severely condemn those found persuading others of the truth behind the narrow way of Christ. However, the two systems of thought are mutually exclusive. Foundational truth has been revealed to mankind by God.

Modernism says that truth can be discerned by reason and logic, and the new tolerance found in post-modernism claims that there is no such thing as objective truth - it all depends on one's culture.

Yet the irony of all this is that the proponents of this new tolerance ethic are so dogmatic about dogmatism and so absolute in their opposition to absolutism! They are deeply intolerant when it comes to those that dare to propose that 'truth' is absolute - that it is, in essence, a black and white issue. Woebetide the person who points out the error in any belief system or lifestyle! They are immediately made aware of just how intolerant these people are toward intolerance. The cost to the Church of this new thought pattern has been enormous, undermining the faith of many and introducing a universalism of immense proportion.

The ingredients for the prophesied spiritual amalgam are before us - and if the Church doesn't soon endeavour to rebuild the crumbling walls that once held safe her beliefs - then she will find herself desperately defending a notion that has passed into history - and worse - it will be increasingly unlawful to do so?

Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived, (2Tim.3:13).

Mike Claydon

JOYCE MEYER - MULTI MILLIONAIRESS

'...Joyce Meyer has authored many books and is seen on TV around the world. She claims that God has made her rich. Her life in the Word Organization takes in something like \$95 million a year.

Joyce says that it is nothing short of a miracle how God has provided for her, her husband and family. Meyer makes no excuses for hawking her books, tapes and relentless pleading for donations on her web site, on her TV shows and at her conferences. Her theme is, 'Give and it shall be given unto you'. Her headquarters were built at a cost of \$20 million..all post card perfect for the 510 people that work there.

A private plane valued at over \$10 million sits at the St Louis airport, the ministry employs two full time pilots. In recent years the ministry has spent over \$4 million on five homes for Meyer and her four children. The board of her ministry is composed of herself, her husband and four children who are all paid workers...Security is important to Meyer, a division of her ministry is devoted to her security. Her officers wear pistols, the headquarters can only be entered by staff or by private invitation. She says her material success is a reflection of her commitment to God. She says, 'The whole Bible really has one message, 'Obey me and do what I tell you to do and you will be blessed'.

What sayeth the Bible about women preachers? The USA has spawned many television evangelists; who will forget Jim and Tammy Bakker (of flashy eyelashes), or Jimmy Swaggert, all who dealt in millions of dollars, yet where did it get them? This is all part of the faith-wealth gospel promoted by the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement...'

(Extracted from the St Louis Post Dispatch).

Editors Comments: Joyce Meyer is essentially a Word-Faith teacher as well as a teacher of psychology. Her teaching is deceptive because of the sprinkling of scripture and her motivational ability in speaking.

Her Word-Faith teaching in the past has copied much of what Copeland, Hagin, Hinn and other false prophets have taught as new revelations. Such 'revelations' have revealed that Hell is both 'fire hot and cold and clammy'. She has taught that Jesus atoned for our sins in Hell and He had to be 'born again'. Her teaching on the deity of Jesus and the atonement is in fact sheer heresy. Meyer admits she obtains such teaching from extra Biblical sources. She makes great merchandise of God's people, (2Pet.2:3).

(See Diakrisis July/Aug/2002, P.2; also see our paper 'The Word of Faith Movement')

Mel Gibson Anti-Semitic?

After many denials last year that he was 'anti-semitic', 'The Passion of The Christ' Roman Catholic director and producer Mel Gibson, finally admitted his deepest feelings when arrested for drink driving on the streets where he lives in Malibu, California. Said he when resisting arrest 'those [expletive deleted] Jews start all the world's wars!' Asking the arresting officer 'Are you a [expletive deleted] Jew?' ...
(Adapted from 'Apostasy Alert' July/2006)

Pat Mesiti Back

Pat Mesiti, formerly Hillsong based AOG Youth Alive Director and Director of the Australian Christian Churches (ACC), was relieved of all ministry on November 4th, 2001 for sexual immorality. He was a motivational speaker who convinced thousands that the pursuit of money and fame was a Godly business. Brian Houston, Hillsong's senior pastor, at the time said, 'This whole area of sex abuse and predatory behaviour is devastating...'

Pat Mesiti was instrumental in the foundation of Hillsong when in 1986 with Mark and Darlene Zsech, he was part of a band that outreached to high schools. Pat founded 'Youth Alive' and was Executive Director of Teen Challenge NSW.

Hillsong has had its problems over the years. In 2000 Mr Houston was forced to sack his father, Frank, after he confessed to what the church's national executive has described as 'serious moral failure' while he was an AOG minister in New Zealand. In the early nineties Geoff Bullock was forced to step down from the ministry after admitting to an adulterous affair and he subsequently divorced his wife. Darlene Zsech took over his position as 'worship leader' at the Hills CLC.

After sexual immorality was revealed, Pat Mesiti underwent the church's three year 'restoration process'. Recently, (July 7th 2006) he held a Conference at Phil Pringle's Oxford Falls (NSW) Church. He was advertised as 'Speaker - Motivator - Entrepreneur...Developing the Millionaire Mindset...Pat is one of the worlds most celebrated speakers. He is a highly effective communicator and most notably an income acceleration coach. His passion is to Equip and Empower individuals and businesses to experience growth and prosperity to its fullest potential...'

This is a breakfast not to be missed...Cost \$30.00...'

(Excerpt from Apostasy Alert, July/2006)

The Aussie Bible

Source: Bible Society of NSW

'There was this sheila who came across a snake-in-the-grass with all the cunning of a con man. The snake asked her why she didn't just grab lunch off the tree in her garden. God, she said, had told her she'd be dead meat if her fruit salad came from that tree, but the snake told her she wouldn't die. So she took a good squiz and then a bite and passed the fruit on to her bloke. Right then and there, they'd realised what they'd done and felt starkers.'

So begins Kel Richard's account of the fall of mankind retold using 'strine' or Australian vernacular in 'More

Aussie Bible', released in Sydney by the Bible Society of NSW.

...this second instalment starts at Genesis with Kel giving the 'Aussie' treatment to the Book of Genesis, Proverbs, the Gospel of John and John's first letter.

'More Aussie Bible' starts with creation: 'God was tinkering around in his workshop when 'out of the blue, God knocked up the whole bang lot'.

Editors Comments: See our original comments on the first installment of the 'Aussie Bible' in Diakrisis Nov/Dec, 2003, P.4. Doctrine and accuracy are lost issues in the modern versions. The slide in translations continues...

How To 'Study' The Bible

In the last issue of *Diakrisis* (July/August/2006) we looked at how we as Christians *think* when interpreting Scripture. For doctrine, it is imperative our thoughts be filtered *objectively* through a mindset of 'Sola Scriptura', the all sufficiency of Scripture (2Tim.3:16-17).

To ensure that we '**rightly divide the word of truth**' we need to be involved in serious Bible 'STUDY'. The falling away of the church, the lack of apologetics and objective thinking is largely because, as modern Christians, we lack the discipline to 'study' scripture. In this ministry we read and reply to much correspondence within which we view Christian thinking on various Scriptures. Too many of the letters show we simply do not read what the text actually says because we lack sound study methods to correctly interpret the passage.

Today there is a need to teach people how to 'study' the Bible. If one were to ask 100 Christians what they understand about doctrines such as Justification, Sanctification, Redemption, etc. - the results would shock! Many may be aware of these doctrines but are hard pressed to explain what these terms actually mean. There is a need to teach 'study' methods of correctly interpreting Scripture.

There is often a difficulty in understanding the term 'study'. Many Christians equate 'study' with simply reading the bible in 'devotions' every day. However, studying the Bible should be more than just a daily reading of selected passages. The difference between selective *reading* and *studying* the Bible is like the difference between drifting aimlessly in a boat and moving in a boat to a destination.

This article explores various methods for Bible Study:

First, An Imperative To Any Bible Study System!...

Coupled with any study method, it is imperative that Christians have read, and have a habit of *constantly* reading, the Bible *from cover to cover*. It is the author's strong conviction that anyone who has not read the Bible from cover to cover could not have a full orb'd view of God's salvation plan for mankind and is more than likely to have at least a truncated view of many important doctrines, as well as being susceptible to extra-biblical teaching. Many heresies and extremes can often be traced to a lack of teaching of the Bible *as a whole*.

The plan of salvation flows through both the Old and New Testaments. *The seedbed of all doctrine is in the book of Genesis* and then elucidated throughout both Testaments. In the Old Testament the themes of salvation, holiness, God's sovereignty, all have their foundation. Doctrines such as Separation and Election are first found in the Old Testament. The 'blueprint' for the doctrine of *Separation* can be seen in Leviticus 20:23 '**And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation...I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. 25 Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean...fowls...creepeth on the ground...26 And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.**' Although given to Israel this is also the foundation for much New Testament Scripture on Separation/Holiness!

So too with such doctrines as Divine Election. *The foundation for 'Election' is seen in God's election of Israel out from among all other nations:* Deut.7:6-8, '**For thou art**

a holy people unto the lord thy God, the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are on the face of the earth...'; Deut. 10:15, '**Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.**'; Isaiah 45:4, '**For Jacob my servants sake and Israel's mine elect, I have called thee by thy name.**'

Thus, when we read the same phraseology in the New Testament in 1Peter 2:9 we are already grounded from the foundation of the history of Israel: '**But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.**'

Another very important theme is *The Law*. The Law is foundationally best taught from the Old Testament. The Law first came to Israel. *How God dealt with Israel is thus very important in understanding the Law in the New Testament*. The Law then becomes a crucial doctrine in evangelism. The Bible teaches the Law gives the knowledge of sin (Rom.7:7), shows the depth of sin (Rom.7:13) and its consequences. Thus, '**the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ**', (Gal.3:24). When the Bible says to give 'Law to the proud and Grace to the humble' (1Pet.55), this is best understood and demonstrated by God's expansive dealings with either a proud or a humbled Israel. This is then crucial to any understanding as to *why* salvation is needed - many have never judged themselves by the perfection and holiness of God as shown in the Law.

The very Nature and Character of God is also first seen in God's dealings with Israel. With this in mind, *the OT is the introduction and the very foundation for the necessity of Christ*. The Bible is holistically one story and plan for the salvation of man.

One of the best ways to show that we must read our Bibles *from cover to cover* is found in the example of Jesus who taught two disciples in Luke 24:27: '**And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself**'. These '*Scriptures*' were in fact entirely the Old Testament as we know it today! In addition, Romans 15:4 adds this: '**For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope**'.

At the risk of over-emphasising the importance of reading the Bible in its entirety *before*, and *with* any systematic Bible study method, I would venture: *it is doubtful if anyone can truly understand the New Testament without at least a basic knowledge of Israel's origin, development and history from the Old Testament*. God reveals himself through his acts in history. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost and Stephen's sermon before his martyrdom show how important it is to know the *foundations* of our doctrines from the Old Testament and then in the Bible *as a whole*.

I have laboured on this 'pre-requisite' to Bible study because to read and re-read the Bible as a whole is to give *balance* and *discernment* to any topical Bible study!

Bible Study Methods:

Firstly, *observe the Text*. What does the text *objectively* say? What are the *objective facts*? Read and re-read carefully and prayerfully. Notice what is there and what is not. Too

many today see what is not in the text and reach the wrong conclusions. Following is an example of finding *only the objective facts* in a text: John 3:16 ***'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life'***. Objectively, the text states: 1. God loved the world (his creation) 2. He gave His only son 3. Those that truly believe in him would not perish but have everlasting life.

Recently I had a reader commenting on Jn.1:12,13 ***'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'***. The reader wrote: *'This text reveals two things. First, receiving him is up to us (free will) and 'as many' reveals that God knew that not all would accept his call to repent and believe'*. However, the text in fact mentions nothing about 'free will'; or that it is 'up to us'; or that God foresaw who would 'accept'. Although these thoughts may be deduced or found elsewhere, it is simply *not in this text*. In fact, an exegesis will show the opposite! The text actually goes on to say that the ***'them'*** in the text were born again entirely of God - the text in fact proves this by three clauses in the negative (***'not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man'***).

Another example of poor 'study' technique is found in the way many 'read' Romans 8:29-30: ***'For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...'*** The 'foreknow' is today commonly interpreted that 'God foreknows who will accept or reject him in the future' and thus his 'predestination' is based on that ability or 'free will' within man. But a study of the text shows no such interpretation is possible.

Ask the right questions - Who is talking?; or who is it talking about? *What is the context?*; what is the subject? Where is the event?; when is the activity in time?

Why is the passage written? What is the atmosphere? - joy, anger, correction, majesty?...For example 1Corinthians 14 was written (as was most of 1Corinthians) to *correct* problems and abuses in the Corinthian church. The Corinthians had an 'unknown tongue' that Paul speaks *against* and wishes to *correct*.

Much of Bible 'Study' is doing 'WORD STUDIES'. I have found this to be the most enriching and stimulating form of Bible 'study'. Look at the *key words* and then where they are used *elsewhere* in scripture and their *context*. Study what these key words mean in Greek by use of 'Strong's' indexed numbers. Be aware that one English word may be translated from several different Greek words. For example, the English word 'love' has several different Greek words, all defining accurately what type of love it is.

When the word we are studying has been searched out within Scripture, then look at *synonyms and antonyms*. The synonyms are words *similar* and antonyms are words *opposite*. For example, the word 'Justification' (δικαίωσις) has synonyms translated as 'redemption', 'remission', 'propitiation'. Similarly, the antonyms are 'judgement', 'condemnation'. By looking closely at the synonyms and antonyms we build a 'picture' of what the word actually means in the original languages. From then on when we read the word elsewhere in Scripture *we have already built up a foundation* as to what the original writers understood the word to mean.

There are excellent 'tools' now available to do such word

studies. (A resource I personally use is *'The Complete Word Study Bible'* by AMG Publishers - on CD and available from this ministry).

In determining key words - *verbs* and *nouns* are important. Conjunctions ('*therefore*'; '*but*') also *connect phrases*. For example, 1Corinthians 14 has a series of phrases that must be linked together to understand the *contrast* Paul is making between the 'unknown tongue' and the true 'tongues' and 'prophesy': 1Cor.14:4 ***'He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; BUT he that prophesieth edifieth the church'***. The '*but*' shows a contrast - the first part of the verse is negative ('*retorical*'); the second is '*positive*'. This same contrast is then shown throughout the entire chapter. *Verses or part of verses must never be isolated when they should be connected*. The book of Romans is another example of many thoughts that are all connected.

What is the literary form? - narrative, poetical, (Psalms, Proverbs), rhetorical (Corinthians), literal, doctrinal (Romans), figurative, (Jn.10:6-9) or prophetic (Isaiah, Daniel, Revelation). *Always interpret the Bible literally unless it is obviously figurative or symbolic; if figurative or symbolic then look for the literal truth behind the figurative*. For example, Jesus used the bread and wine as *symbols* when He said that they were His body and blood. [In scripture Jesus also said, ***I am the door***, (Jn.10:7-9 - not a piece of wood); ***I am the way***, (not a road men walk on), and ***I am the light of the world***, (not a light bulb)].

Look at the tense and 'voice'. The English tense is past present or future, (Greek adds other tenses). The '*voice*' denotes the action by the subject as *active* or *passive*. For example, Hebrews 1:1 speaks of prophets speaking in the *past* and Hebrews 2:3,4 speaks of the signs and wonders as in the *past*. Again, Romans 8:30 speaks of our Glorification as being in the *past*, something already done in the mind of God. In Ephesians 5:18 the '*filling*' by the Spirit is *passive* - meaning we are the recipients of an action performed by God. In Jude 3 the '*faith once delivered*' is *passive* - it was delivered *to men* by God. The work of Justification in salvation is *passive* on our part - the subject, God, renders all the action. In Ephesians 2:8 ***'For by grace are ye saved through faith...'*** The word '*saved*' in Greek is a *passive* participle. In Acts 13:48 The words '***were ordained***' is *past* and *passive* - it was done in eternity *past* by God to the people in question who were *passive* in the action.

It helps our motivation in Bible Study to realise a '*high view*' of Scripture - it is God-breathed, inspired, inerrant and infallible! The Bible never contradicts itself. Interpret unclear '*minority*' passages with clear '*majority*' passages.

Anyone who says they are not '*disciplined*' in Bible study is admitting to sin and to being '***ashamed***' (2Tim.2:15) - it's that serious! Learn to develop a quiet time and even to having a special place where if possible there are no interruptions. *Bible study is part of the work of our Sanctification by the Holy Spirit*. '*Working out our own salvation*' includes such work as studying the Word of God. *Bible Study is part of our very worship of God!* It is where we respond in praise, thanksgiving - subsequently applying what we learn to our lives. It is also where we develop intimacy with our Lord and Saviour.

'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth', (2Tim.2:15).

Terry Arnold

How To Listen To a Sermon

by George Whitefield

(Keys for getting the most out of what the preacher says)

Jesus said, *'Therefore consider carefully how you listen'* (Luke 8:18). Here are some cautions and directions, in order to help you hear sermons with profit and advantage.

1. Come to hear them, not out of curiosity, but from a sincere desire to know and do your duty. To enter His house merely to have our ears entertained, and not our hearts reformed, must certainly be highly displeasing to the Most High God, as well as unprofitable to ourselves.

2. Give diligent heed to the things that are spoken from the Word of God. If an earthly king were to issue a royal proclamation, and the life or death of his subjects entirely depended on performing or not performing its conditions, how eager would they be to hear what those conditions were! And shall we not pay the same respect to the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and lend an attentive ear to His ministers, when they are declaring, in His name, how our pardon, peace, and happiness may be secured?

3. Do not entertain even the least prejudice against the minister. That was the reason Jesus Christ Himself could not do many mighty works, nor preach to any great effect among those of His own country; for they were offended at Him. Take heed therefore, and beware of entertaining any dislike against those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers over you.

Consider that the clergy are men of like passions with yourselves. And though we should even hear a person teaching others to do what he has not learned himself, yet that is no reason for rejecting his doctrine. For ministers speak not in their own, but in Christ's name. And we know who commanded the people to do whatever the scribes and Pharisees should say unto them, even though they did not do themselves what they said (see Matt.23:1-3).

4. Be careful not to depend too much on a preacher, or think more highly of him than you ought to think. Preferring one teacher over another has often been of ill consequence to the church of God. It was a fault which the great Apostle of the Gentiles condemned in the Corinthians: *'For whereas one said, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos: are you not carnal, says he? For who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but*

instruments in God's hands by whom you believed?' (1Cor.1:12; 2:3-5).

Are not all ministers sent forth to be ministering ambassadors to those who shall be heirs of salvation? And are they not all therefore greatly to be esteemed for their work's sake?

5. Make particular application to your own hearts of everything that is delivered. When our Saviour was discoursing at the last supper with His beloved disciples and foretold that one of them should betray Him, each of them immediately applied it to his own heart and said, *'Lord, is it I?'* (Matt.26:22).

Oh, that persons, in like manner, when preachers are dissuading from any sin or persuading to any duty, instead of crying, *'This was intended for such and such a one!'* instead would turn their thoughts inwardly, and say, *'Lord, is it I?'* How far more beneficial should we find discourses to be than now they generally are!

6. Pray to the Lord, before, during, and after every sermon, to endue the minister with power to speak, and to grant you a will and ability to put into practice what he shall show from the Book of God to be your duty.

No doubt it was this consideration that made St. Paul so earnestly entreat his beloved Ephesians to intercede with God for him: *'Praying always, with all manner of prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and for me also, that I may open my mouth with boldness, to make known the mysteries of the gospel'* (Eph.6:19-20). And if so great an apostle as St. Paul needed the prayers of his people, much more do those ministers who have only the ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit.

If only all who hear me this day would seriously apply their hearts to practice what has now been told them! How ministers would see Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven, and people find the Word preached sharper than a two-edged sword and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the devil's strongholds!

(Adapted from Sermon 28 from *'The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield'*. George Whitefield (1714-1770) was a British Methodist evangelist whose powerful sermons fanned the flames of Revival)

Chronology of Christianity

by R.C.Wetzel *'A Chronology Of Biblical Christianity'*

[Continued from past editions of *Diakrisis*. To be continued]

1891 Abram dwelt in Egypt.
1889 Abram and Lot separated one from the other.
1884 Lot captured but rescued by Abram.
1883 God made a covenant with Abram.
1881 Ishmael was born to Abram and Hagar.
1868 Abram's name was changed to Abraham. Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed and the Dead Sea formed.
1867 Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah.

1830 Sarah died at age 127.
1829 Abraham showed his willingness to sacrifice Isaac.
1827 Isaac married Rebekah. Abraham married Keturah.
1817 Shem died at age 600.
1807 Esau and Jacob were born to Isaac and Rebekah.
1792 Abraham died at age 175.
1775 Esau sold his birthright to Jacob.
1744 Ishmael died at age 137.
1723 Jacob married Leah and Rachel. Leah bears Reuben.

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

Dear Terry, Thankyou for your prayers and support when I have rung for advice. Thankyou for the tapes and articles you sent. Thank you for the wonderful ministry you are doing...

(L.B., NSW)

Dear Terry, Warmest greetings. I trust now that you have a full time pastoring elder in the your church you can once again turn all your focus to the areas of particular interest in the newsletter and teaching. May the Lord encourage you as you follow down a path using His word to expose man's deeds and folly. More and more we will face the fact that in haughty independence and defiance, the world will persecute those who stand for the Bible and believe its judgements.

My wife and I appreciated listening again to the sessions from the Easter camp you did in Sth. Australia, and your experiences you have been through in Roman Catholicism and the Pentecostal movement, adding extra awareness of certain ways that they follow contrary to what God gives us instruction to do...

(W.A., Sth. Aust.)

Dear Terry, I just want to encourage you to keep on going. You are doing a marvellous work for the Lord, and there are many rewards laid up for you in heaven. I found your 'Casting Your Cares' sermon very encouraging and practical...

(B.S., Brisbane)

Praise/Prayer Points

- Praise the Lord for fruitful ministry in Fiji and at Fiji Bible College in June/July. There were many opportunities to teach as well as inform and equip students, pastors and elders. A whole new itinerary may have opened up in the South Pacific islands - please pray for wisdom in knowing how we should handle this new opportunity.

- Praise the Lord our editor is now free of pastoral/Elder and church work to devote full attention to *Diakrisis* and the itinerant ministry. However, he is foregoing travelling till the new year so as to regain health and strength. Pray for strength for both our editors and for wisdom in planning itineraries for next year.

Dear Terry,...the message you gave when you were here last was strong and very informative...and the video series you sent 'Does Truth Matter Any More' by John MacArthur was so interesting...I turned 90 last February and I have seen the worldly things creeping into the churches...that's when I creep out. Our church is small in number, but quite spiritually alert, and we try to keep it that way. Thank you for the information you send out, Bless you all in the Lord,
(M.L., Victor Harbour, Sth. Aust.)

'Stony Ground Hearers'

'I am glad you know when persons are justified. It is a lesson I have not yet learnt. There are so many stony ground hearers who receive the Word with joy that I have determined to suspend my judgement till I know the tree by its fruits...Do you think any farmer would have a crop of corn next year unless he ploughed now. You may as well expect a crop of corn on unploughed ground as a crop of grace, until the soul is convinced of its being undone without a Saviour. That is the reason we have so many mushroom converts, so many persons that are always happy! happy! happy! and never were miserable. Why? Because their stony ground is not ploughed up; they have not got a conviction of the law...they fall away...that makes me so cautious now, which I was not thirty years ago, of dubbing converts too soon. Now I wait a little, and see if people bring forth fruit; for there are so many blossoms which March winds blow away that I cannot believe they are converts till I see fruit brought forth. It will do converts no harm to keep them a little back; it will never do a sincere soul any harm'.

(George Whitefield, 1714-1770)

'Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. Not everyone that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord', have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out Devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them I never knew you. Depart from me you that work iniquity, (Matt.7:16-23). 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves..', (2Cor.13:5)

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