

A Dictionary of Discipleship

Orthodoxy & Orthopraxis

Definition with Application

The Bible quoted fr. KJV, except otherwise indicated.

Christians were originally called “Disciples of Christ”, which means they were learners, followers, who understood the doing & teaching of their Master, so, they could teach others. This is the authenticity & continuity of Christianity. The Incarnate Lord Jesus Christ says: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt.5:48). He says also: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (Jn.14:9). Think of the word “pattern”, which means to follow the model of the father. It can be found out what the truth is about by simply looking in a mirror.

The resurrected Lord told His disciples: “All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matt.28:18-20) This message is commonly known as “The Great Commission”. It is the principle of doing discipleship. The problem of the church is having enough of hearers, but wanting in doers.

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; For he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. (Jam.1:22-25)

In much the same way, this book is also a glass in a lesser scale.

To compare a book with glass, the idea seems not a little far-fetched. Some people even may comprehend it as a spy-glass, which means to enable one to see farther; but not a looking-glass (mirror), to look inward. But, this is what the Bible says. And most dictionaries are distinguished by the collection of numerous words, and wide or deep definitions. However, this dictionary contains words which might not be hard to understand, but it does matter to look into it hard, and apply it. In this sense, the disciple is much like the apprentice in trade.

True belief must be manifested by behavior. This is what a disciple is expected to be.

Jesus never had any conflict with His contemporaneous co-religionists, except His claiming to be God. It is not because there were differences in their believing, but the great difference existed in practicing their belief. Now, come to think of it, what really matters, is not whether the people our Lord dealt with regarding their belief is errant or not, but is if they have any true belief at all. Jesus called such people Hypocrites, because they, just like the actors in plays, do not believe what they talk, and far from “walk the talk”.

Among the noises of contention of orthodoxy, let us consider our orthopraxis: Is there any difference in our practice of our faith, or so claim what to be our faith? Actually, the Apostles’ epistles & Prophets’ books, always began with dogmatic teachings, and ended with applied theology, or ethics. “And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” (I Jn.2:17) What one “does” is what counts. As the Bible says:

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. (Phil.2:13-16)

In this present age, people love more “stars”, even much more than ever before. As Francis Bacon called it “Idols of Theatre”, which clouded our sight of truth. Yet only those who follow the teachings of Christ Are called Christians (Acts 11:26). Therefore, the pale and cool orthodoxies is never be enough; the true disciples ought to be full orthopraxis, in order to aid light to their sounds.

May this little volume help “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves.” (II Cor.13:5) If you do not care to do so, then do not read any further, which can save your time of cursing the mirror.

A

Abba

Aramaic word for “My Father”.

Jesus prayed in Gethsemane: “Abba, Father! All things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.” (Mk.14:36)

“Ye have receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry: Abba, Father.” (Rm.8:15) “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father.” (Gal.4:6)

app “Behold, what manner of love the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...We know that, when He shall appear, we shall see Him as He is.” (I Jn.3:1,2) So, should be known that, we shared the same heavenly Father, and that we have hope & looking for His appear.

Abide

“LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?” (Psa.15:1) Abide means to continue in a place, to dwell. Hence it means to confirm to. “For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither evil dwell with Thee” (Psa.5:4). So, the prophet said that “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (Isa.33:14) “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhibited eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Isa.57:15)

app Thus Jesus said to the repented Zachaeus: “Today I must abide at thy house.” (Lk.19:5) It is not that because his is a luxury palace, but a converted sinner’s clean house.

Abomination

1.“The graven images of their gods shall be burn with fire; thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it, thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.” (Deut.7:25,26)

2. "For the forward is abomination to the LORD; but His secret is with the righteous." (Pro.3:32)

app God's people should be hallowed & separated from evil, either any idol of material, or disobedient made one equal to idolatry (Sam.15:23), should not be allowed.

Abortion

Abort ori. means "to terminate", "to disappear", "to die"; in this case, is a "*fetus*", L. means a little child. The Law says: "If men strive hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her [gives birth prematurely], and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished... and if any mischief follow, then thou shall give life for life." (Ex. 21:22,23) This shows the seriousness of life in the sight of Law.

app. In a culture of mass killing of war, abortion, seems not that horrifying, the excuse is that that is only for "convenience" & "expectancy"; or, it would not harm anyone, except the unwanted "tissue" inside the woman. Since killing is common place, & thus "fetus" is no longer consider as life, so old folks is put in the same category.

Nevertheless, there is one good "abortion": The Bible says: "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it finished, bringeth forth death." (Jam.1:15) Therefore, if one aborted the conceived lust, is aborting the oncoming death; it is desirable.

Abraham

From his homeland Chaldean Ur, Abram, then God changed his name to Abraham; he answered God's call, wandered went to Canaan & Egypt. By the promise of God, he at an old age, had his son Isaac, though whom was born Jacob (Israel) & twelve. He was called the "Friend of God" (Jam.2:23). "Though the righteousness of faith" by Jesus Christ, "who is the father of us all" (Rom.4:9-16).

app Abraham is our father of faith, not only by faith he confessed that he is a stranger and pilgrim, he also went out, sojourned in the land of promise, and "he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God" (Heb.11:8-13). May God guide all those who fallow Abraham's steps.

Accountability

Saints as "minster of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4), or as stewards of materials, must bear in mind all times that to make best use of what is in one's hands, & need to give an account. Therefore, must be "a faithful and wise servant . . . give meat in due season"(Matt. 24:45). "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." (Matt.25:19) At the same time, one must "Providing for honest

things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”(II Cor.8:21)

app. The fall of ministers is often because they forgot they are only the stewards, not the “lord”, in most cases, likely started in accounting.

Adam

“Soil”, “Tillable red earth”.

1.The word can mean mankind, or human beings: “Since the day that God created man upon the earth.” (Deut.4:32)

2.The Fall of man, comes death: “For out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen.3:19) “Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come.” (Rom.5:14)

3.Adam as type of Christ: “For as in Adam all die, even in Christ shall all be made alive... So it is written: The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” (I Cor.15:22,45)

app “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor.5:17) The Church institute new creatures, only with those kind of people who has new life, & have new concept, then possible to go without old corruption.

Agape, Caritas

Gk. *Agape* (Jn.21:15,16), the word Jesus used for “love”, deeply love: used of divine love (Jn.14:21), that love the law demands (Lk.10:27) Gk. *phileo*, the word Peter used, is “ to have affection for”, a lesser degree than *agape* (Jn.21:15) . In Latin *Caritas*, hence charity.

app. Jesus accepted Peter’s word. “Feed my lambs”, “Tend my sheep”, means “My Church” (I Peter 5:1,2) thus Peter referred to Jesus as the “Chief Shepherd” (I Peter 5:4).

Alpha & Omega

The first & last letters of the Greek alphabet, spoken by Jesus as the self-disclosure of Eternal God (Rev.1:8; 21:6).

Jesus announced His coming: “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” (Rev.22:12,13)

app Christians as runners of the race, who want to obtain the reward, must “looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb.12:1,2) As Paul says to the Philippians: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil.1:6)

Amen

Amen in Hb. Merely meant “truly”, or “certainly”. As in confirmation to an oath: “All the people shall say, Amen.” (Deut. 27:15-26) or, Praise: “Let all the people say, Amen.” (Psa. 106:48) Pray or bless the Lord (I Cor.14:16). God is faithful & trustworthy: “For all the promises are Yea, and in Him, Amen.” (II Cor.1:20)

app. Christian should always be honest toward God & men, esp. let your prayer stand, not lie. There are some people with their mouth making promises, but their feet busily drawing “No.”

Anathema

Gk. *Anathema*. “Let him be accursed.” (I Cor. 16:22 ref.Rom.9:3, Gal.1:8,9) corresponding to Heb. *Herem* (ban).

App: “Love His appearing” (II Tim.4:8) should be Christian’s hope, which is the proof of new life (I Thess.1:3; I Jn.3:3); without which is the proof of one’s in the stage of lost.

Angel, Messenger, Message

1. Angel means Messenger, hence Eu-angel (good tidings), the one who bears the good-tidings, is Eu-angel, i.e., good angel. Christ Jesus as “Apostle” sent by God (Heb.3:1)
2. The resurrected Christ greeting His disciples said that “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” (Jn.20:21)
3. “They[Angels] are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14)

app. 1: The Man of God (Elisha), has angels encamped around him (II Kings 6:15-7, ref. Psa. 34:7)

2: The Roman centurion knows the Lord could command the angels (Matt. 8:5-13).

3: King James I of England (fmr. James VI of Scotland), wrote *On Daemons* (spirits good & evil), talk about good-angels & ill-angels.

Anger

The God of love & of righteousness is a God of long-suffering & not easily provoked to anger. But God has His divine anger even toward His servants. “The LORD’s anger burned against Moses” (Ex. 4:14). Also toward His people: “His [The LORD’s] anger was aroused” (Num.11:1). Human is easily provoked to anger. As children of light, “Be angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Never give place to the devil.” (Eph. 4:25,26)

app. Christians often neglect to God's anger, on the other hand, easily give way to let out one's anger on others, esp. on the inferiors. This is due to one's pride; it's very much in need to cure the evil root thru the Holy Spirit.

Anointed, the (Christ)

There was a special formula to produce an oil based ointment, strictly for religious unction, i.e. reserved for anointing Priest (Ex.30:30), Prophet (I Kings 19:15,16), & Prince (I Sam.2:10; 10:1; 16:1,13).

Christ is God's anointed one (Psa. 2:2 cf. Zech.6:12,13; Acts 4:26). This event caused the jealousy of the Jews & they rejected Him, & crucified Him. But God raised Him from the dead & at Pentecost the Promised blessing anointed the Christians.

app. John Milton in his *Paradise Lost* attributed jealousy as the root evil which caused Satan's fall & the prime sin of Cain who killed his brother. So, believers must give Christ the first place in their lives.

Anti-Christ

Anti fr. Gk. *oppos.*, against. The final Antichrist of the end time is ref. as the "Beast", aka. "Lawless One", "Man of sin, the Son of perdition" (Rev.11-18 II Thess.2:3-10). St. John: "It is the last time [last hour] . . . even now are there many antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last time." (I Jn.2:18) That is those false teachers oppose the anointed Christ & His teachings. That "they might be manifest that none of them were of us . . . He is antichrist who denies the Father and Son." (I Jn.2:18-22)

app. Since the primitive church had no property or other benefit to fight with, so this case is a pure spiritual warfare.

Antinomianism

These people declared that since Christians are in Christ and obtained God's love & grace, then they deny any need to be taught by the law how to live. So the commands of Decalogue & other ethical parts of the Scripture are totally irrelevant; all one needs is follow the "spirit's guide". Thus they use "liberty for an occasion to the flesh." (Cal.5:13)

app. What the people who practice Antinomianism always want of "the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22,23), which is the character of the Royal regalia of one who is inheriting the kingdom of God.

Apostates

"Certain men, the children of Belial . . ." (Deut.13:13)

This people are not from outside, but as rebellious among God's assembly. "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.” (I Tim.4:1) also called “a falling away.” (II Thess. 2:3)

app. Un-regenerated human nature is always tended to rebel against God (Jude:11). They for their own gain do not hesitate to betray the Lord.

Apostle

Apostleship is the gift of Christ for edifying of His Church. “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.” (II Cor.12:12) Apostles are called & sent by Christ (Matt. 10:1-4). Paul also (Acts 9:15,16), with true “signs of an apostle” (II Cor. 12:12). There are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And so no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” (II Cor. 11:13,14)

app. Apostle is the cardinal gift of Christ (Eph. 4:11,12) & the prime builder of the Church (Eph. 2:20), so not a few in all ages tried to exalt themselves & claimed to be “apostles”. They are not of the Lord because they do not have the servant spirit.

Ark

Ark means a chest. The Ark of Noah is God ordered Noah to prepare a vessel to save mankind at the punishment of the great deluge. Although Noah faithfully proclaimed God’s wrath is coming, but only saved his household (Heb. 11:7). The Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25:10) is the most holy object in the tabernacle. Both Arks are the type of Christ Jesus.

app. Noah is the first & greatest failed preacher; but he is also the first & the most successful Patriarch of the “House Church”, whole family 100% serve God. Today’s preachers not a few are unable to proclaim the gospel under his own roof, they should consider Noah’s example.

Armageddon

Also *Harmagedon* (NRSV), Scholars generally explain as Gk. transliteration of the Hb. phrase *har meggdo* “The Mountain of Megiddo”. Appeared only once in N.T. for the kings of the earth assemble to fight against God. (Rev.16:16) Hence became a familiar designation of the final battle of the forces of the good & evil, which results in the triumph of good, destruction of evil.

app The interpretation difficulty is that if fit into the location, then the multitudes of the army & its enormous supporting forces would hard to have enough space to content & maneuver.

Arminianism / Calvinism

Arminianism was founded by Jacobus Arminius (1559-1609), a Dutch theologian of University of Leiden, anti-Calvinist Reformed theology.

The fundamental theological differences between the two is rest upon the human Free-will. Calvinism's basic belief is in Predestination of salvation; while Arminianism's belief is that humans can do their best to influent others' will to make their own decision, thus determining their eternal destiny.

Calvinism "Tulip": Total Depravity; Unconditional Election; Limited Atonement; Irresistible Grace; Perseverance of Saints.

Arminianism: Free-Will; Conditional Election; General Atonement; Resistible Grace; Possible Falling from Grace.

App: the Bible says: those who "were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). The apostle Paul knew that God "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph.1:5), yet he "labour and travail, for labouring night and day ... preached ... the gospel" (I Thess.2:9). We should follow the example of Paul striving faithfully as though he never knew anything about God's predestination.

Armor of God, The whole

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation,

And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph.6:13-18)

app. Apparently this is less than "whole", because the back of the warrior's is left un-defended. This is the reason why that stand is important. And that only could rely on God's backing. Alexander the Great of Macedonian, when dead but young, he had over 30 wounds but all were in front and received none in his back. While other great leaders had wounds on their back. These make all the difference.

Asceticism

Many religions held a dualistic view, practice asceticism, which belief is to make the body suffer is good for the soul. Usu. with a purpose of holiness of soul, & in wade off the carnal lust, some sects believe in "neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh" (Col.2:23). Some Christians also have the similar believe. But in many cases will result in "vainly puffed up" (Col. 2:18) instead. The right rules for holy living, as

Christian believe, is the fruit of union with Christ, and mortifying the members of earth & walk under the lead of Holy Spirit.

app. In a hedonistic world, the stoic rule of living is attractive and often gives the appearance of superior moral ground. But the truth is not always as it shows. However, on the other hand, the trend of materialistic & luxurious wasteful living, often leads to the laxity of morality, & eat into the church treasury & spiritual power. While John Chrysostom (c. 347- 407) visited Vatican, the Pope boasted that now they have no need to say that “Silver & gold have I none.” He retorted that “You also can no longer say ‘In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up & walk’.” (Acts 3:6) Of course not the Roman Catholics alone, today it is pretty easy to find some who belong to Protestant churches laid at the “Beautiful gate” lame & begging.

Assurance

Christians not only have assurance from punishment of sin & from hell, but have faith & hope. “For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” (II Tim.1:12) Which is based on that “He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.” (II Tim.2:13)

app. Quite a number of Christians are satisfied in “the elementary teachings about Christ” (Heb. 6:1 NIV) do not have the assurance of hope “as an anchor of the soul, both sure & stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” (Heb. 6:19)

Atheism

One claims that “there is no God” (Psa. 14:1). But in most cases this proposition in fact errs in universal negative, which cannot be proved. Rather confesses without sham & shame that one is no other than agnosticism. Such honest seeker perhaps could lead to salvation.

app. One who does not know that one does not know is a fool (Psa. 14:1). Till one sees one’s real “filthy”, then as the lost son, one may be on the way of returning to his father’s home (Lk.15-17).

Atonement

The Fall of mankind resulted in the tragedy of separation from God, thus became enemy of God. Atonement made by Christ (Rom.3:24), is the only way which leads to peace with God (Col:1:20 cf. Isa.59:20), thru the cross.

app. Church commemorates the Lord’s supper (I Cor.11:23-26), with faith accept the grace thru His death, with love toward each other as one bread, & with hope for the second advent of Christ, to take His bride.

Attendance, Building, Cash, abr. ABC. Commercial terms, now adapted by churches. Actually, these principles can apply to restaurants, theaters, entertainments, almost any enterprise but not church. “In lying words saying: The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.” (Jer.7:4) But they are astray from the “old paths”(Jer.6:16).

app. Jesus did not advise His disciples to ad. “The beauty queen of Sychar” & her half-a-dozen husbands & lover (cf. Jn.4:1-30), but to offer people “Living Water” instead. “They that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” (Jn.4:24)

Avarice

Greediness, Avidity. Greed is the sign of want of contentment. “For the love of money is the root of all evil.” (I Tim. 6:6-10) As Christians one ought to “set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col. 3:2) But avarice up-root your mind from above & plant it on the earth.

app. Unlike rice which can fill physical body’s desire, or, appetite, avarice after every intake, only makes one hunger more, as always. If a Christian family were talking often of money that is a sure way to educate their young to have Lot as their model & to aim at “filthy fat”, rather than to be the descendant of the poor, but pure, Abraham (Gen. 14:22 -15:1).

B

Baal

“Baal” is a Semitic word which means “The Master”, “The Lord”, hence “Husband”. As the major god of the Canaanites, he supposed to be the god of the storm & of soil, of fertility. Israelites always attempted to serve him, some times associated with Ashtaroth, which Jeremiah refers to as “Queen of heaven” (Jer.44:18,19).

app Because of their wish to have prosperity & desire to syncretize with natives, the Israelites were easily drawn to Baalism, & forgot God’s commandments, which requires them to be separated from Pagan worship. Obviously, that is often the problem of the Church.

Baptism

Baptism is a religious ritual of purification & new life, after conversion & follow a master, which is a practice used beyond Christianity. John’s baptism is signifying repentance (Matt. 3:1-11). John is only the herald of Christ, & he witnessed that “but He that cometh after me [John] is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” (Matt 3:11,12)

app. In early Church there were disciples of John who did not know the baptism of Christ (Acts 9:1-7). Today, a much greater number of so called “Christian” did not know repentance.

Beatitudes

Blessed means more than an emotional state of happiness. It includes spiritual well-being, having the approval of God, and thus a happier destiny, “for great is your reward in heaven”. (Matt.5:3-12 cf. Lk.6:20-23) Therefore it is nothing to do with motive of selfish or worldly gain whatsoever.

app. This great teaching of Christ is having a much farther & deeper meaning & giving new purpose of living to His disciples. Happy is not *carpe diem*, or, materialistic “prosperity gospel”.

Betray

An action of disloyalty to disown, desert, or to denounce allegiance due someone, esp. one’s former Master. The most notorious was the Lord’s onetime “Chancellor of the Exchequer” Judas’s treacherous betrayal of the Lord Christ (Matt. 26:14-16)

app. The action of betrayal usu. started by betraying the trust of the Master. Today, the descendants of Judas’ molls are still in plenteous. There may never be a perfect leak-proof way to prevent such act, but one’s personal experience of conversion & to know the Lord, is quintessential.

Bible

Gk. *biblia*, derived from *biblos* & *papyrus*. Papyrus was the water plants which ancient Egyptians used to produce the world’s oldest paper.

The holy word of God which made one who believes holy thru Christ. In ancient time, the ones who know how to read, & interpret the Bible professionally is called “scribe”, among them the ablest is Ezra (Ez.7:6). The Jewish Rabbi believed that had not there be Moses before him, Ezra could be their Law- giver.

Jesus pointed out the serious problem of the Jews: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” (Jn. 5:39,40)

app. If the one who traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho heard & saw the one who traveled before him, wounded laying on the roadside, but be keeping his devoted reading and do nothing, will be rewarded to Hell’s fire, with his treasured good book. The Lord’s command to him: Go, do thou likewise.” (Lk. 10:30-37)

King James Authorized Version, is one of the best translated Bible in English language. At Hampton Court Conference (1604), James stated that “We may never have a perfect English Bible, but We know that the worst

English translated Bible is the Geneva Bible.” It is because that its notes on Ex.1:21 & I King 15:13, etc.) displeased His Majesty. Yet the so called KJV published in 1611, which contained a great majority from Geneva Version, by academic honesty it could be name G- KJV, only without the notes. The KJV currently in print is after 5 revisions. Even “the Lord’s Prayer” commonly used in churches is significantly altered from the original first edition of KJV. Thus prove that James was right & was with scholarly insight. Other places like I Kings 21:21, Mark Twain mocked it as unreasonable severe punishment, to which it is hard to define.

Bible Believing

To read & know the bible is essential for right faith & behavior. But to know & believe is a totally different matter. Believing always comes with behaving. Believe without behave is only half believe.

app. In Jesus’ time, there were the scribes & the Pharisees misusing their biblical knowledge as weapon to find fault & attack Jesus, but refuse to believe the Bible which bears witness of Jesus as the Christ. Even Herod the evil king was more sincerely in believe that Christ is the new-born King, though acting wickedly.

Bible & Revival

One truly believe the Word of God, the revival will surely follow. King Josiah discovered the Book of the Law in the Temple, & being read to him; His heart was tender & humble himself before God, thus led to a national repentance, revival & reform (II Chr. 34:15- 35:19). In 1517, Erasmus published his Greek New Testament, then; Martin Luther, William Tyndale & others, translated & published the Bible into many dialects, thus fanning the Reformation in Europe & popularized the gospel, then revival followed.

app. Evangelicals today, should know & believe in the Bible as the inerrant word of God, & humble before God, and then revival comes after repentance.

Bless

A gracious word, means “redden with blood”, by sacrifices to consecrate. In Christianity, to say: “God bless you”, actually saying: “God covers you in blood.” Which means “Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself: by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Col.1:20) Of course, its prototype is “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” (I Cor.5:7)

app. The Passover comes with unleavened bread. The Church redeemed by the Lamb’s blood, ought to purge out the old leaven of malice & wickedness, but with “the unleavened bread of sincerity & truth.” (I Cor. 5:8)

Body

The Church is the body of Christ; the mysterious Head is Christ. Therefore, they share the same purpose of living, common value & interest, & mutual love. “For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we are 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.” (I Cor. 12:12,13)

app. Member, etym. means part— esp. limb, of the human body, hence a person is a part in the group, or community.

Born Again

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (Jn. 3:3) i.e., “born of water” is “born of flesh”; “born of the spirit”, is the second birth “into the kingdom of God.” (Jn. 3:5-8)

“He that has the Son hath life.” (I Jn.5:12) “Ye may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with Father & with the Son Jesus Christ.” (I Jn. 1:3)

These new creatures are “children of light” (Eph. 5:8,9);

“ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Peter 1:4);

Thus by the “captain of their salvation”, to bringing many unto glory” (Heb. 2:10), becomes the family of God (Eph.1:13,14).

app. Spirit- wind, is the work of God, which gives new life without death. Yet, some people insist on the impassibility of “nature change” of the “leopard’s spots” (Jer.13:23); while some other believe in the pagan idea of born-again, again & again, i.e., re-incarnation. But the right teaching is that all by Christ & the work of Holy Spirit (Jn.3:8-21). The one who has been born-again & with renewed life shall live by the Spirit & bear fruit.

Bravery

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear: but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (II Tim.1:7) Therefore, bravery is given by God, because the children of God need to be brave in front of a hostile environment of the foes. Over brave is rash, on the other hand, too little bravery is cowardice. The middle way is bravery.

app. When Elijah was facing the evil king Ahab, in response to the charge: “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” Elijah answered: “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baals.” (I Kings 18:17,18) That is the example of bravery that a prophet needs. In facing the powerful Sanhedrin, Peter & the other apostles said: “We ought to obey God

rather than men.” (Acts 5:29) Today, the Evangelical churches need more Spirit of power & bravery, rather than the soft, clever “Eunuch Theologians” who without back-bone, only knew how to compromise & please the authorities.

C

Call

God called the Fallen human to repentance & salvation: “Where art thou?” (Gen.3:9) “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk.19:10)

app. In practice, Call can mean a brief visit. The Puritan pastor Richard Baxter (1615-1691), not only made alter call, but he also made home calls on all his Kidderminster parish, none of the members is rich, to deliver home services, lessons, & even to give them books to read (q.v. *Reformed Pastor*). This faithful hard work for years, resulted in leading many lost souls into the Fold, & changed the notorious area to the model parish.

Calling

Vocation which guided by the Lord, not limited to clericals alone, but all who are doing something “which is good” (Eph. 4:28).

app. Thus religious workers are called “reverend”, “Venerable” etc., who in civil service, that they can be addressed as “Honorable” also. But only those who are honorable in deeds are honorable indeed (Phil. 4:8,9).

Calvary

The place where Christ was crucified. The word derives fr. *Calvaria*, L. for “Skull”. In N.T., The word “Calvary” appeared only once (Lk.23:33 KJV).

“When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.” Aramaic word *Gulgata*. Heb.*Gulgoleth*. i.e. Golgotha, in English. The spot of Jesus’ Crucifixion was outside the city of Jerusalem (Heb.13:13), but is uncertain, commonly believed to be the skull-shaped rock just north of the Damascus Gate.

app. We all are “thieves”, or malefactors, who trespassed God’s order. Thanks be to the Lord, who on the cross bore our sins, shed His own precious blood and redeemed us. Therefore, every day & every hour we need to make our decision to confess His name, & received by the Lord into His kingdom. Except those being fixed on the cross & breathed one’s last there, Christians after conversion must have action to manifest one’s new life.

Cannibal

A certain animal which eats meat, esp. human flesh.

Old day cannibals consume humans to fill their appetite, i.e., people of Fiji, Tonga, did so sometimes in the past, but since they had been converted to Christianity, they cease the evil practice. Only modern day cannibals eat human, but do not have bone left, i.e., n.e.d. (no evidence of disease/ no evidence of deed).

app. Cannibals' have no concern of mutual love but to fulfill their stomachs. The carnal person lives in the same principle, & only "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer.17:9). Therefore, regeneration is needed.

Care

Care, or Cure, means pastoral care of the souls of the believers: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (I Peter 5:2,3) One's care must have compassion. Jesus was never on the religionists' pay roll, He had boundless compassion, because "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." (Acts 10:38)

app The faithless shepherds: "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock ... my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." (Eze.34:3-6) In Jesus' days, though there were no short supply of religionists, people "fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." (Matt.9:36) Today, there are "shepherd" having no sheep, yet sheep have no shepherd, and God's flock do not receive enough care.

Catholic

The word fr. L. *catholicus*, fr. Gk. *Katholikos*, which means universal or general. Roman Catholicism means the faith, practice or system of Catholic Christianity, with the Pope in Vatican. The Bishop of Roma's stress on his supremacy caused the Great Schism in AD 1054, while The Eastern Orthodox Church was established with its Patriarch in Constantinople. Then came the Reformation; thus the Roman Catholic Church could no longer even claim their universalness, territorially or legally. Yet the spiritual universal *Ecclesia* is firmly established on Christ, the Rock, "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:17).

App: Despite of the outward differences, even fragmentation, the Church of Christ is ever one: all those who receive His grace, born again, confess His

name and truly trust in Him, belong to the true Church, and be preserved by God unto eternity.

Catholicity of the Church

The universal Church, regardless of specific time, location, sects, all inclusive of the true believers who confessed the Name & born again into God's household thru Jesus Christ's redemptive grace. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph.3:15)

app. One was asked which church he is from. Answered: "Christ's Church." Further question: "When was your church established?" "Nineteen hundred & eighty years ago, give & take in 3,4 years."

Charity

Exemplified by Christ, "charity edifieth." (ICor.8:1). It's evidence of agape love to our neighbor, just like "God so love the world that He gives" (Jn.3:16).

app It is possible one gives without love; but not one loves without giving.

Charismatic

Charisma, Charismata, means "gift". Because some erroneous teachings, resulted that "charismatic" got an undeserved evil reputation. Thus "the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thess. 2:9) be the "fault" of Charismatic. Therefore, the false teachers' evil work hinders the gospel.

app Though that seems to be a Diabolic theory. Actually, they are the proof of the values of the gift. Just as all the world's major currencies, all have counterfeits, yet no one suggests that should stop the using of money. The existence of counterfeit *Charismata*, proof that 1. There is a real thing; It further proof that 2. The real thing has value; Furthermore, 3. The counterfeit & real one has similarity; & 4. The counterfeit is easier to get by with; 5. Finally, someone will be benefited thru this process. In conclusion, Christians should "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18), not fear of the Spirit.

Christ

Christ, the Anointed, Gk. for *Messiah*. In O.T. time, prophet, priest, & king these 3 offices are anointed. Christ Jesus was the Prophet "like unto Moses" (Deut. 18:15 cf. Acts 3:22), the eternal High Priest (Heb. 9:11), the God promised King, "the seed of David" (II Sam. 7:12; Rom.1:3). He is the incarnated God, who manifested in flesh (I Tim.3:16 cf. Jn.1:1-14). Only by believe in Christ that one can have life eternal.

app There were many people in the past, who claimed to be “messiah”. Even now, there are not a few “christ” fell & rise. But Jesus Christ did warn His disciples to beware of the false christs (Matt. 24:23-36).

Christian

“It came to pass, that a whole year they [Barnabas & Paul] assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” (Acts 11:26) Being so called, means they followed the doctrine of Christ, and people saw their orthopraxis & offered that precious name. Christians not only believe in God, but the Triune God. As the Epistle of St. John stated: “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (I Jn.5:11,12) Only thru believe in the Incarnated Word, one can have life everlasting: “In Him was life.” (Jn.1:1-4).

app Nowadays people are contending for the Faith, while others hardly can verdict their claim. A certain Siant once said: “If you cannot love your brother in Christ, you should love Christ in your brother.”

Church

The Lord says: Tell it unto the church” (Matt18:17) is referred to the assembly body of the elected people; in O.T. church in the wildness (Acts 7:38); N.T. “The church of God” (Acts 20:28); Christ is the Head of the Church (Col.1:1-18-24). Locally, they may meet in a house, but the Church is not the house (Philem:2).

app Once a group of tourist visited a European cathedral site. Someone expressed that “What a beautiful church!” A clergy at the side replied: “If you wait just quarter of an hour the church will come.” That is to say, the Church is not a building, but only symbolically (Eph.2:19-21). In fact, Church is a collective group of saved souls.

Circumcision

In O.T. times, God used the circumcision as the evidence of the covenant between Him & Abraham & his descendent. Thus it became a mark, thus demarcation between God’s chosen people & heathens. But they do not keep the Law and only boast on their circumcision (Gal.6:13). So Paul says: “We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.” (Phil.3:3)

app. Christians today often fell on the same stumbling block as the Jews did in time past. Outward showings such as baptism, rituals, membership, paper & parchments, have been used as shields in conversion’s stead. Nothing can take the place of “worship in the spirit” which only the true Christians can approach the Holiest thru our Heavenly High Priest.

Comforter, The Other

Parakletos in Gk. “One called alongside to help”. Before leaving the disciples, Jesus said that: “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth ... I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you...” (Jn.14:16-18) “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.” (Jn. 16:13) To say “another”, means while Jesus was with the disciples, He is their *Parakletos*, alongside them to solve all kind of problems. The Promised Holy Spirit is taking Jesus’ place, & the revelation should be completed. *Parakletos* trans. Also “Advocate” (I Jn. 2:1), as the Holy Spirit is the believer’s indwelling *Parakletos* to help one’s ignorance & infirmity, & to make intercession (Rom.8:26,27).

app The Holy Spirit is Christian’s great helper in every step. “That no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus ‘accursed’; and that no man can say that Jesus is ‘The Lord’, but by the Holy Spirit.” (I Cor.12:3) The Holy Spirit is not a thing, but the third person of the Triune God. In N.T. Church, there was a person whose original name was Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, The Son of Consolation).” (Acts 4:36) Thus became his name throughout church history. “He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” (Acts 11:24) Church need people with all kind gifts, but those who full of the Holy Ghost & bear the fruit of love is most needed.

Commandments

Commandment, commonly known as Command, is issued from the ones in a high position to one’s inferiors to obey. Ten Commandments is the cornerstone document of Jewish & Western morality, even the law. But some held the view that the first Commandment in fact is a “statement” (Ex.20:2-14; Deut.5:6-18). However, the last is the only commandment that deals with mentality. In N.T. Jesus said that “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (Jn.13:34,35) N.B: that “love one to another” is not new, (Jn.13:34,35) because it is what the law commands; but “as I have loved you, i.e., “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn.15:13). So, “the end of the commandment is charity” (I Tim.1:5). “Love worketh no ill [does no harm] to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom.13:10)

app. Thus we can see that recognizing the one & only God, & fear of God is the basic concept toward Godly living. The covetousness is indeed to worship an idol in God’s stead, therefore, it is the root of all evil.

Commencement

Commence from L. which means to initiate, to enter upon, hence to have or make a beginning. Since the educational institutions were originally established by the Church & were purposed to train clergies & lawyers for its service, the regalia used at the commencement ceremonies were clerical attires, & it marked “to begin the activities in Church”.

app. Today the Church has lost the vision & function on education, & the majority of educational institutions, which were founded by Churches, now become secularized & often become rebel’s camps which worked against the Church. This should be a concern, if one still have, for love God’s kingdom.

Commission, The Great Commission

Commission originally means a formal order granting the power to perform certain acts of duties. The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ begins the “dispensation of God” (Eph.3:2), by commanding His disciples: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matt. 28:18-20) Some termed the latter part as the “Cultural Mandate”, actually, it is not another commission, but “teaching them to observe” meant the same people who accepted the gospel & influencing the culture, and resulted in its renewal & restoration.

app. Since the Great commission must be performed as a whole, the one who is commissioned, as good and faithful servants, should not only evangelizing, but with teaching at the same time; otherwise is becoming doing half the task, & leaves the another half undone.

Confession

Confess means to acknowledge or tell not only the sin (I Jn. 1:9), but also praise & thanksgiving (Deut.26:1-15). Esp. confession by no means only as lay Christians to clergies, but “confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed.” (Jam.5:16)

app. The Christians with affectionate love toward each other, should form small groups, share, care & dare, that is to say, responsible for each other, encouraging, comforting, & confessing, for their common benefit.

Compassion

Passion means suffering. Compassion means suffer with. As members of the same body, we should be “of the same mind” in will, but “rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” (Rom.12:15,16) In the case of the victim who fell in the hands of robbers, the co-religionist of the same

community, acted only as they are passersby, but the journeyinh Samaritan stranger, who is motivated by compassion, involved in a dangerous, & burdensome, enterprise of rescue. Compassion promotes Consideration & Concern. It's the spirit that protects the community. It's the power that produces comradeship.

app. The term of "neighbor", as all Jewish people know, does not limited to the ones who live & move in the same environment, but means those who are not relative, nor enemy, but all inclusive friendly persons. Thus Jesus ending the story of the command to the seemed uncomprehending religionist: "Go, and Do!" (Lk.10:25-37) The *Sh'ma*: "Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God is one LORD. And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Plus: "And thy neighbor as thyself." The correct dogma must follow by steps.

Congregation

Congregation means a religious community formed a body of believers assembled in a particular locality. Thus such congregate is limited to local & visible. In concept, must not assume it to be universal, because such a position is inconceivable logically.

app. Not infrequently, local congregation unwittingly use language such as "The House of the Lord" (Psa.23:6), "God's storehouse" (Mal.3:10) etc., which should never be used in vain, nor used in synagogues; actually, most people do not have the right concept of the claimed function or mentality.

Conscience

"To have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." (Acts 24:16)

"My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost" (Rom.9:1)

"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (I Tim.3:9)

app. "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing wonder and awe, the more often and more seriously reflection concentrates upon them: the starry heaven above and the moral law within me." (Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804)

Consecration

Things to separate or dedicate as holy in religious terms, are consecrated. At peace time, one should remember "it is He that giveth the power to get wealth." (Deut.8:18) At war, "safety is of the LORD." (Pro.21:31) Therefore, one ought to consecrate part of whatever of the gain, & offer it to God. Hence come the concept of the word "Taboo!" or "Tabu!" in Polynesian. When Achan transgressed God's covenant, having stolen the devoted things from the spoil & lied (Jos.7:11-26), caused the curse to himself & Israel, until they dealt with it seriously & purged the evil.

app. This manifested God's holy character, & as His people, one should bear in mind, & be careful in handling these consecrated items. If one falls any short of this requirement, it will result in God's wrath & curse.

Consolation

Christians who intend "to continue in the faith ... must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) Therefore mutual consolation & encouragement is much needed.

app. One who in suffering & experiencing being lost, need consolation the most. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb.4:16) Besides, if we have co-sufferers, brothers who were tempted & tried, and can offer comfort & consolation, it will be a natural & necessary act of bodily love. (Rom.12:15)

Conspiracy

Conspirare, L. means to breathe together, hence to agree, to plot together. Thus it means a certain group put their heads together secretly to act against an establishment or persons with authority. Such were the religionists of the Jews against Jesus Christ (Matt.26:3-5); but "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" which worked out the salvation (Acts 2:23). They also against Paul, but was foiled by the Lord (Acts 23:12-24,11).

app. Today such ugly plots are still often brooded: by "our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe", but the mighty Lord is always with us as He has promised. Be thanks to the Lord.

Contentment

Opposite to the greedy, hungry wolves, the Lord's sheep always be "godliness with contentment" (I Tim. 6:6). Thus proves "The LORD is my shepherd: I shall not want." (Psa.23:1).

app. The infidel shepherds invaded & infected the fold, "through covetousness they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (II Peter 2:3). Because that is their indelible birth-mark.

Conversation

1. In Biblical term, "upright conversation" (Psa.37:14 cf. II Cor.1:12), means upright conduct, walk.

2. Conversation (speech) shows the fountain of the heart. Christians have new life, must be "putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor ... let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." (Eph. 4:25,29) Be courteous in conversation: "Let your speech be

always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col.4:6)

app. “Then they that feared the LORD speak often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon His name.” (Mal.3:16) “Thought upon His name” is the source of fear of God. Today, there are many forms of recording kept. So, that not only the board meetings, church conferences should use them, family daily conversation may also be introduce to this process.

Conversion

The word conversion, means “to turn”, esp. in religious & ethical sense. Apostle Paul’s conversion, with a commission from the Lord: “Rise, and stand upon thy feet! For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.” (Acts 26:16-18) This is a full version of prescription & conscription to Paul: after conversion & convert others.

app. Conversion then comes commission. Church is a converted group, but needs to have second generation & after. That is a church with a vision & a mission.

Cross, Crux

In the ancient church the saints used to draw a cross sign in front of their heart to signify Christ’s suffering in order to purify one’s heart & mind. Jesus purchased believers on that accursed wood, so Christians ought to remember always that all our being is belonging to the Lord, our new Master, “whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” (Rom.14:8)

app. The using of cross on the roof top or the front door as decoration, obviously comes after the persecutions.; on persons for décor even long after. This tradition of practice in itself is nothing to do with Roman Catholicism. So, Protestant Christians are not an exception, & drawing of Cross is accepted.

Crusade

The Church had Crusades, which started in 1096, under Pope Urban II, a born Frenchman, used the French *Croisade*, in Medieval Latin term *Cruciare* which means “to take the cross”. Their goal was to recapture the

Holy Land from the Turks. These Eastward expeditions ended in the fifteenth century.

app. Certain expeditions with mixed motives, though using a good name & proclaim good goals, but without Christ as the Head, cannot be a real Church operation, & god's blessings should not be assumed.

Currency

Currency, Ancient Chinese, the word "Money" is the same as "spring", "錢"通"泉") just as "currency" is from "current". Water without flow becomes rotten. Hence "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Pro. 11:25) "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." (Pro. 11:24)

app. Rich man's problem: "have no room to bestow my fruits and my goods"; actually, he has an option: open & let it flow out. (Lk.12:16-21) This will give him better rest, physically & spiritually.

Curse

A curse is an invocation of ill wish for harm or injury to come upon one. Anathema meant the curse of excommunication.

app. 1. To use profanely insolent blaspheme language against God (Job 2:9).

As Danish philosopher Soren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855), whose father was in dire poverty. One day, he went to a field, used terrible language against God & cursed Him. After that, his family became prosperous. Yet they believed that they were under the shadow of that curse.

2. Jewish Philosopher Benedictus de Spinoza (1632-1677) was excommunicated by the Jewish community (1656) , they pronounced the severe & long curse on him (Deut.28:15-46).

Cyncretism, Syncretism

Cyncretism (L.) aka Syncretism, means a mixture of religious beliefs or cultural ideas. The Israelites on the wilderness route, mixed Yahweh worship and Gold Calf festival was one of such early cases (Ex.32:1-6). After the occupation of the Promised Land, Baal worship and other native cults and alien idols became chronic diseases compromising the pure worship. Until the Assyrian resettlement in Samaria, the peoples "feared the LORD, yet served their graven images" (II Kings 17:41). Subsequently came the Hellenization and Romanization which led the people of God into deeper mire of cyncretism.

App: The Christian religion's uniqueness and its worship must be kept pure and intact. Therefore, any compromise just for fitting the purpose to please

the hands that feed them, or, to bend to the acceptability of the masses, is a contamination of the true faith.

D

Damn, Damnation

The word came fr. L. means to fine, to penalize, condemn, thus mean damage, loss; hence eternal condemnation. Jesus said: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believe on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (Jn.5:24) “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (Jn.3:17,18)

app. The only way to salvation is through Christ Jesus. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Darkness

Jesus is God’s Son, the Incarnated Word. “In Him was life: and the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” (Jn.1:3,4) “Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (Jn.3:19) But Jesus declared that “I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (Jn.8:12) So, Jesus called that “While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” (Jn.12:36)

app. In darkness, one cannot differentiate color & shape, comely & homely. So the darkness could hide all kinds of evil. Things were done under cover of darkness such as falsifying accounts & hidden projects, are evil practices. Christians as “Children of light”, must bear fruit of light (Eph.5:8,9), and naturally reject all the dark, or shadowy practices. As one Chinese sage nicely phrased: “Things one cannot do ought not say; things one cannot say ought not do.”

David

The best known character in the Bible, best loved & admired, even today.

- 1.The man God had chosen (I Sam.16:12-23; II Sam.10:5) Anointed by Samuel, after waiting for many years then became king over Israel.
- 2.Makes covenant with Jonathan (I Sam.18:1-4), the exemplary friendship.
- 3.Twice spars Saul (I Sam.24:1-26; 26:1-25), as God’s anointed.

4. As Prophet (Acts 2:29-34), ministered to all.
5. "The sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam.23:1).
6. Man after God's own heart (I Sam.13:14), whole heartedly (Psa.132:1-18).
7. Sincere repentance: The carnal sin (Psa.51); The great sin (II Sam.24:10).
8. The Son of David (Matt.1:1; Rom.1:3), the promised seed: Jesus.

app David had a true love for God & his fellow human beings, either his enemies or friends, his superior or subjects. He was not perfect, yet the Bible repeatedly cited him as a model.

Deacons

In the early church, out of the necessity of managing the daily supply of foods, "Deacons" were elected (Acts 6:1-7). Thus the Apostles could be relieved from serving tables, but give themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

app. The word "deacon" means minister of the church. Sometimes it means servant. Thus one should always bear in mind, as from its beginning, to behave humbly to serve God by serving the members.

Death

1. Death means "lost", "to part with." The time one's soul separates with the body, breath ceased, is death (Psa.104:29 Lk.12:20). 2. Yet there is another death, which means one separates from Christ & lost eternally, without hope, that is "second death": any one does not have second birth (born again) must experience the second death; "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev.20:14,15) There to spend eternity. 3. At the Christian's death, he is "clothed upon" with a "house from heaven" which means everlasting abode; pending on the resurrection of the "earthly house" (body), and is at once with the Lord (II Cor.5:1-8 Phil.1:23).

app. Upon one parting from a friend or relative, to have sorrow is natural & reasonable. As to the Apostle's admonition that "concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope." (I Thess. 4:13-18) It's not to forbid sorrow, but do not sorrow as others who have no hope: our hope is upon the resurrected Christ.

After death, in the intermediate state, which the O.T. in Heb. called "*Sheol*" (i.e., grave, cf. Gen.42:38). The N.T. saints are in a blessed existence called Paradise (Lk.23:43). There is no place of purgatorial, therefore no ransom or bribery is possible, neither another possibility of salvation for the lost (Lk. 16:26 Heb.9:27).

Debt

A word opposite to own or have. Debt means one owes, therefore, due to be paid someone & ought to pay someday. The word "Debt" in Chinese, orig.

mean “Duty”, hence imply to yoke, or burden, applied fiscally or non-materially. e.g. “Forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” (Matt.6:12) In O.T. times, one who is indebted often becomes the slave or indentured servant: “The borrower is servant to the lender.” (Pro.22:6) But Knowing that our old man is crucified with Christ, we “being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness” (Rom.6:6-22). As Christians, we are co-debtors of gospel with Apostle Paul to all humans (Rom.1:14). Yet, financially we should be free from the burden of debt.

app. 1. Incredibly, consumerists manufactured & manipulate, & changed the current opinion, by euphemism giving debt another term “credit”. Some churches followed the trend of the world, to mortgage certain items which are supposed to be dedicate to God, as a result, that made God debtor; by so doing, in effect it changed the Lord’s Prayer to “Forgive your debt”! Thus Paul’s rhetoric question: “Who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again”, one can render an answer: “The Bank!”

2. A car plate displayed that “Thou shalt not steal: except the Government.” In mocking the government spend & “borrow” national debt, in fact is stealing from the posterity.

Deceit, Deceive, Deception

The Devil is named “Deceiver”, who from the beginning, till now is going around deceiving people, use smooth sayings or semantic tricks. It happened at Eden “the Serpent beguiled Eve” (Gen.3:4,5 cf. II Cor.11:3); It happened in the early Church (Acts 5:3). “Because there is no truth in him [the devil]. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (Jn.8:44)

app. “The whole world lieth in wickedness” (I Jn.5:19), i.e. under the Evil One’s domain. Lie is using to cover the unrighteous deed, therefore, sham is because of shame. But the untrue will be exposed in the light. Christians must be separated from this evil doing. Someone said, the test of a Christian’s true character is the honesty of his income tax return. Church must be beyond reproach on their financial trustworthiness.

Decision

One has responsibility for one’s action, because one has a will. Therefore, Decision making is important. “Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” (Jam. 1:6,7) However, some stated that human-will is but “the Devil’s bride”, while others over emphasizes human-will & decision making, thus making man the equal partner in the business of salvation. Paul said that “For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (Phil.2:13)

app. Modern Evangelicals often try to making too much of “Decision”, & employed all kind of psychological method & to try to influence people’s minds, such as to arrange the personnel, time, environment, light, music etc. for the effect of decision making. But some made a practice, that to those who make their so called “decisions” in evangelistic meetings, are not “converts”, only seekers.

Decalogue

In Gk. *Deka*, ten, *logue*, words, which mean Ten Commandments, or, the Covenants.

1. The first statement: “I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” (Ex. 20:1-17) then it follows:

2. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me;
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;
5. Honour thy father and thy mother;
6. Thou shalt not kill [murder];
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery;
8. Thou shalt not steal;
9. thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor;

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s ‘wife, or ... anything that is thy neighbour’s.

All the other covenants were based on the first to make it meaningful. For before being liberated, a slave legally is non-entity, thus no one can make a covenant with a slave.

Christ came to fulfill the law: The ritual ordinances were but type & shadow, of which Christ was realized by His sacrifice of redemption & sanctification, that we are no longer subject to the law; as to the ethical law, all have obligations to observe.

app. The Decalogue is the inspiration & fountainhead for many legal streams. Jehovah commanded Moses to make two stone tables, The Decalogue is written on with God’s own finger. It implies that one tablet is for the duty of human beings toward their Creator, while the other for human beings toward fellow human beings; they are written on both sides, with implications that compel the recipients to have the duty of action or inaction respectively, either “ought” or “shalt not”.

Dedication

Dedication is a religious act to consecrate, or separate certain items, or valuables, for the exclusive use of God. On the other end, God shows visible

sign of acceptance and pleasure. e.g. the dedication of the tabernacle, “a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle (Ex.40:34). The dedication of the temple & the ark was brought into the temple, that “the cloud filled the house of the LORD... the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.” (I Kings 8:1-11; cf. II Chr.5:13,14)

app. N.T. Church has no sacred building called “the House of the LORD”, but we are “the temple of the living God: as God hath said: ‘I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,’ saith the Lord, ‘and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters’. saith the Lord Almighty.” (II Cor. 6:16-18) By the same token, “If a man therefore purge himself from these [iniquity], he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” (II Tim. 2:21)

Deeds

Deed is to do, *ado*, to be done, hence which means perform, more than just talking. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom.8:13)

app. Deeds usu. follow the words, even could go without words, but more visible than words. “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead ... As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” (Jam.2:17,26 NIV) So, “if ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.” (Jam.2:8) Thus proof that social concern must be put into exercise.

Deliverance

Deliverance, L. *liberare*, means set free. Hence means to take one out of an undesirable situation, spiritually or physically. e.g. Peter experienced the miraculous rescue, & was come to himself: “Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.” (Acts 12:11) Paul said: “We had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raised the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in Whom we trust that will yet deliver us.” (II Cor. 1:9,10)

app. The gospel is God’s deliverance of mankind, as Jesus has announced: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance of the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” (Lk.4:18) So the gospel always goes with

deliverance & liberty, the clearest evidence is the liberating of women & the abolishing of slavery.

Denial

L. *denegare*. Means to refuse, deny, to renounce. Jesus said: “Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt.10:33) But there are people “They profess that they know God, but in work they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” (Tit.1:16)

app. Christians denial of their Master in deeds do more harm to their witnesses than words. e.g. Joining the wrong company, etc. Peter’s denial of Christ is the traumatic memory for him. Yet he “sat down among” the enemies which was a greater denial plus mocking in deeds. So, he “remembered the word of the Lord ... went out and wept bitterly” (Lk. 22:55-62), in fact, as to the true action of repentance there is concern, “went out”, separation was more important than weeping.

Despair

Since “patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess.1:3,10) is “an anchor of soul” (Heb.6:19), there is little wonder that the devil is working hard to offer despair to Christians: some in suffering may be “wearied and faint” (Heb.12:3), some even in doing good but seeing no reap also may weary (Gal. 6:9 II Thess.3:13). Even Apostle Paul at times needed encouragement & looked up toward God for comfort (II Cor.1:3-10).

app. Church should always look for those in despair & offer concern to them. In many cases the neglected were driven to extreme actions, which should be prevented.

Devotion

Devote, Devotion, to vow firmly or without reservation, hence to consecrate for a higher end, piety. A devoted servant, “who is devoted to thy fear.” (Psa. 119:38) Such person will not fear the faces of men, but be faithful to the One who redeemed him & owns him.

app. A devoted servant is not a man-pleaser, nor does eye-service to the boss. Therefore, the world “thinks it strange that ye run not with them to the same of excess of riot, speaking evil of you, who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.” (I Peter 4:4,5)

Diligence

The returning Lord punishes his servant for being lazy & evil (Matt.25:26). Such person lives with a purpose, & willing to serve their Master longer hours, in order to have more work done; not “as a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and hireling looketh for the reward [at evening].” (Job 7:2)

God's faithful servants always wakeup be time. King David in an eventide that "arose from off his bed" (II Sam.11:2) is sure symptom of the spiritual decline & disease to come.

app. The Puritans believed that "Unwilling to work is symptomatic of the lack of grace.

John Milton said: "Fly envious time, till thou run out thy race, / Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours." So, the "faithful & wise servant", should mindfully, follow the example of Chief Shepherd by preparing an early lakeside breakfast (if one ever has fasted at all), for the disciples (Jn.21:9-14).

Demons, Devil

The devil is the adversary of God & man: "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8) Jesus called him "the prince of this world." (Jn.14:30) Because "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." (I Jn.5:19) i.e., "the whole world is under the control of the evil one." (NIV)

app. Some disbelieve anything spiritual & invisible, & deny the existence of demons, in today's trend, *scientia est potentia*, & deny things beyond ken, the world beyond the veil to some, is nothing. On the other hand, some often err by saying every problem is caused by the devil, and spare all human effort. The example of Apostle Paul though he was highly learnt, he was fully aware that that spiritual warfare depended on the Lord (Eph.6:10 cf. II Cor.10:3-6), at the same time, he used all human resources at his disposal.

Disciples

It means to train, to teach, to learn, to discipline, thus involve technological, education, military training, thus forming comradeship; so, a disciple is more apprentice than pupil. Jesus said to His disciples: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations [trials]. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." (Lk.22:28,29) And called them "friends" (Jn.15:15), "children" (Jn.21:5).

app. What short coming in today's church, is in the "discipleship". Thus a camp of raw enlisted, can never become an effective army. Of traditional trades, the masters always teach by doing, the apprentices learnt by following. Paul taught believers to follow him, as he followed Christ (I Cor.4:16; 11:1); while the false teachers only have hollow words, but not hallowed deeds.

Discord

A state or condition of lacking of agreement, or absence of harmony. In music, or in social order, this always results in undesirable situations. The

Church's important & mandatory function is "let your conversation [conduct] be as it becometh the gospel of Christ ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." (Phil. 1:27) But the adversary is busying to sowing discord among believers, having all kinds of selfish desires & sins, which results in discords, thus hindering the purpose (II Cor.12:20,21).

app. William Shakespeare in his play *Troilus & Cressida*, by the voice of the resourceful Ulysses, stated that:

*The heaven themselves, the planets and this centre,
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order.
And therefore, is the glorious planet Sol
In noble eminence enthroned and sphere
Amidst the other, whose medicinable eye
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,
And posts like the commandment of a king,
Sans check to good and bad. But when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny ...
Take but degree away, untune that string,
And hark, what discord follows! (I, iii, 85-110)*

The Church's ill comes from neglecting the glorious Sol (Christ), and the church's musical harmony has loosened. So Apostle Paul said to a disorderly congregation: "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Cor.14:40) Therefore, the church "to make a noise" is not by good antiphonal or polyphonic music, but by witness of harmony of the bodily life.

Disguises

The work of disguises is to cover one's real self & for a plotting or secret action purpose, or to pose as one which he is not. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed in an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." (II Cor.11:13-15)

app. Since being in a world full of people whose "heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer.17:9), one has no way to know everyone's true intention. Though "knowest His will, and approvest the things that are more excellent" (Rom.2:18) in general is beneficial, one should bear in mind that "honesty is the best policy". In occasions, being cheated is better than being a cheat

oneself. Church must try all efforts to avoid the accusation that “Religion is often made the covert of crime.” Rather to make criminals true converts.

Disobedience

Since obedience is the basic duty of a servant, so the great sin is disobedience. The old prophet Samuel pronounced these sad words to the first king of Israel: “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, He hath also rejected thee from being king.” (I Sam.15:23)

app. The worst thing of church is never allowing her Lord to express His opinion. Too high is the human noises which drowned out the thunder from above. Since the people never have any idea of obeying their Lord, then hardly could they feel the sin of disobeying. Therefore, this stiff-necked generation, need a prophet to rebuke them of their guilt, otherwise God may put them under someone’s iron yoke, in order to let them experience the Lord’s “easy yoke” & “light burden” (Matt.11:30).

Disputing

Dictatorship cannot be allowed in the Church, so discussions would be used before an important decision is made on affairs, esp. where doctrine is concerned. But some people would be against this norm, by assert their own opinion over strongly, to an extent that they see their victory is more important than being right. Thus disputes arise. In such a case, humility is needed. Peter is undoubtedly a “born leader”, yet at his mature & mellowed age he wrote that Advice: “Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (I Peter 5:5,6) For morals & manners, we must consider this exhortation.

app. There are certain groups, ever ready to evoke: “Ye should earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude:3), in fact, but suspicion, strife, separation, & ending in shame & self-destruction (Cal.5:15). On the other hand, humility & consideration always bring better result. On the event of Antioch disputing, both Peter & Barnabas were senior to Paul, yet they yielded to truth (Gal.2:11-16). At latter time, Peter did not spare with his effort to introduce Paul. What an example!

Divorce

When building a house, it is not easy, as some people will “plucketh it down” lightly. Such can see more often in today’s society. Jesus related divorce to “from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and the twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain,

but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Only one exception: “saving for the cause of fornication”; otherwise, divorce “caused her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” (Mk.10:6-9 matt.5:32) Here “fornication” is referred to pre-marriage sexual (unseemingly) action.

app. “When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it comes to pass that she finds no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness [unseemingly] in her,; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.” (Deut.24:1)

The Mishna records a debate on the meaning of the word “unseemly” that took place in the first century C.E. between the two foremost rabbinical academies in Israel. Beit Shammai believed that this word means adultery, and that the sole grounds for divorce, therefore, was sexual impropriety. Beit Hillel ruled that “unseemly” might refer to any act that made a husband unhappy, even something as minor as his wife’s cooking (Gittin 9:10). Jewish law ultimately ruled according to Hillel’s dictate, though the rabbis did create an important safeguard, the Ketuba, to protect women being treated unfairly. (J.L. pp.621,622)

Nowadays divorce becomes common place, yet Jewish community still insisted on to “write” a bill of divorcement, literally hand written. To the non-Jews even this effort is being saved, so, as sequential divorce & being remarried, in fact is equal to polygamy. Church on this case should take a more Biblical stand.

Doctrine, Doctor

The person who knows the Doctrine, is able to teach (docile), is a Doctor; the data one uses, Documents.

“Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ... He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evagelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the defying of the body of Christ: Till we all come to in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph.4:7-13)

As to the document & didactic method: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Tim.3:16,17)

app In John Calvin’s Geneva community, he himself serves as the Doctor, which means teacher. At the time of John Knox’s visit, he was much impressed & hailed it as a model of heavenly city. Now, If the Church cares for doctrine, then, it follows that they should pay full attention on Christian

education as the major part of ministry, and have qualified doctors, to feed God's sheep.

Dove

This symbol of peace is universally welcomed. Dove is a bird ritually clean, which can be used for sacrificing purpose. When the deluge is over, Noah "sent forth a dove from him"; unlike the raven which could feed & lodge on floating corpses, the dove found no place to rest on the remaining waters, it returned to the ark. Only after seven days, again Noah "sent forth the dove out of the ark, and the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off, so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth." (Gen.8:7-11) Thus the dove with olive leaf becomes the desired peace symbol.

Dove also represents Holy Spirit, which only dwell in clean place.

app. Peace is most needed & keenly sought after in the world, but one cannot have, and it is even more difficult to keep. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (Jam.3:17,18)

Dreams

In different religions, dreams are believed to be the invisible soul's activity in unseen world. The Bible says: "In the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God." (Eccl.5:7) Yet there are occasions God through dreams showed people His will, or warned people things to come (Jer.23:28). Jacob dreamt "a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven" (Gen.28:12). Joseph "dreamed a dream" of he & his family's future (Gen.37:5), thus earned him the name of "dreamer". Pharaoh had dreams (Gen.41:), about the feat of the country. Solomon had dreams about God favoring his non-selfish wish (I Kings 3:1,20).

Nebuchadnezzar & Daniel even had dreams of the world history (Dan.4:1-37 7:1-14). In N.T. times, God reveal events related to His plan of salvation to Joseph & the sages from the east (Matt.1:20; 2:12,13). But God wants His people to fear Him & observe His words, "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Deut.13:1-5 Isa.8:20).

app. Apostle Peter at his Pentecost message, referred to Joel's prophecy fulfilled, as "your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Acts 2:17) But, over relying on dreams & sidelines the Word is dangerous. Therefore, all claimed dreams, prophecies, & revelations other than the Bible, should be carefully checked.

Drunkenness

The Bible Land produces abundant grapes, its juice turned wine naturally. So the “wine which cheereth God and man” (Judg. 9:13) becomes daily essentials. The critics saw “The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners’.” (Matt.11:19) It’s because Jesus did not lead an ascetic life. However, one ought not to drink excessively, esp. as “drunken” at the church Agape feast, is scandalous. So, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” (Eph.5:18) Always be sober.

app. “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom.14:17) So, Paul to the Church saying that “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” (I Cor.10:31)

E

Ear

In the Mosaic Law, *Sh’Ma* started with “Hear! O, Israel.” Then runs the “great commandment” in the law: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” (Deut.6:4) Lord Jesus ended His message mentioning that “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” (Lk.8:8 14:35) It’s obvious His audience all have, but “uncircumcised in heart and ears” (Acts 7:51), the message fell to deaf ears. Therefore, “blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (Lk.11:28 cf. Jn. 14:21-24), who are true listeners & doers.

app. Martin Luther once said that “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom.10:17), then ear is the most important organ for salvation. It follows that “The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.” (Pro.20:12) Thanks be to the LORD.

Ecumenism

Ecumenical fr. Gk. *Oikoumene*, means “The World” (Acts 17:6; Matt.24:14; Heb.2:5). Since the early Church, its members struggle to pursue a worldwide entity; but it is something like one trying to jump over one’s own shadow; in fact the spiritual Church is never divided.

App: Ecumenical is not a human effort, but is an existing state: in reality it based on the answered prayer of our Lord to His Heavenly Father; whereas humans trying to make uniformity instead of unity can never achieve.

Jesus Christ praying for His disciples: “They all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me ... that they may be one, even as

We are One; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfect in one.” (Jn.17:21-23) So, what the Church needed is “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph.4:3-6).

Education

The word “Education” came from “lead” (duc, duke etc). Thus the educator is supposed to be a trainer who leads his trainees to follow his steps. One drives a herd of hogs, fills ducklings, but shepherd leads his sheep. So, Lord Jesus said: “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” (Jn.13:15). By a similarly way, Apostle Paul could also say that “I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye...” (Acts 20:35; Phl.3:17). The Apostle also said that “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (I Cor.11:1) or, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (NIV)

app. In the history, certain unfit persona but assuming that they were great leaders, but led people into disasters. Some were the false teachers. They instead of training the followers in the paths of righteousness, dragged others into ruin. Jesus commented that “Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?” (Lk.6:39) Apostle Paul talked of some of the Jews that “art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness.” (Rom.2:19) Therefore Christians must be careful to choose their educator, thus avoiding being led astray.

Election

To mankind, election means from the whole Fallen & sin-cursed human race, God solely based on His sovereignty power, arbitrarily chose part of them, to bestow on them the special favor. Those who were Abraham’s seed in O.T., & by faith became Abraham’s seed in N.T. Thus says the Bible: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” (Rom.8:29,20) Those mysterious election, only could know by one way, that is they responded to the call to believe: “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)

app. The Bible says: “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” (Deut.29:29) The long stream of history proved that multitudes of arguments got no further than in vain, only those who commit themselves to do the Lord’s will were blessed.

Endurance

The often quoted example of endurance is the O.T. Saint Job: “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” (Jam.5:11)

app. In today’s shallow culture, fast results & surface value is desired. Endurance is rarely considered a virtue. Christian’s endurance is “Patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess.1:3). That is to say, we are not afraid what is happening to this world, but care only who is coming to receive us into the everlasting glory.

Entertainment

Entertainment means “to hold together”, which is not an end in itself, except aiming to get something from the purse of the audience. However, “Be not forgetful to entertain the strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” (Heb.13:2) Gr. *Philoxenia*, to be hospitable. It is always a good Christian practice, esp. in certain areas where hotels are not available.

app. Apostle John, commended Gaius, “to strangers, which have borne witness of thy charity before the church, whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well.” (III Jn:5,6) On the other hand, the same Apostle of Love, warned the Church: “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 Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” (II Jn:9-11) As to the “entertainment” in today’s sense, there is none in the N.T. For in church meeting is not for hilarity, but worship & fellowship.

Enthusiasm

Gk. “In the power of theos (god)”, i.e. “divine possession, or, inspiration”. Cold dogmatism is not for a live church. But enthusiastism lacks Bible teaching & discipline, and will surely lead to confusion, not peace (I Cor.14:33). It is not the way of edification to the saints.

app. As virtues must be kept in the middle way. Church should avoid any polarization all the time: “Quench not the Spirit; Despise not

prophesying.” (I Thess.5:19,20)

Envy

The cardinal source of the first criminal case which came into the world was due to a brother’s envy. Cain’s envy toward his only brother Abel, resulted in his evil action of murder (Gen.4:4,5). Joseph’s brothers’ envy promoted them to the action against “the dreamer” (Gen.37:18-36 cf. Acts 7:9). It was

“for envy they [the Jewish religionists] had delivered” Jesus to the oppressive Foreigners’ hands.

app. The shameful envy is a sincere recognition of one’s own inferiority. It is also because one foolishly chose to against one’s own close relations. It comes the saying: “a sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones.” (Pro. 14:30) The way to cure envy is to develop bodily love.

Epiphany

The radical *phan* is transparent, so in Gr. *epiphaneia* means manifestation. *Theophaneia*: “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim.3:16) is the early hymn of Incarnation.

app. Christians who have the new life, ought to “be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” (Phil.2:15)

Eschatology

Gk. *eschatos*, means “finis”, “final”. The disciples asked Christ about the end of the world & His returning; to which the answer is unknown to others but the Father. Yet another form of *eschatos* is the end of one’s life, i.e. to meet one’s Creator & must give account of life, to which most proper attitude is to “be ready” all the time & anytime.

app The guising game of the date & time of the second advent, becomes ever fashionable & profitable, but it is unhealthy in Christian spiritual life. Since Christ Himself declined to satisfy the curiosity of the disciples, “Be Ready” should be the proper & final answer. Go no further.

Ethics

etym. Akin to Gk. *ethos*, custom. Therefore, culture, character. “If they neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Matt.18:17) or, “treat him as you would be a pagan. . .”(NIV) “heathen” means nation, i.e., different culture, custom.

app. As Christian, one must follow His steps (I Pet. 2:21), and practice the Lord’s command (Jn.13:33), and flying high His Royal Standard. Kant says very aptly that “So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only.” (Emmanuel Kant, 1724-1804)

Example

Deeds speak louder than words. Luke wrote to a once prospector of the Truth, “of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach” (Acts 1:1), which

meant that the Incarnated Word of God, was always walk what He talk, by showing a perfect model for others, to observe & follow His steps.

app. Apostle Paul witnessed for Christ. At the parting from the elders of Ephesus, they & Paul knew each other for more than three years, Paul said that “I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord ...” (Acts 20:30,35). Thus it demonstrated the role of example in ministry.

Ex-communication / Papal edict

The Jewish community uses Ex-communication as a most severe punishment for its members, which means to “cut-off” the subject person from the community by pronouncing the curses of Deut.26:14-26 on the offender; one of such cases was Spinoza (1634-1677), who was excommunicated by the Jews on ground of atheism.

As to a town or political entity, the Papal Edict in effect would isolate them from outside connection, which could force people who lived there to go out of business.

In the Protestant churches, generally speaking, church discipline is hardly implemented; causes long suffering laxity under a false shield of love and tolerance.

App: The Church must have discipline, if one intends to be make disciple fruitful, though ex-communication should never be applied lightly. “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness” (Gal.6:1). This way is far more desirable.

F

Faith

1. Faith is what one believes in certitude as one is willing to rely on & act upon.

2. Faith leads to justification: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” (Rom.3:28) Apostle Paul declared to the synagogue at Antioch: “By Him [Jesus Christ] all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” (Acts 13:39)

app. “Justified by Faith”, *Sola Fide*, but it does not provide an excuse for one to indulge “in sin that grace may abound.” (Rom.6:1) If anyone who claims that he is saved, surely he will not in the bondage be “the servant of corruption” (II Peter 2:19).

Faithfulness

Faithful is being worthy of the faith, which means as subject do loyal coherent to whom the allegiance is due. So, L. *infidelis*, means one “having no faith.” Therefore, Paul has had the “godly jealousy” over the “chasteness” of the Church (II Cor.11:2,3).

app. The word infidelity was at first a church term, but has now been largely applied in sexual unfaithfulness. The Corinthians was notorious for their sexual immorality. The famous Cynic philosopher Diogenes (c.400-320 B.C.) once in Corinth, when he saw a boy throw a stone on the street, he warned him: “Take care lest you hit your father.” Fidelity is what the Church needs in both of religious & moral ground. The Lord of the Church said: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Rev.2:10) Let *Semper Fidelis* be our motto.

Fall

The human history is full of problems, because ours is a Fallen race. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and also death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom5:12) By the grace of God, He sent His Son Christ Jesus incarnated came to the world, and became salvation for mankind: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (I Cor.15:21,22)

app. The doctrine of original sin seems against reason, but once you accept it, the reality of human race has a whole new meaning. (Blaise Pascal, 1623-1662)

False Prophets

The ancient Foe works to the woe of the Lord’s heritage, as wolves in sheep’s skin. “There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” (II Peter 2:1)

app. The Evil One with all his cunning craft, used his messengers to induce God’s people to go astray. Whereas the O.T. false prophets led people away from worship God, the N.T. false teachers do is trying to attack the foundation of Christology & soteriology. They do not come as foreign religions, but by using the Church’s familiar religious terms & jargons, adding their “private interpretation” (II Peter 1:20), that is “privily”, even they may use such term as “spiritual” meaning, which leads to heresies. Therefore, God’s faithful ministers should be “rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Tim.2:15), by edifying the believers.

False Witness

To qualify one as witness, whatever they are testifying must be perceived by their own experiences. So, at the N.T. Church's first meeting, Peter's primary motions is that "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection." (Acts 1:20-22) But the Jewish religionists use money to buy false witnesses of the roman soldiers saying: "His [Jesus's] disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept." (Matt.28:13) Thus the most clumsy & ridiculous story was invented, but it is false witness. The Bible says: "He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness; but a false witness deceit." (Pro.12:17)

app. In church history, even to the present time, so called "pietistic lies" were manufactured, or exaggerated, for their own praise, yet they come under the name of testimony or witness. They may even end with "Glory be to the Lord", actually real shame.

Family

Family is not only an original institution, it is the basic building block of any society. The Church begins as God's family: "For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering (Heb.2:10-14). "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph.2:19) At the same time, the church need to rules orderly & properly, thus the leaders are needed: "If a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (I Tim.3:5)

app. Among the faults of the Church family, the leaders' own children are required to be believers, & it is best to let them be kept away from church purse, & not make the church their family business, to avoid of fall.

Famine

Famine is a state that food supply is in extreme shortage. There was a case when God used famine in Egypt to fulfill His plan of salvation (Gen.41:48:), which is the longest & often quoted. But generally, it is punishment of God toward the people (II Chr.6:26 cf. I Kings 1:1; 18:18). Yet the LORD pronounced another kind of famine: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it." (Amo.8:11,12)

app. It seems this curse has fallen on the Christian world in deed. Just as it was at the time of Eli, "The word of the LORD was precious (very rare) in those days, there was no open vision." (I Sam.3:1) People not only run

“from the north even to the east” as was originally meant to be ancient Damascus, Assyria & Babylon, they even run for the wisdom of the Far East, trying to salve the insatiable hunger to drive them insane. God’s mercy!

Fast

Fasting is abstinence from food for ritualistic, or ascetic, or other purposes.

In the Bible, has recorded fasting of different kinds:

1. For memorial reason: The people of Jabesh Gilead learnt King Saul’s & his son’s death, buried them & “fasted seven days.” (I Sam.31:13). The Jews fasting for the remembrance of their country’s subjugation (Zach.8:19).
2. For Devotional purpose: “Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.” (Joel 2:15 cf.Lk.2:37)
3. For committal prayer: When the Jews in the Persian regime were facing extirpation, Esther commanded them to fast (Esth.4:16). Once Jesus told His disciples about their failure on their exercise of casting out demons, by stating that, “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” (Matt.17:21)
4. For commencing a new task: When Ezra & the remnant captives were about starting their returning trip to Jerusalem, Ezra proclaimed a fast by the Ahava Canal (Ezra 8:21). In response to the Holy Spirit’s command to separate Barnabas & Saul (Paul) for their called mission. “They had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” (Acts 13:3) Lord Jesus in His “Sermon on the Mount”, named three religious duties, i.e., Alms-giving, Prayer, & Fasting (Matt.6:1-18), the most often neglected is fasting.

app. 1. The Desert Fathers led a life of fasting & prayer, they believed that that is a spiritual warfare against the evil powers.

2. John Wesley encouraged his adherents, by quoting the Lord’s words: “your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees” (Matt.5:20), of which is included “fast twice in the week” (Lk.18:12). Even for only physical health’s sake, fasting is a good practice. In today’s Church to emphasis on fasting & prayer is a spiritual need, in order to have the repentance & blessed awakening.

Father

1) In the Bible, “Father” not only meant a male parent, also fore ancestor, or respectable elder male. Therefore, it implies due reverence, and proud religionists desired to have people to addressing them so, esp. in public. Jesus told His disciples: “Call no man your father upon the earth, for One is your Father, which is in heaven.” (Matt.23:9) As to Jesus Himself, He called God as “Father” most often.

2) L. *Pater*, hence “Paternoster” is “Our Father” in “The Lord’s Prayer” (Matt.6:9-13; Lk.11:2-4). The East Orthodox Church’s leader is called Patriarch.

3) “The whole family in heaven and earth” (Eph.3:15), hence paterhood, patria, etc.

4) “Fathers of the Church” means those famous leaders of the Church from first to seventh century.

5) “Pope” derive fr. *Pape*, means father.

6) The Father image of God: a. God loves (I Jn.3:1); b. He forgives (Matt.6:14); c. He provides our needs (Matt.6:8); d. He gives what is good for us (Matt.7:11); e. He protects (Matt.10:29); f. He comforts (II Thess. 2:16,17); g. He is the Giver of the Holy Spirit (Lk.11:13).

app. Catholics address their “priest” as “Father” is already rather common place practice. It seems strange that these group of people are officially unmarried. Christ did warn the disciples that one should not desire of addressed with any form of reverence, thus ministers of the Lord ought to remember.

Favor

The Bible recorded God bestowed favor on a certain person or persons. One may find these people had some quality or characteristics which seem to merit God’s favor, yet all of that is God given. For that apparent unfairness, man has no right to find fault with God. “Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it: Why ...” (Rom.9:20; 11:33-36)

app. The members of the Church all received talent from the Lord; whatever it may be, it is entrusted by the same Lord, one ought to labor out of love (I Thess.1:3) until one faces the Lord & receive from Him these gracious words: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (Matt.25:21,13).

Fear

Out of awe is one source of fear. The Bible says: “the LORD thy God is a consuming fire.” (Deut.4:24) Fire has many benefits for humans, but is never meant to be played with. So, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.” (Pro.9:10)

Out of afraid of punishment is another reason for fear. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” (I Jn.4:18) God’s great love manifested in giving His Son for the sacrifice of peace: “There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” (Psa.130:4) However, Jesus says: “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and manifest

myself to him.” (Jn.14:21) Thus “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant.” (Psa.25:14)

app. What the world knows as love is only indulgence. So, by the concept of most people, love means being absent from discipline. But the Bible says: “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.” (Heb.12:6) God’s children ought to know this kind of love and learn to fear God the heavenly Father.

Feasts

The O.T. commanded God’s people to observe three annual feasts, i.e. The Passover & First Fruits, The Pentecost, & The Feast of Trumpet & Tabernacle (Lev.23:1-44). Thus the feast of Passover is memorial & brings into view the real Passover Lamb of Christ’s redemption & resurrection, who became the First Fruit to God (vs.4-14). The Feast of Pentecost is the ante-type of the descent of the Holy Spirit (vs.15-22). The Feast of Trumpet, of Atonement, then of Tabernacle, the series of events is a prophetic type referring to Christ’s second advent & God abides with men in the kingdom (vs.23-44).

During the period between O.T. & N.T. there were 2 feasts added: 1. Purim commemorates God saved the Jewish people from the hands of Haman (Est.9:20-28). 2. Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah), commemorates the restoration of the temple, in the time of Judas Maccabeus, & the Jewish revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes (164 B.C.).

App. The Church celebrating the Lord’s Supper, should not only remember the Lord’s establishment of the New Testament by His sacrificial redemption, but also remember that the Church is justified by faith; “purge out the old leaven ... be a new lamp ... the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (I Cor.5:7,8), love one another; & share the hope of “Father’s kingdom” (Matt.26:29 cf. Mk.14:25; Lk.22:18).

The early church, accustomed to having “Agape Feast” followed the Lord’s Supper, for communion. This practice is the extension of the spirit of the O.T. Feast. It seems to be a good tradition worthwhile carrying on.

Fellowship

Gk. *Koinonia*, e.g. *koine* is common language. Hence commune, community, communion, same mindset & comradeship etc., trans. fellowship. Fee means share property (ref. the legal in *fee simple*), ME *felawscipe*, becomes fellowship, often used in Church’s spiritual relation. Church is “called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” (I Cor.1:9), to share the inheritance (Eph.1:14); to have “fellowship of the Spirit” (Phil.2:1); to have fellowship (comradeship) with the saints (Phil.1:5); to “have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (I Jn.1:3); who is “companion in tribulation & suffering, also will be partakers in the eternal glory.” (Rev.1:9; I Peter 5:1)

app. Christian community often lack of communion, even hardly have any communication, & concern among members, & how could one imagine at times to have real comradeship in the spiritual warfare? Therefore, the real *koinonia* through Christ & in Christ is needed.

Filthiness

The Apostle Paul based God's promise to His people, Israel, and applied the same principle to the Church, the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, set the Church free from bondage of sin, and makes them inheritance of God: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor.7:1) The dwelling of God, therefore ought to be kept clean all the time: "If a man therefore purge himself from these [dishonor things] he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (II Tim.2:21)

app. The Apostle never has intention to try to promote any scheme in the Church, but calls the Church separate from the world. For believers, the physical filthiness like the Corinthian temple prostitutes, & the rites of idol worship, must be kept away, and also the filthy mindedness, and the wrong value system, as spiritual pollution, should be wade off.

Fire

Heat, light & power comes from fire. It is an emblem of God's word (Jer.23:29), also the righteous God & His judgment. John the Baptist introduced Jesus Christ by saying that "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather His wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." (Lk.3:16,17) Fire is for consuming sacrifices. Like the Israel people laid their offering on the altar, "there came a fire from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat" (Lev.9:24), which showed God's pleasure of receiving. Also "The burnt offering upon the altar all night unto morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it." (Lev.6:9)

app. Christians should serve the Lord with fear and in pure love, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." (Rom.12:11) Those who work "lukewarm and neither cold nor hot" (Rev.3:16), shows the half dead spirit, should never enter the ministry.

Firstborn

Under primogenitary system in certain culture, people give the elder son & his issue privileges over other children. Because the first born is represents vigor & strength, ought to dedicate to the Lord Creator, like do to the first fruits. So the "General Assembly and Church of the first born" (Heb.12:23).

Firstborn of Israel means consecrated to serve God (Num.3:11-13). As all believers share the inheritance of Jesus, therefore they all be counted as the firstborn (Heb.1:6,14; 2:11,12).

app. Believers should not despise one's birthright like Esau (Heb.12:16), who for temporarily satisfying their flesh resulted in losing God's promised blessings.

First Fruits

First Fruits ought to be consecrated to God, and at the dedication, the person should formally declare his thanksgiving toward God, saying: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous ... And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt ... and He hath brought us into this place. And now, behold I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which Thou, O LORD, hast given me ..." (Deut.26:5-11) Therefore, the firstfruits should be given to the priest who represent the Lord (Num.18:12; Deut.18:4).

app. Christ has risen the third day after the crucifixion: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that that slept ... afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." (I Cor.15:20-28) Thus the believers have hope at the harvest, that is the end time of harvest.

Fish

According to the Leviticus Diet Law, those that can be eaten were with scale. There are 19 kinds of fishes in the Lake of Galilee, or Sea of Tiberias, 17 kinds of them they were allowed to eat, while the other 2 kinds of fishes if they happened to catch any, have to be thrown away. St. Augustine based that to interpreted Peter's catch of 153 great fishes, as the total of adding from 1 to 17. The early Christians used the Fish symbolism to identify each other as coming from the acrostic of that Greek word *ichthys*, or *ichthus*: *Iesous Xritos Theou Yios Soter*, which means Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour.

app. Christians ought to be like fishes with their scale which could swim against the current. To Paul's disappointment with Christians at Corinth was that "are you not carnal and walk as men?" (I Cor.3:3) So, Christians should "be not conforming to this world." (Rom.12:2)

Flatter

People generally love to be praised, esp. in public. Hence flattering comes to meet the demand. The flatterer is one who praises excessively, only it is not in truth necessary, but for self-interest. The Bible condemned who "flatter with their tongue." (Psa.5:9)

app. For those who seemed to have everything, flattering is the one they covet to collect. Some who are used to falsehoods even in prayer are using flattery as an art. The Church believe in that worship God “must worship in spirit and in truth” (Jn.4:24), such practice should be rid of.

Flesh

The word used as “carnal”, in contrast with spirit. But in itself it is not evil. Jesus’ incarnation is God manifested in the flesh: “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” (Jn.1:14; I Tim.3:16) So, “every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.” (I Jn.4:2,3) But, the lusts of the flesh is to be mortified (Col.3:15).

app. Paul charged Timothy: “Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (II Tim.2:22) The Christians who have small groups of comrades, could encourage each other & be accountable to each other, as Daniel & his three friends did in a dangerous pagan world (Dan.1:6-20; 3:13-30).

Fool

The Bible uses “Fool” as meaning scoundrel, evil, Godless, or villain. To be called a fool is a moral judgment (Pas.14:1; Lk.12:20).

app. The “Fool” may be highly intelligent by the world’s standards, yet it is obvious to the true nature of reality, that he who “walketh in darkness” (Eccl.2:14) “knoweth not whither he goeth.” (Jn.12:35)

Forbearance

As God has overlooked & His forbearance for the ignorance of mankind (I Peter 3:20; II Peter 3:9), out of His mercy, we should forgive our brother “until seventy times seven” (Matt.18:21-35). In his treatise at Mar’s Hill, “On the Unknown God”, Paul used the wonderful words “God winked at” (Acts 17:30) humankind’s ignorance, in order to give them a chance to repent.

app. David is a man of forbearance. He patiently endured Saul’s persecution, and would not take revenge on God’s anointed (I Sam.24:4-10; 26:6-24). In another occasion of the “man of Belial” foolish Nabal, the intelligent woman Abigail begged David’s forbearance on her husband, at the latter days, “shall be no grief ... nor offence” of heart (I Sam.25:31). Jesus even bore the thorn at His side, Judas for over three long years. Let us note how short our forbearance is!

Forgiveness

The Lord taught His disciples the manner of prayer, which ended with something as a footnote that: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matt.6:14,15) That sounds close to a precondition of forgiveness. But rather it is to state that one having received the Father’s forgive, should apply the similar mercy toward one’s fellow human beings also.

app. In the Church, forgiveness often be a difficult thing to do in reality. As the saying goes that “a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.” (Pro.18:19) No wonder on the East of Eden, there are no lack of cities within the city! Such a picture makes us think that if this strong defense be used toward the enemy will be much better.

Forsaking

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have. For He hath said: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say: The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me?” (Heb.13:5,6) “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom.8:31-39)

app. Those covetous only proof that they do not know the great Jehovah-jireh (Gen.22:13,14). The One who always provide, His Church shall never need to go begging or compromising. On the other hand, one who forsakes God is forsaken “the fountain of living water ... It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God.” (Jer.2:13,19)

Four Horsemen

The old Apostle John was expelled into the Isle Patmos, who had seen the apocalyptic vision of the Four Horsemen: White, Red, Black & Pale. “And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beast of the earth.” (Rev.6:1-8)

app. As the End Time is approaching, though no one knows the date & hour, there are signs of forewarning: The White Horse is the “beast of the earth”, which actually means the false teaching, conquest without armed force (q.v. I Cor.15:32 cf. Acts 20:29), yet is the most dangerous; follow by the Red Horse (war); then Black Horse (death); & then Pale Horse (famine).

Fraud

Fraud is an intentional perversion of truth, as an act of deceiving or misrepresenting. Deceit & defraud is against honesty, “that the lord is the avenger of all such.” (Mk.10:19; I Thess.4:6)

app. Since the devil is the father of lying, fraud should be strictly forbidden. Anything which is untrue, for any purpose, should all be rooted out. “Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.” (Eph.4:25) One cannot imagine that members of the same body are transmitting the untrue feeling to each other. So ought not we.

Freedom

The greatest theme in the Bible is Freedom. Christians through the redemption of Christ, are freed from sin & the yoke of the Law, but out of one’s own free will became “the servants of righteousness.” (Rom.6:18)

app. Four Freedoms, i.e. The freedom of speech & expression, the freedom of worship, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear. (U.S. Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt: State of the Union message, Jan.1941) That is the formulation of worldwide social & political objectives. To put it simply, that means to do what one wanted “for”, and do not do what one dread “from”.

Friends

The LORD said: “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” (Gen.18:17) One can feel that what the real meaning implies “he was called the Friend of God” (Jam.2:23). Jesus said to His disciples: “Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I made known unto you.” (Jn.15:13-15) Those who had been chosen to be Jesus’ friends, and shared His knowledge, should bring forth fruit, viz. pray to the Father in Jesus’ name & love one another (Jn.15:16,17).

app. There is a Greek saying that friends are two people sharing one heart. sJesus said: “If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (Jn. 14:23) This is the mystery of “have the mind of Christ.” (I Cor.2:16)

Fruit

The meaning of fruit is the result of procreation. In the Bible, this term does not only apply to the products of plants, but to grains, and even human lives, symbolically. Jesus said to His disciples: “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” (Jn.12:24) Again, “you should go and bring forth fruit.” (Jn.15:16)

app. Every disciple of Christ should produce fruit according to his individual capacity. Fruit shows the character of the plant: “good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.” (Matt.7:16-20) Christian by the Holy Spirit produces fruit, not by self-effort. (Gal.5:22,23 cf. Jn.15:1-5)

Fugitive

God is merciful. “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him the best; thou shalt not oppress him.” (Deut.23:15,16)

app. This ancient law about the treatment toward the fugitive, seems very benevolent even to moderns, which is ahead of its time. Christians should show mercies to strangers & those whom are oppressed, because Christians had experienced persecutions, therefore we should sympathize with, and give asylum to them. (Heb.13:3)

Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism has a strong emphasis on the inspiration and authority of the Bible, Inerrant and Literally Interpretation, esp. Jesus Christ’s Incarnation, Signs and wonders, Crucifixion and Redemption, Resurrection, and His Second Coming; based on such belief, “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jud.3), only upon some of them who overly emphasize on separatism, and lose ground in love, personal piety, and becoming anti-intellectualism, belligerent, judgmental and paranoia, yet had zeal without spiritual power and lack of social concern, which caused it eventually to become irrelevant. Thus the term became synonymous with elementary, even not un-often with despise, and resulted in the rise of Evangelicalism.

App: Christians need to hold a firm standing on essential truth, but dogma must follow by “pure and undefiled religion” (Jam.1:27), and the cool virtues always have to be accompanied with warm love, which is the royal standard of Christ’s disciples.

G

Games

There are different kinds of games:

1. Hunting for Food. “Esau was a cunning hunter” (Gen.25:27). He gets wild games for his father.
2. Playing for Fun. Same as the word gamble. (Matt.27:35 cf.Psa.22:18)
3. Killing for Folly. Abner challenged Joab: “Let the young men now arise & play before us!” (II Sam.2:14) which resulted in bloodshed
4. Competing for Fame. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.” (I Cor.9:25-27)

app. The city of Corinth is known for its Isthmian Games, the ancient games only next to the Olympics. Paul used this familiar theme as metaphor to encourage Christians to keep their body under control, viz. “bring it into subjection” to God’s will (I Cor.9:27), in order to obtain the crown (cf. Phil.3:12; II Tim.2:5; 4:7; Heb.12:1). Today’s Christians are no less of sports mania, so should think of such spiritual applications.

Garments

The apparel one wears often reveal the person under it. Apostle Peter charged Christian women not to over pay attention to outward decor & makeup, but to have “the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit” instead, “which is in the sight of God of great price.” (I Peter 3:2-6) Paul also give admonishment to women believers: “to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.” (I Tim.2:9,10 NIV)

app. Churches should follow example of Orthodox Church who pays more attention to garments of both sex, to observe proper social protocol. Some who claimed to be “spiritual” as the Gnostics, ignored all social norms; on the other hand, some goes into extreme by only allowing white garments in their meetings.

Genealogy

To a certain extent, genealogy is useful in establishing one’s faith. But “give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith.” (I Tim.1:4)

app. The Church neglects its spiritual sources of their tradition, that may lead to “drinking water but forgetting the fount”; yet if overly concern on such, as going to the extreme by fabricating myth for one’s vain glory, becomes falsehood.

Gentleness

One “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude: 3), never need to add in quarrelsome & rough words. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that ask you a reason of the

hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (I Peter 3:15) If one has a reason, one will be meek.

app. John Wesley was a master to control his own temper. As Peacemaker, one should put off one’s pride, never behave as though winning the argument is more important than right; much harm would had been done to the kingdom because those who “war after the flesh”, never achieve “pulling down of strong holds”, but multiplying & reinforcing them (II Cor.10:3-5).

Giants

Before entering the Promised Land, Israel sent spies to search it. After 40 days, they came back & brought report that there were giants inhabiting the land of Canaan. Ten of the spies discouraged the children of Israel: Though the land is good, but “we are not able to” go up against them, because they are stronger than we. (Num. 13:26- 14:10) Only Joshua & Caleb had trusted in God.

app. People generally like easy life, desiring not to have difficulties; they rather go back & have a life of slavery than facing uncertainties. Faith is trusting in God Omnipotent; those who have faith in God, as “seeing Him who is invisible” (Heb.11:27), would despise whatever risk they face.

Gifts

“When He [Christ] ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ... some, apostles; some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph.4:7-12) Since the Church is established at Pentecost, the “gifts” is called the gifts of the Holy Spirit, & every one of the member of the body “is given grace according to the measure of the gifts of Christ”; which means that all are ordained into the ministry, & all share the gifts.

app. The gift is not manufactured by any human agents, but from above. Nevertheless, other conditions by the Omniscient God’s “pre-established Harmony”, such like Paul being taught “at the feet of Gamaliel” (Acts 22:3), are also part of the equipping process.

Gleaning

God is merciful by commanding Israelites, with the law of gleaning at harvest time: to have some be left for the stranger, for the poor, the fatherless and the widow. (Deut.24:19-21 cf. Lev.19:9; 23:22)

app. Selfishness will never be the birthmark of Christians. One should have liberality & concern for others, the needy, esp. to those in God’s household.

Glory

Renown, fame, praise, honor & good reputation — actually these qualities give one distinction which are all come from God, the fountain of blessings. Human beings apt to love vain glory which rob God of His glory, usurping the throne as a pretender, which deserves the most severe punishment. After did the censor of Israel, David confessed to the LORD: “I have sinned greatly in that I have done.” (II Sam. 24:10) That act seems does no harm to anyone, yet offended God greatly.

app. In this age, there are so much self-aggrandizement, advertisement & glorification, all of which seem to be the fashion of the day. The Lord’s servant should always humble oneself: “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil.2:5-8). Christ says: “How can you believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?” (Jn.5:44)

Gnosticism

In ca. the latter part of the first to second century, the early father of the Church, believed that Simon Magus was the founder of Gnosticism.

The Savior’s appearance divides human kind into three classes. The pneumatic or spiritual recognize The Savior immediately and respond to him, while the hylic or material reject him utterly. Between these two extremes the psychic or soulful types hesitate, and only gradually to join the Savior. ... The pneumatic in Valentinians themselves, the hylic are non-Christian and the psychics are ordinary Christians. The attention lavished on the detailed description of the psychics is indicative of the apologetic and irenic tendencies of the work. (NHL p.59)

It is this stream of thinking, that from the “spiritual knowledge” (gnosis) comes the paradox of the Gnostic ethics, which led some of them to practice asceticism, while another sect practice hedonism, because of the dualistic view polarizing their behavior.

app. Though the Bible never mentioned Gnosticism, it implied the common attribute of this heresy (Col.2:22,23; I Cor.1:22). In general, if any one who is conceited & claims to have special spiritual knowledge, or “light” or such like, but does not have the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal.5:22-25) & distinguished moral characters, such a one is dangerous. Beware of them.

God

Self-existence: God said to Moses: “I AM THAT I AM.” (Ex.3:14) He is Immutable: “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (Jam.1:17) God is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Eternal & Invisible. Job had never denied God. But he had many honest questions;

God instead of answering, gave him more questions such as: Can you do? Do you know? Were you there? Thus revealed to him that God is God.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism says: “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”

God is Spirit in nature: “God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” (Jn.4:24) Not in rituals or places.

God is Love (I Jn.4:8): Divine goodness all come from Him (I Jn.4:7-21).

God is Faithful: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I Jn.1:9)

God is Just: “Righteousness and judgment is the habitation of His throne.” (Psa. 97:2 cf. I Jn.1:9)

God is Holy: “Ye shall be holy, for I am holy.” (Lev.11:44 cf. Col.3:12)

God reigns: “The LORD is King for ever and ever.” (Psa. 10:16) His divine sovereignty is over the universe.

In His redemptive relation to man, Jehovah has seven compound names which reveal Him as meeting every need of man from his lost state to the end. These compound names are: a. Jehovah-jireh (Gen.22:13,14). b. Jehovah-rapha (Ex.15:26). c. Jehovah-nissi (Ex.17:8-15). d. Jehovah-Shalom (Jud.6:24). e. Jehovah-ra-ah (Psa.23:1). f. Jehovah-tsidkenu (Jer.23:6). g. Jehovah-shammah (Ezk.48:35) (cf. SRB, p.7 note)

app. By knowing God Christians can believe & trust Him, to meet all our needs. The Bible mentions so often that ravenous is the visible birthmark of false prophets; as having the Lord to be our shepherd, we are content always.

Godliness

For certain heresies, “godliness” has coherent power to their adherents, but it has never be properly defined. As James put it: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Jam.1:27) Thus James in simple language, without confusion, defined godliness to mean that Christian ought to practice love & holiness at the same time.

app. No little effort has been wasted on vain talking of godliness & spirituality; yet true godliness is miserably neglected. Christian must follow their Master, be anointed with Holy Ghost & power, going about “doing good” (Acts 10:38).

God, Gold, Glory

These 3-G motif, motivated the Age of Discovery & then after. Christians serve the Lord must “out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” (I Tim.1:5) A servant’s sole desire should be always rest on his Lord’s interests.

app. Impure motive will never produce good result. One serve God must without any selfish interest mix into it, otherwise will become one serve two, even multi-masters. This is the problem hinder the Kingdom's advancement.

Goodness

God is good toward His creatures. "The LORD is good to all: His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psa.145:9) "Good" not temporarily, but eternally. One with such knowledge, could enforce, and maintain it, like no others but God.

app. It's the reality, not based on intention that makes such state of goodness established. Obviously selfish motive has no place in all these.

Gospel

Apostle Paul declared that "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." (Rom.1:16) The word devised is from OE God's tidings, or Good tidings. The tidings came from God: "Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom.1:3,4; cf. I Cor.15:1-10) Thus "Evangel", L. *euangelium*, its element in Gk. *Eu*, means good; *angel*, means message, messenger; therefore, it is to bring, to announce good news.

app. This good news, to Paul as well as to others, is that God's power is to save all sinners whoever believes. Hence one who proclaims this News, should be saved by Christ, prior. The problem is always caused by those unsaved messengers.

Grace

Derives from L. *Gratia*, which means pleasing, favour. The Bible says: "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." (Eph.2:8) Thus salvation is not gained by one's effort, is not a right, or an entitlement, but unearned, unmerited gift, bestowed by God.

app. Some come into the Church, with a belief that he is gracing the church, who himself is good enough, by his being or state, who never have the "saved sinner to serve" mindset; such a one is to be the trouble of the church. Only by God's grace can one comes to true conversion.

Guardian

In N.T. time, there are many Roman great households which have guardians, or tutors, among them some are slaves (Gal.4:1,2). Therefore, when the children are under age, they must be subject to their tutor's teaching;

although they would be future masters of the house, they have to obey them as if they were their inferiors.

app. The guardian or tutor could not produce one to be an heir of the house, but could give instructions, to lead the pupil to know himself. So Paul used this analogy to show that the law was preparing for “the adoption of sons.” (Gal.4:4) According to the Roman custom, at “the fullness of time” of the legal age, the son could have the same right to act as the father does. The Church today is not under any obligation to do such, yet the concept should be valid.

H

Hallow

In N.T., Gk. *hagios*, trans. as “holy”, “sanctify” ... Hallow, means saint; hallowed, to make holy, as used in the Lord’s Prayer: “Hallowed be Thy name.” (Matt.6:9 cf. Mal.1:11) God’s saint should always do as Peter did, encouraging Christians, to “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (I Peter 3:15).

app. James admonishes those who have “the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jam. 2:1-8), that they should practice His commands, and never allow His name to be blasphemed because of their acts.

Hand

Action requires one to stride out, to fulfill the purpose needs hand to perform. So, hand represents action and power. Ezra was leading his people back from Babylon to do the restoration work, “the good hand of his God upon him”, which means having His blessings and help. (Ezra 7:9) Sometimes, “the hand of the Lord was against” His people (Deut.2:15 cf. I Peter 5:6) which represents Divine chastisement. As the word apply for humans, surely “the work of his hands rewards him.” (Pro.12:14 NIV) So “The hand of the diligent shall bear rule; but the slothful shall be under tribute.” (Pro.12:24) When seeing a brother in need “thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him.” (Deut.15:8) Then one may “pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands.” (I Tim.2:8)

app. Paul admonished the believers: “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the things which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”(Eph.4:28) We have no reason to believe that Ephesians were a den of professional thieves; but some of them before they were converted might have been involved in stealing items from the temple (Rom.2:22). Some of today’s religionists who robbed the public treasury are much worse than them.

Happiness

Lord Jesus in His “Beatitude” sermon, made a distinction between His principles & the worldly view: the truth is that everlasting happiness itself must never be sought as an end; it is the fruit of right actions. “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy; he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psa.126:5,6)

app. Hilarity and hedonistic excitement will draw crowds, but will not produce real happiness. So, “Be afflicted and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.” (Jam.4:9)

Harlot

Originally the word means a young man esp. if debauchee or idler or rough, hence a loose woman, esp. a prostitute. Symbolically, the Jewish people plays go a-whoring with idolatry. The Church as espoused to Christ should be a chaste virgin (II Cor.11:2-4); it will be a great shame that at the end-time such religious institution becomes a “great harlot” (Rev.17:5).

app. As the word “chaste virgin” lost its appeal, so does “holy” in most cases. Yet if one desires to be God’s temple, it follows that one must be separate from the unclean & darkness (II Cor.6:14-18).

Harvest

In agricultural society, harvest comes as a joyous time for the community. The Jewish Feast of Harvest is not celebrating for what one gains, but thanking Him who gives. According to the law: “The feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field; and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field” (Ex.23:16), both of which ought to be remembered as God’s gifts. Later, it falls on the day of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ which symbolizes that He is the first fruit of resurrection (I Cor.15:23).

app. In the New England Colonies of America, later U.S.A., the Thanksgiving of the harvest was established, but it became much of a secular carnival. So did other feasts. One should remember the Creator.

Hatred

One of the unpleasant emotions is hatred, which not only is the fount of evil action, but also harmful to the one who hatches it, i.e. separate oneself from the love of God (Matt.5:21-16).

app. Cain was of that “wicked one” (I Jn.3:12 cf.Gen.4:8); his hatred promoted his murderous action; thus he had a nameless fear, leading him to build a city of defense & walled himself in.

Haughtiness

Haughty means high-mindedness, disdainfully proud, which makes one ugly, often leading to one's downfall. The Bible says: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Pro.16:18) God "giveth grace to the humble" (I Peter 5:5).

App. Self-esteem became a psychological problem, because it seems impossible for one to find the right balance, but it always errs on the "high side", as one day the writing on the wall appears: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." (Dan.5:27)

Head

One body has no more than one head is the norm. For the Church, Christ "is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." (Col.1:18)

App. As Apostle Peter noted that he himself is only one of the elders, so by no means be he the head or father of the universal Church. On the other hand, the oligarchic system seems to have infected the church, which deformed her into seven-headed monster (Rev.17:3). May Christ be the rightful Head, that His will be done on earth.

Health

Saint's physical body is no less than "the temple of the holy Ghost which is in you ... therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor.6:10,11) So one has the duty to be a faithful care-giver.

app. According to the dualistic theory that mind & matter are two distinct things, thus begot the problem of "ghost in the machine". Yet as the people who worship at the temple turned to "temple-worshippers" were wrong. Though we have to care for one's own body, body-mania is not biblical.

Heart

Before modern times, people referred to the term "heart" as the faculty of emotion, thinking and will, or the home of one's ego, though physiologically the statement is in err. It is like as said phenomenally "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same" (Psa.113:3), hardly anybody wants to change to "we are dwelling in a travelling planet."

app. "The heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer.17:9) is human's true & remediless condition. Nevertheless, since "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness that shined in your hearts" (II Cor.3:16), you changed into children of light.

Heathen

Primarily came from heath, hence waste land, the word “Heathen” ori. means uncultivated, uncivilized remote country. In the Bible, it is often referred to as unbelievers. “At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ ye sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” (Eph.2:12,13)

app. Thenceforth there is no place for any kind of discrimination in Church but have “the bond of peace ...ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” (Eph.4:4-6) So we should curb the use of such word as “heathen” , esp. in a despised mode.

Heave-offering

Heave means elevate or lift. According to O.T. Law, “Thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave-offering, and the shoulder of the heave-offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, even of that which is for Aaron and of that which is for his sons ...by a statute forever...” (Ex.29:27,28) That is as to say that priests deserve the best and as an inheritance from God, not to receive as the wage of hirelings.

app. God’s ministers who serve at the altar should always hold their integrity as such & be treated as such.

Heaven

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen.1:1, J.D.V.) Apostle Paul related that he was “caught up to the third heaven ...into Paradise” (II Cor.12:1-4). According to a common enumeration, the first heaven was the atmosphere of the birds & clouds; the second was the sky in which the stars were there as we see; the third would be “heaven” as we call it as the dwelling place of God. The resurrected saints will be dwelling with God forever. The word “heaven” in Gk. origin may be referred to as vaulted roof above, as the visible heaven look like.

app. As Paul related his experience, after 14 years, even with indirect language, the things he heard in there was not permitted to be uttered; after that he received a painful “thorn” as God’s means to keep him to remain humble. Therefore, if you hear today, anyone who boasted that he has “heavenly” experience, it is no difficulty to judge such claim.

Hell

Tophet, is a place in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, outside Jerusalem. In O.T. times, the evil kings of Judah offer their first born child to heathen gods through fire there. At Josiah’s revival, he defiled the place (II Kings 23:10-13), since then it became a refuse-burning heap. All the items there were in

the same category; that could not fulfill their master's purpose, which symbolizes those in Hell.

The N.T. time, Jesus revealed the similar condition of Hell: "Where their worms dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mk.9:48) Heaven is a place far better than what we can imagine, so hell must be a place worse than what is symbolizes in reality.

app. Both Heaven & Hell are real. Those who deny it will not change the facts of either. Thus the Bible ends with a warning: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away the words from this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev.22:18,19)

Hermeneutics

The Gk. word is from the Olympian messenger Hermes (Acts14:12), a bearer of secrets. However, biblical hermeneutics means to open the scriptures, by semantic interpretation which leads one into salvation.

app. The anomaly of the messages from the pulpits is much less to do with what the Bible says, but what the messengers say what the Bible says, or what they try to make the Bible say.

Hermit

Gr. *eremos*, means solitary, hence desert, whence *eremites*, lit. a desert-dweller. Among them, Antony of Egypt (c.251-356), generally regarded as the founder of Christian monasticism.

app. Hermits appearing in history seemed to be a crystal stream as the Roman Catholics became secularized & corrupted. The meditation & prayer in the desert might make contribution to the spiritual warfare & the most shining example was Athanasius *contra mundum*.

Heresy

fr. Gk. *hairein*, to seize, to take of oneself, hence a choosing, hence it means a sect. From the beginning of the Church, the evil one sowed tares under cover of the night, & has never taken a pause since. Unlike any other religion those attacking the church from outside, the heresies were the menaces from within. As Apostle Peter put it that "there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them ... many shall follow their pernicious ways" (II Peter 2:1,2). That is to say the common trait of heresies is that they claim that they are Christians, but deny the redemption of Christ, "neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12).

app. Humans out of their conceit, are always trying to do “private interpretation” (II Peter 1:20) on the “inspiration of God” (II Tim.3:16), as there is no other way but leading into err and perdition.

Herodian

Herodian is a Jewish group supporting the dynasty of the Herods. Such people depended upon the alliance with Romans and betrayed the OT ideal for the inheritance of God. The act of Herodian (Mk.3:6) is using religion as means to an end of political gain, and is in existence and strong even today.

App: In the Bible nowhere teaches that believers should not be employed in politics; otherwise we would never have such exemplifying characters like Samuel, Nehemiah and Daniel. Yet the religionists should keep themselves above reproach, and do not for their belly’s sake betray the Lord, and sell their soul to the political entities, and act without principle or conviction, just like eunuch or salesman.

High Priest

Under the Mosaic Law, high priest’s office foreshadowed Jesus Christ, the Son-High Priest, “who is consecrated for evermore” (Heb.7:28). But during the Roman period, the high priest is ordained by the authority as political appointment, and most times could be obtained through bribery, who under the pretext “expedient ...for the people” (Jn.11:50), they crucified the true High Priest.

app. Selfish motives could disgrace the highest honor of a religious institute. Therefore, we should beware of the people who evoke “expedient” for their undeclared purposes.

Hireling

One who works for a wage or similar compensation, without being a slave or indenture servant, is called hireling (Jn.10:12), who has little interest attached to the master. In contrast, Shepherd is the one who serve for love.

app. During English Puritan revolt, the term “hireling” was special used for the official church clerics. Hirelings’ mindset is on the pay (Matt.20:1-16 cf. Job.7:2); not all workers whom received compensation could be called so.

Holy Spirit

The third person of the triune God is the Holy Spirit. Whom Jesus called “Another Comforter” (Jn.14:16,17), *Parakletos* in Gk. “One called alongside to help”. The Holy Spirit is a person; this indwelling *Paraclete* is to enlighten one’s ignorance and help infirmity (Rom.8:26,27). He can “grieve” for the believers, be “grieved” by the wrongs of believers; who also motivate & empower the believers (I Thess.5:19).

App. The Holy Spirit should be treated as the third person of the Triune God, to be controlled & obeyed His guidance, is not simply used as a power. On the other hand, one who intentionally “blasphemy against” the Holy Spirit, shall not be forgiven (Matt.12:31).

Holy Temple

In O.T. time, Israelites were taught to treat the Temple as God’s earthly office & residence at which address people could find their worshiped Lord, just as they do the King.

In N.T., The temple is the church & believers, individually & co-operatively (I Cor. 6:19; 3:16,17; cf. II Cor.6:16) .

app. In church service some used to sing “God is in His Holy Temple”, which is totally irrelevant, except put one’s hand on his own heart.

Homosexual

Homosexual practice is not the only evil; but in the O.T. it is considered to be “committed an abomination” and subject to capital punishment (Lev.18:22; 20:13). Even in N.T. time, Bible clearly stated it is one of the sins (Rom.1:26,27,32).

app. Ancient Gk. soldiers practiced homosexuality among their ranks. So homosexual is grown out of war sub-culture. It was a pagan myth that humans were created in 3 balls, but by a sword each was cut into 2 halves, & they went on rolled over the world to seek for “other half”. As a result, two pairs of halves across joint together, became male & female married pairs; while the other pair from the same ball re-jointed, that is the homo-pair. Therefore, Christians should not use such term in their speech.

Hope

Something unseen yet one believes that is hope: “Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” (Rom.8:24) The hope is “laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel” (Col.1:5). It is “according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (I Peter 1:3).

app. The Apostle Paul said: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (I Cor.15:19) Which means we have hope beyond “this life”, i.e. life everlasting.

Horse

In the land of Canaan, there produces no horse, & the native domestic beasts are only donkeys & oxen. In ancient warfare, those who has horsemen have great advantage over those who have not. But God forewarned the king of

His people that he “shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; for as much as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.” (Deut.17:16) Always remember that: “The horse is prepared against the day of battle; but safety is of the Lord.” (Pro.21:31)

app. For Christians, precepts must be prior to pragmatism, expedience is no excuse for disobeying the Lord. For those who sight only the present gain, often result in lose God’s presence.

Hospitality

In ancient days, hospitality was not considered as etiquette, but ethics. So, “given to hospitality” (I Tim.3:2 cf. III Jn:5), “lodged strangers...have washed saints’ feet” (I Tim.5:10), is the required virtue.

app. Christians should offer to co-pilgrims not only refuge & hospitality, but the warmth of love as well. Even today we have all the conveniences of travelling industry can afford to give; this ministry is still much needed.

House of God

In spiritual reality, since God is spirit, then House of God by no means could be material. The House of God only can be heaven (cf. Acts 7:49). Yet He is condescending to make “the house of God ...the church of the living God” (I Tim.3:15), which means the redeemed people, not the building; otherwise it could not be “the pillar and ground of the truth”.

app. The religious building however beautiful it once had been, has become ruins, because it was just “lying word” (Jer.7:4). The true House is God’s family, redeemed by Christ.

Humble, Humility

Humble is a state of mind, or, of material, or both. Christ Jesus “who being in the form of God, do not consider to be robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation (Phil.2:5-11), lit. “emptied Himself” (*kenosis*). The root of trouble of human relation is pride. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

app. One knows God must be humble naturally. “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their’s is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt.5:3) Humility deriv. of L. *humus*, means “on the ground or of the earth”. So the one bowed to the ground, is the way to heaven. That is what Job’s changed attitude toward God, became thus changing his life (cf. Job 42:6).

Hunger

Hunger is one in distress, suffering, because of want of basic food supply. During a time of disaster, “They that be slain with the sword are better than

they that be slain with hunger; for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.” (Lam.4:9)

app. Spiritual hunger drives one seeking for “that meat which endureth unto everlasting life” (Jn.6:27-35), which only can be found in Jesus Christ. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” (Matt.5:6)

Hymn

In the primitive Church, they used O.T. psalms, but also new compositions of spiritual songs (I Cor.14:26; Col.3:16), to add “teaching and admonishing” in their gatherings. Paul & Silas personally “prayed and sang praises unto God” (Acts 16:25) in prison. In Paul’s epistles, it contained portions of early Christian hymns (Eph.5:14; Phil.2:6-11; Col.1:15-20; I Tim.3:16 etc.).

app. Church employing singing & music in worship, should be careful. While they are effective instruments in teaching, the evil music might easily lead the congregation astray. In church history, St. Ambrosius (A.D. 339-397) used songs as teaching media, edify the church; Arius (c.A.D.250-336) also did employ music to corrupt the populace.

Hypocrites

Hypokritikos is fr. Gk. a stage actor, hence one pretending to be what he is not, as in life as on stage. Jesus rebuked the religionists: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!” (Matt.23:13-29) That was because of their dishonest deeds.

app. While hypocrites violate the basic principle of truthfulness, they did confirm the positive value of virtue which became dysfunctional in themselves. But some bold-faced evil doers denouncing others is totally invalid in their moral defense.

I

I AM

At the time God called Moses & ordained him to lead Israel out from Egypt, Moses asked by whose authority he was to take this task. God said to Moses: “I AM THAT I AM.” And He said, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you.” (Ex.3:14)

Jesus said to the Jews:

“I AM the bread of life.” (Jn.6:35)

“I AM the light of the world.” (Jn.8:12)

“I AM the door of the sheep.” (Jn10:7)

“I AM the good shepherd.” (Jn.10:11,14)

“I AM the resurrection, and the life.” (Jn.11:25)

“I AM the way, the truth, and the life.” (Jn.14:6)

“I AM the true vine.” (Jn.15:1)

app. Existence is the conception of time. There is nothing eternal or present, only God. Because when we say “Now”, it already became past. The eternal God exist outside of time, yet He controls time. So we can say that: “My times are in Thy hand.” (Psa.31:15)

Idleness

One wasting of time aimlessly is idle. In religious institutions, it used to give someone a sinecure, which means “without care of souls”, therefore it is the worst kind of idleness. During the Puritan revolt such personnel were subject to the order that “rather let him labour working with his own hands the things which is good.” (Eph.4:28)

app. There is a saying that “An idle brain is the devil’s workshop.” In church history, the idle clerics often caused the disciplinary problems, as well as the idle wanton widows in society (I Tim.5:13). So, an occupation is good for the soul & body.

Idolatry

Jesus says: “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (Jn. 4:24) Idol is a lie (Isa.44:6-20) Idol-worship is strictly forbidden by God (Ex.20:2-6).

One worships something, or someone instead of God, is his idol. That act is idolatry. None of the Northern Kingdom Israel’s kings ever restore pure Jehovah worship, and all of them never totally left the sin of the golden calf worshiping culture.

The good kings of Judah, all were against idol worship. King Asa (I Kings 15:12); King Jehoshaphat (II Chr.17:6); King Hezekiah (II Chr.30:13); King Josiah (II Chr.34:31-33).

app. In the days past, people worship idols made of materials, & now people worship materials as idol. When a leader of a family, or of any community, including religious community, talk about a figure, or a figure of money with adoring attitude, in fact, it’s idol-worship. For a closer walk with God, the English poet William Cowper (1731-1800) wrote may be our prayer:

The dearest idol I have known,
Whatever that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.

Ignorance

If one knows of his mental state of ignorance, such can be counted as wise.

Those “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom.1:22); “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” (I Cor.1:30)

app. The condition of today’s world is that there are too many people who are self-conceited, & boasting that they are wise, thus refusing to accept Christ.

Images

God prohibits His people to worship any kind of image. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness ...thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God ...” (Ex.20:4,5).

App. Some believe that one should not make any “image” of drawing or picture of any kind. Some believe that for didactic, decorative purpose, it can be allowed, but not devotional. However, though under the name of art, such works in public worship places can never be a good idea, but distraction.

Immutability

After the Fall of man, under the law of decay, the world is always in a state of change, & with everything in it. Only God has immutability, & therefore also immortality. With God there “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (Jam.1:17)

app. Daniel uses “the Ancient of days” to express the venerableness of God, not in the sense of old age. The Renaissance artists often drew God’s image as an old man, which spreading the wrong idea.

Indulgence

The word originally meant “longsuffering towards”, hence “to be over-kind to”. Thus it became a religious fine, mixed with money laundry, plus a huge church building fund-raising program which develop into a notorious ugly scheme was the act of selling indulgence. When the movable-type printing press established in Europe, the first major business was printing Indulgence; and on the other camp, Luther’s sermon also used the printing machine to publish & reach the populace & against such process.

app. After the Reformation, the selling of Indulgence practice in Roman Catholic Church had ended. Yet the similar idea is still much in existence, even in Protestant churches. A certain person who offers certain amount of money to a religious organization, then gained the privilege from the leader’s wink on his business practice of irregularities is its new form, usually without printing evidence.

Ingratitude

Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one Samaritan returned to glorify God & thank Him. Jesus was marveled by “this stranger”, and He said unto him: “Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Lk.17:12-19)

app. Among the evils, humans “knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” (Rom.1:21) So, gratitude toward God & glorifying Him is important in knowing God.

Inheritance

The cases of inheritance were often settled by Rabbis (Deut.21:15-17). Jesus was asked to do one of these arbitrations (Lk.12:13-34). But the Lord told them to “take heed, and beware of covetousness”. If one only has contentment, then no contention is needed. He also used the occasion to teach His disciples to pay attention to the “inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the purpose of His own will.” (Eph.1:11)

app. The pilgrims of faith have one thing in common, that is their mindset is other-worldly (Heb.11:14-19).

Injustice

We can see it everywhere, the trademark of law, balanced scales. Yet, some people want it weighed on their side, in practice. “Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good.” (Pr.20:23) When the Lord appears, “The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory.” (Psa.97:6)

app. It is often someone’s word that “carry weight”, which means the weight of the gold. The balance leans with the wealth is not only the phenomenon of which corperation but the church board also. When Job’s wealth had gone with the wind, his wisdom became weightless air in others’ eyes.

Iniquity

Equal means even ground. Iniquity means gross injustice, so it is sin. The Golden Rule is that in all things “ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” (Maa.7:12) Men “yield your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity” (Rom.6:19), & trespasses God’s standard.

app All human individuals have equal value & should be treated as such. If one treats different people differently, it is the ground of sin. God’s Church ought to keep in mind God’s standard toward all men. Before they were saved, all are sinners; after, become members of the same body. One should not go beyond that & defraud anyone.

Inquisition

The Inquisition aka The Holy Office of Inquisition, established by Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241), ca. 1229, as a Roman Catholic tribunal for the discovery & punishment of heresy. With misguided zeal, & wielded the Papal authority & political power, motivated by hatred or greedy for the subjects' possession, esp. the rich Jews, which often conducted its investigation based on bias or prejudices, with little regard or regardless for individual rights. They sent many people to prison, cruel torcher, even to flame.

App: With the rise of Reform movement, Enlightenment & nationalism the inquisition has diminished, yet we should on our guard always & that kind of spirit shall never allowed it to penetrate in a loving community.

Inspiration

Since the unseen "spirit" often is symbolized by wind or air (cf. Jn.3:8), thus inspiration literary means breathe upon. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." (II Tim.3:16) Therefore, "The prophecy, came not in old time, by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (II Peter 1:21)

app. "Moved by the Holy Spirit" is a phrase one should not utter lightly. Otherwise it will be faulted as "carry the name of the LORD in vain."

Instruction

"Who so loveth instruction loveth knowledge; but he that hateth reproof is brutish." (Pro.12:1) It is significant that these words came from the wisest person that ever lived on earth, except Christ.

app. The church growth often failed on lack of instruction of the Bible. Paul encouraged a group of spiritual Christians, to pay attention to the admonishments and "despise not prophesying." (I Thess.5:12,20) Here hangs the church's spiritual growth.

Integrity

The word "integrity" means firm adherence to a moral code intact. This moral character is most important of God's servant. The most humble Moses when he was challenged, "was very wroth, and said unto the LORD: 'Respect not Thou their offering; I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them'." (Num.16:15) That was defending his integrity and he stood on his integrity as he thus spoke.

app. Because of lack of integrity one cannot talk about faithfulness. Woe to him, as the infallible balances shall find wanting.

Intercession

To intervene out of love for others, before God, is the most important ministry. “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” (Rom.8:34)

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Rom.8:26)

As for the ministry of Christians, “first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men” (I Tim.2:1). Yet one should not do “make intercession...against” (Rom.11:2) God’s people.

app. One pastor even made an emphatic statement that the reason that the church has seen no revival is the sole responsibility of the pastor who is lack of prayer. Of course, intercession is the duty of every believer as well.

Interpretation

A teaching technique that combines factual with stimulating explanatory information is interpretation. Jesus used parables to achieve this goal. “With many such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it; but without a parable spake not unto them; and when they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples.” (Mk.4:33,34)

app. For the technological directions little interpretation is needed, usu. by demonstration is sufficient. As for legal or wisdom literature, to have interpretation is a must, so goes “To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and the dark sayings.” (Pro.1:6) Only that has to be done properly. Quite often, the interpretation clouded the real meaning & intention.

J

Jesus Christ

The only possible way of knowing the Father is through the Son:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil.2:5-11)

The above seemed to be a hymn of the early church, which stated the central dogma of Christianity. Christ, or Messiah, means the anointed one, of the God-attribute, who came into the world by incarnation; the name Jesus which means savior, represents His human nature, and for the purpose of redeeming the Fallen mankind. The pre-existing Christ is the second person of the eternal triune God, is not at a certain point of history ordained by the Father who became such; He is “declared [manifested] to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom.1:4) The whole process from descending to ascending, became a great “V” shape process, rightly symbolizing the victory of God’s salvation for mankind.

app. Christ Jesus shows the God-Man, from eternal to temporal; Jesus Christ shows the redemption & triumphant exaltation of “bringing many sons unto glory” (Heb.2:10). Praise the Lord!

Jordan River

Hb. *Ha-Yarden*, “Flowing Down”. It is the largest river in the Promised Land, and the lowest river in the world. Rising from various springs at the foot of Mt. Hermon, it descends in a torrent, flows through a deep trench flanked by plateaus, to the Lake of Gennesaret (Lk.5:1), commonly called Sea of Galilee (Mt.4:18), aks. Sea of Chinnereth (Jos.13:27), in N.T. known as Sea of Tiberias (Jn.6:1), 210 m. below sea level; drains into the Dead Sea, at a depth of 400 m. below sea level. Its course is more than 360 km. forming Canaan’s east boundary.

app Symbolically Jordan divided a spiritual life into two stages: Those who only exited from Egypt, but still wandering in the wildness, & those who entered into the Promised Land of rest. (Heb.3:7-19 cf.Psa.95:11) So, we are exhorted to follow the examples of Joshua & Caleb, to be faithful to God.

Joy

Eternal happiness does not necessary mean being in an hilarious state at all times. “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom.14:17) The Christian’s joy thus define to as the fruit of Holy Spirit, which is also based on the hope for eternity.

App. Carnal happiness or laughter is nothing to do with “joy in the Holy Ghost”; the worldly hedonistic *carpe diem quam minimum credula postern* attitude is just the opposite to the thought of the Kingdom.

Judge, Judgment

The Lord says: “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” (Matt.7:1) That has been much misquoted not in context for certain pretext. Simply being “Judge not”! Such either is reasonable, or applicable. “For with what judgment ye

judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” (v.2)

app. In practicality, one must make thousands of judgments, including moral ones, daily. Those who misquote the words to discourage judging is either fools or trying to fool others. So, Paul prayed for the church: “that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.” (Phil.1:9,10)

Justice

About all the teachings of the Lord Jesus which got universal acceptance without any dispute on the Golden Rule (Matt.7:12) This is the justice, the standard of right and fair.

app. The Jewish sage Hillel (1st Cen. B.C.) said that: “What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow creature. This is the whole law; the rest is commentary.” This common sense statement based on self interest, but Jesus’ teaching requires saintly Christian practice.

Justification

One of Job’s friends Bildad, ended with a question: “How then can man be justified with God?” (Job 25:4) To this, the N.T. answer is: “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written: ‘the just shall live by faith.’” (Rom.1:17) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Rom.5:1,2)

app. Justification is by faith in Jesus Christ alone; “no man is justified by the law in the sight of God.” (Gal.3:11) Yet true living faith is accompanied always by deeds (cf. Jam.2:14-126).

K

Key

The most important part of any great gate is the key, which is the authority. Jesus is the One who holds the Key of David (Rev.3:7 cf. Isa.22:22); who has “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt.16:19); and “the keys of hell and of death” (Rev.1:18).

app. Jesus said to Peter “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt.16:19), which referred to the necessary discipline of the Church (Matt.18:15-17), as Westminster Confession (30.3) has explained.

The Roman Catholics claimed that the Pope has “Power of the Keys” is a misinterpretation and misrepresentation.

Kid

A young sheep is called lamb. A young goat is called kid, it refers to related young animals, even young & inexperienced persons. “Thou shalt not see the a kid in his mother’s milk.” (Ex23:19 cf. Deut.14:21) This shows God does not want His people to do cruelty.

app. Christian parents or church should teach people to be kind and care for all lives, and not encourage any cruel treatment to animals.

Kindness

“Love is ...kind.” (I Cor.13:4) Therefore, “be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love” (Rom.12:10) is the request of a dedicated Christian life.

app. Kind thought leads to kind deed. “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom.13:8-10) To eliminate the unkind deed, one should deal with its roots (cf. Matt 5:21-26).

King

A constitutional monarchy is beyond the ken of ancients. The ideal king for them is a benevolent, wise philosopher-king, who rules his domain, city-state with absolute power. Before Israel enter Canaan, there were many kings of the city-states in the land (cf. Jos.12:1-24); they were generally wicked, & was destroyed by Israel.

App. The royal title King is but few, the real problem is that too many persons like to act as king, esp. those have ambition but in inferior positions, wanted to find compensation somewhere.

King of Kings

Certain great monarchs designated themselves, or liked to be addressed as “King of Kings” (Dan.2:37), which means he rules over vast areas, and over many local power and authorities, at least for some time. But the real King of kings is the coming One “which in His times He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, Lord of lords.” (I Tim.6:15) The Babylonian system shall make war against the Lamb, & at the end they will fall, “and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” (Rev.17:14)

app. Humans like to be admired, even desired in adoration. The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar enjoyed the high position for a moment, but at the end time that great Rock will crush all those kingdoms (Dan.2:45).

Kingdom of Heaven

1. The hidden kingdom: When the Pharisees demanded Jesus to show them a schedule of the kingdom of God, He answered them and said: “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, ‘Lo, here!’ or, ‘Lo, there!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Lk.17:20,21) Gk. *entos* = “in the midst” or, among you. That is to say, in its spiritual aspect, the kingdom is already in progress.

2. The visible kingdom: In the final stage of human history. The new people of the kingdom is the born-again, holy and sanctified (cf. Jn.3:3); The new region shall be new heaven & new earth (Rev.21:1-7); The new ruler shall be “the Lamb that was slain” (Rev.5:12); The new culture: “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any pain.” (Rev.21:4; cf. I Cor.15:51-57)

The Lord taught His disciples the model prayer: “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven” (Matt.6:10). The kingdom is God ruling human hearts to execute His will.

app. In individual or cooperative Christians, we should note that Christ is the Head, “let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since of members of one body you were called to peace.” (Col.3:15 NIV)

Kiss

The apostle ends his epistle to Church, by charging them to “Salute one another with an holy kiss.” (Rom.16:16; I Cor.16:20; I Thess.5:26) This does not suggest that some kind of kiss there is unholy in practice; but encourages that church should add on social greetings with affectionate holy love.

app. Church is allowed to have social activities, but should always add holy purposes and depth, in the spirit of feast of any kind.

Kneeling

In prayer, we should not add any restriction of formalities, not even limited to closing one’s eyes. But for some solemnity reason, Solomon knelt down and spread his hands before the assembly and prayed (II Chr.6:13); so did Ezra (Ezra 9:5); Daniel even made it his customary practice (Dan.6:10). In N.T. time, Paul said his farewell and knelt down & prayed with the elders of the church of Ephesus on the shore: “When he [Paul] had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and pray with them all.” (Acts 20:36) Paul also was especially concerned for the same church: “For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Eph.3:14)

app. Kneeling in prayer is not absolutely necessary at all times, but is a good way in prayer, either private or in public, church in no way should discourage it.

Knowledge

In order to make right judgment, one needs the right knowledge. Apostle Paul loved the church, so he wanted them to grow spiritually. “This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve things that are excellent and without offence till the day of Christ.” (Phil.1:9,10)

app Some people take the words out of context, that “knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth” (I Cor.8:1); This by no way meant that knowledge is the cause for “buffeth up”. How about some “vainly buffed up by his fleshly mind” (Col.2:18)? In fact, some people without knowledge yet are being buffed up. Therefore, the Apostle never intended to promote ignorance as a virtue, but knowledge is counted as one of the virtues (II Peter 1:3-11), which could enhance the advancement into the kingdom.

Koinonia

(see Fellowship)

L

Labour, Labourer

In one of His serial of kingdom parables, Jesus talked about a labour disputation, which shows the basic concept of work and reward. One has to know that called into the vineyard is but by grace (Matt.20:1-16). The last hired workers, knew the grace beyond their expectation, they out of love worked harder than others, shed sweat & blood, which might produce better result.

app. The Lord’s vineyard only need those who love Him, to work without the attitude of a hireling, not for pay but love. On the other hand, “Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn ...even so that the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” (I Cor.9:9-15) And they should be treated with dignity also (I Tim.5:17).

Ladder

When Jacob, later God changed his name to Israel, was on his way to Haran, spent a night in the wildness. “And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” (Gen.28:12)

In N.T. time, Jesus revealed Himself to the Israelite, Nathanael, “in whom is no guile” that “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” (Jn.1:51)

app. Since the beginning of history, humans dreamed of transcending oneself to reach heaven. Thus came the Babel project & God's judgment of the confusion of tongues (Gen.11:1-9). The cross of Calvary is the only ladder to restore the way to heaven by Jesus Christ's blood. The Church has yet to learn the lesson of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified (I Cor.2:2).

Lake of Fire

That undesirable place is the eternal destination of some people, though they rather deny its existence. "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Rev.20:10; 19:20; cf. 21:8)

app. Just like one doing spring-cleaning, or purifying one's property, often they gather the unwanted items to abandon for destruction.

Sometimes one wants to eliminate an unpleasant thought, by denying that there is such a thing at all. But that will make no difference. Jonathan Edwards' famous sermon: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (July 8, 1741), not only kindled the fire of the Great Awakening, but saved many souls from the Lake of Fire.

Lamb

Jehovah-jireh: The ram, type of substitution (Gen.22:14 cf. Rom.8:32), which signifying Jesus's death & salvation of mankind.

The Passover Lamb in Egypt: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." (Ex.12:13; cf. I Cor,5:7)

Lamb's wrath: The great day of His wrath (Rev.6:17), is the coming Judgement of the Last Day.

Lamb's overcoming: The Lamb will overcome great Babylon (Rev.17:14).

Lamb on the throne: The slain Lamb enthroned (Rev.7:17).

Lamb's Wedding Feast: "Blessed are they which are called (Rev.19:9).

app. The Church should purge out "the old leaven ...may be a new lump ... for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (I Cor.5:7) Even now, we should enthrone our Lord and let Him reign in His Redeemed Assembly.

Lamentation

In a state of mourning for loss, people bemoaned and bewailed. When Jesus was led away to crucifixion, people did so because they had lost their hope of redeeming Israel (Lk.23:27-31; 24:21). But Jesus turning to them and warning them said that they should be weeping for themselves, because of the forthcoming woes.

app. Religion is a serious matter, & should not be treated lightly. Sinners should grieve "mourn and weep" (Jam.4:8-10), humbly begging for God's forgiveness.

Lamps

The purpose of burning of lamps is to light up the way in the dark, in joyful occasion, or for watchfulness.

1. In the Holy of Holies, there are no natural or man-made light; but at the Sanctuary, golden lamps lit the place for the priests who serve there (Ex.30:7,8). The lamp therefore symbolizes God's word. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path (Psa.119:105).

2. Let the lamp burning in the night means not to sleep, but watchfulness (Lk.12:35).

3. "The light of candle [lamp] means joyfulness (Rev.19:23).

app. Christians should walk in the light of God's word, and keep watchful till the Lord returns.

Landmark

There are ethical norms & mores on earth which one ought not to trespass, just as we have land boundaries to wade off invasion, to keep own people in & to behave accordingly. "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it." (Deut.19:14 cf.27:17)

app. "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." (Pro.22:28) Thus "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." (II Jn:9) Therefore, church should not turn astray but respect the good traditions of the saints & sages of the past, and follow their foot-steps.

Language

Language is to express one's mind or emotions. Thus it made humans superior to non-humans. "The whole earth was of one language and of one speech." (Gen.11:1-9) In the beginning, humans sprung from the same ancestor, there was no problem of communication at all. Not until a later time, when they abused this blessing, and plotted together for evil, that God confounded their language. When Pentecost came, the Holy Spirit descended on the Church, signified by the understanding of each other's languages.

app. Though many people tried to restore a universal language, such as for one time Latin, later Esperanto, etc. yet none of them came close to achieving that goal. On the other hand, these make us aware that in the mission field, in order to reach out to other peoples and other cultures, one must love them enough as taking the trouble to understand their tongue.

Laughter

Laughter is in a state of mind, one has pleasure without principle, happiness in absence of humbleness, & making noises “as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool.” (Eccl.7:6)

app. So often it is at the most improper place to hear that kind of noises and in many great auditoriums, which is quite senseless, that they should let “laughter be turned to mourning” (Jam.4:9).

Laver

Before entering to service in the Temple, the priests were required to wash themselves in the laver of brass (Ex.30:17,18).

app. In a stage of performance, the purification often were neglected; therefore, uncleanness became common. Because people were trying to bypass the laver and approach the altar.

Law of God

The descriptive laws came from observation, commonly called Law of Nature, such as the cosmos (cf. Psa.19:1,2). But, to the ultimate source, these are also God’s prescriptive laws: “He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” (Psa.33:9) The prescriptive laws are given to His people to observe, such as the Decalogue (cf. Ex.20:1-17). As to humans, even the most wicked lairs, themselves want to be treated with honesty, and that sense is bestowed by God.

app. In today’s culture, people are proud as they broke the limit of nature, and no longer regard the divine laws, and tried to gain un-restrained liberty. In order for others to live, that is not to be done.

Lawgiver

Unlike the modern concept of check & balance of power, the Omniscient, Omnipotent, & Omnipresent God governs the universe completely. “For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king. He will save us.” (Isa.33:22) It is not right for humans to usurp God’s throne to judge others (Jam.4:11,12).

app. Because of the imperfect human nature, it is a good idea that the Church as well as other institutions, should have a healthy system of check & balance to run the office, and to keep it beyond reproach.

Lawyer

The N.T. term “lawyer” is one who understands & interprets the law. Later in Western history, the so called Christendom, they separated the law into Ecclesiastic Law, which means the Law of the Church, and the Common Law.

app. In today's society, normally no longer have such distinction. But some Christian organizations try to hire lawyers pay to lie for them, or, doing something of irregularity. Such are unfit the walk in the light.

Learning

Even the wisest King Solomon encourages one to "receive instruction ... a wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels." (Pro.1:1-7) The prophet Isaiah said: "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." (Isa.50:4) The great prophet had to learn before he could teach. This is known as "The Servant Song" signifying Christ.

app. The Church should be a teaching institution. The multiple "masters" of today's churches produced many immature disciples, all because of the absence of learning spirit.

Letter

God "made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life." (II Cor.3:6) The role of the Law is but the "tutors and governors", who guided us until the time for us to attain full age of adaption. (Gal.4:2-7)

app. The Decalogue is the letter written on the stone tablets, but gives command of "thou shalt not" and "ought to" do, prohibit one to act, or, on the contrary, to be inactive. But the Lord wants one to understand the spirit, and He Himself came to fulfill the law, and gave life to believers to live out the spirit of the law (cf. Matt.5:17-48).

Leviathan

The Leviathan (Isa.27:1) in the Bible, is a mysterious monster, which symbolizes evil, and it resists God's kingdom. Behind the tyrants of the Earth is Satan, and behind the Elects is Christ. We should trust Christ at all times. He is the truth & the ultimate Conqueror (Rom.16:20).

app One who does homage to the world powers, ultimately will betray God, because one cannot serve two masters. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) used Leviathan as the world's system, and used it as the title of his book, but he could never quite solve the conflicts of individual & commonwealth.

Liar, Lying

Those who are lying are liars. The Bible says: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Rev.21:8)

app. Lying is a common fault of human beings, therefore, they prefer others to judge it not so seriously. Since animals are not capable of telling lies, honesty is the basic tenet of humans, to recompense their privilege of using language. It comes with responsibility to tell the truth. If one tells a lie purposely and habitually, esp. make false witness on God's word, it will lead such a one to perdition.

Liberalism

Out from the stem of human-central, rational, and natural religion, grew Liberal Theology. Which started in 19th century Germany, and flourished in Europe then Americas. The people who called themselves "Liberal", meant they are enlightened and willing to accept "new" ideas, liberated from the bondages of traditional Faith held by the Church. So, its other name is called "Modernism". Those who follow such trend, commonly denying the special revelation of the Bible, the doctrine of Trinity, Eschatology, Soteriology, and other tenets, often include the biblical ethics.

App: From Liberalism's holistic view of salvation, sprouted its Social Gospel approach, i.e., While Christianity concern in saving people's soul to a future heaven, should not leave their physical body in the present hell. Nevertheless, their shortcoming is lack of Spiritual power, and lose vision of eternity. Christians should preach the gospel, and "may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:28).

Liberty

Since mankind is under the curse of Fall, and under the bondage of corruption, the most important theme and hope is liberty. "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom.8:21)

app. Liberty without restriction, without responsibility, will be a dangerous thing. God led Israel out of the bondage, but gave them the Decalogue, and guided them by pillars of cloud and fire. So disciples have liberty, yet discipline is also needed.

Life

Commonly life ends at death. True life contains no seed of death, therefore it could endure & conquer death. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I Jn.5:12) Because "in Him was life." (Jn.1:4) "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." (Jn.3:16) This life is from God's family line.

app. The Church is constituted by people with new life. It often has problem of the different view of either eternal or temporary value.

Light

God reveals Himself to His people; One day He will reveal Himself to all the world. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (I Jn.1:5)

app. As witness of Christ, one has "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (II Cor.4:2)

Lily

Lilies can be seen commonly in the fields of the Bible Land. Jesus says that "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (Matt.6:28,29)

app. Jesus wants His disciples to lead a life of faith, and not anxious about living, but to trust in the Father's care.

Lion

In the ancient known world, it is accepted that "A lion is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any." (Pro.30:30) hence it often symbolizes king, or prince.

Israel at the end of his life prophesied about the future of his descendants: "Judah is a lion's whelp" (Gen.49:9). This is fulfilled by Jesus as "The Loin of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev.5:5)

Satan is "the prince of this world" (Jn.14:30), the enemy of believers, all the time trying to do us woe: "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8)

app. Christians must know the will of their Lord, and it is important for them also to know the wiles of the foe (Eph.6:11).

Long Suffering

Long-suffering means patiently enduring injury, offense, hardship or provocation, hence it is painful forbearance. While God's "forbearance and longsuffering ...the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." (Rom.2:4; II Peter 3:9,15)

app. Certain churches misinterpreted this principle by choose to ignored the irregularities of their members, and do not forewarn them about God's justice and holiness. Thus this is not love, but spoiling them; the result will be regrettable.

Lord

Etymological source of the word “lord” is “Loaf-ward”, which means the one who controls the supply of foods. The phrase “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matt.6:11) seems easily to fall into place. The Lord, is the one who owns us & has every right to control us.

app. Pray for “daily” food, is not for annual supply. It’s not only trusting God for the physical need, but implies that the life & breathe is also depending upon the Lord God. The Jewish people besides count the input of foods as God’s blessing, also thank God for enabling them to dispose of the output of things.

Lord’s Day

The day of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the first day of the week, is called the “Lord’s Day” by the early Church (Rev.1:10). But, “the Day of the Lord” (II Peter 3:10) in the Bible is referred to as the day of the Lord’s judgment at the second coming. Of course, Jesus Christ’s resurrection meant to “declared to be the Son of God with power” (Rom.1:4), “who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” (I Tim.1:10) Therefore He can judge the dead and quicken.

app. Christians are called to have self-judgement, or self-exam. Jesus Christ had been “lifted up” on the cross and bore the believers’ sins, “the result was death for Christ, and justification for the believer, who can never again be put in jeopardy” (note John 12:31, SRB). But the self-judgment is always necessary for avoiding God’s chastisement.

Lord’s Prayer

At the request of the disciples, the Lord taught them how to pray; so that how “*Pater Noster*” was called. It is not the Lord’s own prayer; because the beginning “Our Father” was never be the way He address His heavenly Father; and “forgive our debts”, which Jesus has had none, and no one to share with (Matt.6:9-13; Lk.11:2-4). Nevertheless “after this manner pray ye” can mean to follow this fashion, or “when ye pray, say ...” which means the following words, both are applicable.

app. The Lord’s own prayer to His Father is recorded in John ch.17. The Church should let their members learn the contents & meaning of the prayer which the Lord taught His disciples.

Lord’s Supper

Since the primitive Church, The Lord’s Supper, or, The Lord’s Table, was celebrated in accordance with the Lord’s command. It is also known as the Holy Communion. In order to have communion with God and the holy

members of Christ, “as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till He come ...Let a man examine himself ... discerning the Lord’s body.” (I Cor.11:23-30)

app. The Protestant Church recognizes only two sacraments, i.e. Baptism and The Lord’s Supper. But most of the denominations treated both less solemnly than they should be. e.g. The Catholics once banned their members who serve in Congress or Parliament from communion if they voted for abortion, or are defiant on other such issues, while the Protestants often did not take any disciplinary action. These non-actions meant approval?

Love

Gk. *Agape*, or L. *caritas*, hence charity (I Cor.13:), commonly known as divine love. Gk. *phileo*, friendly, or brotherly love. Before His crucifixion, Jesus said that “A New Commandment I give to you: that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (Jn.13:34,35) That is a mark not possible to be un-noticed; it is much easier than definition.

app. Action is more important than pure analysis. It need not be known what kind of love you do to others, but do love them first, then you will know its category later. The easiest measure is “Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” (Rom.13:8)

Love Feast

The early church at the time of the Lord’s Supper, also have Love Feast for fellowship. Later, the two became separated activities.

app. In today’s commercial & industrial society, people in the same community, hardly know each other, much less have communion. Then love feast might be a good practice, to make a large church to be closer to each other.

Lust

The flesh is the seeding plant which bears fruits of corruption. “Now the works of the flesh are manifested, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like ...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God ...They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” (Gal.5:19-21,24)

app. There are people who claimed to be spiritual but walked after the flesh. The Apostle’s admonishing: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as

strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul.” (I Peter 2:11)

M

Mad, Madness

Mentally disturbed, extremely unwise or imprudent, sometimes enraged being the cause. David under the pressure of being pursued by Saul, became temporarily insane, forfeiting his Kingship as God’s anointed and his kingdom, and fled to Gath; only when he came to his normal self, that he pretended to be insane (I Sam.21:10-15).

app. Jesus was doing His Father’s will, “could not so much as eat bread ... they said, ‘He is beside Himself’.” (Mk.3:21) Apostle Paul said to the Corinthian Church: “For whether we be beside ourselves, it is for God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.” (II Cor.5:13)

Magic, Magician

In the medieval Western world, magic associates with occultism, and the term “Black Magic”, implies involves with the devil. In the ancient times, that term was categorized as wise men; while moderns were simply classified as entertainers. The Bible named the Egyptian magicians, “Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” (II Tim.3:8) Hence it means false teachers.

app. Today’s magicians mainly use their art on psychological cases, or use mental control, even in the churches. They usually made financial gains to fatten their personal purses; though some paddle heresies also. Beware of them!

Magistrates

Do respect the authorities, because they are ordained by God: “He beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake ...Render therefore to their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. ” (Rom.13:4-7)

app. We address the government civil officials as “Your Honour”, or “Venerable” etc. in the similar mode as to religious leaders, which do not show servitude to titles but subject to God’s order.

Majesty

“The LORD reigneth, He is clothed with majesty.” (Psa.93:1 cf.Psa.96:6) The incarnate Christ Jesus was humble and meek, yet He revealed Himself sometimes of His majesty (II Peter 1:16 cf. Jude:25). Even Apostle John had seen Him in glory and majesty that he “fell at His feet as dead.” (Rev.1:17).

app. Too often Christians stress on Christ’s love only, rather than His holiness and majesty. Therefore, we should pay more attention to God’s attributes in whole, then at the time when He manifested Himself we would not be surprised.

Man

Scriptures teaches “God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (Gen.1:27). God “hath made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” (Eccl.3:11) This means man was created originally with immortality, a God-like personality, with capacity for knowledge, thought and action; being morally upright, and also having dominion over the environment.

Adam is the term used in the first three chapters of Genesis for “man” (both male and female) as the pinnacle of God’s creation, and having Been created in God’s image and likeness ...

Ish and Ishshah (“man” and “woman”) When husband and wife relationships are in view, ish and ishshah are common forms (there are separate words for male and female in the sense of gender) ...

Enosh is the word for mankind that often stresses its mortality and frailty ...

Geber and Gibbor both come from the root gabar, to “prevail”, “be strong or great”. Both of these words are the opposite of the common understanding of enosh ... (NGSB)

The Fall diminished God’s image, not only in Adam and Eve, but in all their descents, the whole human race. We retain the image structurally, in the sense we remain human beings, but not functionally, for we are now slaves to sin, unable to use our powers to mirror God’s holiness. Regeneration begins the process of restoring God’s moral image in our lives. But not until we are fully sanctified and glorified shall we reflect God perfectly in thought and action as we were made to do and as the incarnate Son of God in His humanity actually did (jn.4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29,46). (NGSB)

app We should respect people’s dignity, and treat them as such; yet we ought to remember our human frailty, and institute proper systems; at the same time, “take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine.” (I Tim.4:16)

Manifestation

At the Last Supper discourse, Jesus in answering Philip’s request said: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me,

Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou then, 'Shew us the Father?' Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake." (Jn.14:9-11 cf.Jn.1:14)

In the same token, Apostle Paul encouraged the Church: "Ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as light in the world." (Phil.2:15)

app. Saint Francis once said: "Do evangelization; use language if necessary!"

Deeds speak lauder than words. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:15) If your deeds made others interested to ask, your witness is on the winning way.

Manna

The great Shepherd and Passover not only save the Israelites out of Egypt, crossing the Red Sea, He led and sustained them forty years in the wilderness, eating the heavenly food manna (Ex.16:14). Manna, a type of Christ as "the bread of life" coming down from heaven to die "for the life of the world" (Jn.6:35,48-51).

app Israel journeyed in the wilderness, God sustained their life with manna, but they complained that "our soul loatheth this light bread" (Num.21:5). So some "will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears..." (II Tim.4:3) The dietary habit need to be developed as to adapt to nutritious food.

Manual Labour

During Apostle Paul's ministry, he often stresses on the necessity of manual work (Acts 20:34,35; Eph.4:28). Manual work was part of the basic training of the Jewish rabbinic education, thus Paul was a skilled tent maker (Acts 18:3). Tradition held that in the late first century in Galilee, the plough could be found there, which is still useable, it was made by the hands of Jesus, and showed that the workmanship was good.

app Christians should not avoid manual work; to the seminarians, it is more needed, in order to be pioneer missionaries. "If any would not work, neither should he eat." (II thess.3:10) It fits any community's rule, not for monetary only.

Marana tha

Aramaic phrase *Marana tha.* means “Our Lord has come”, or “Our Lord, come!” (I Cor. 16:22 ref. Rev.22:20)

App: “Love His appearing” (II Tim.4:8) should be Christian’s hope, which is the proof of new life (I Thess.1:3; I Jn.3:3).

Marry, Marriage

Family is the oldest institution established by God. And the LORD God said: “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” (Gen.2:18) So Jesus’ first social activity in earthly ministry ever recorded in the Bible was that He graced the community by attending “a marriage in Cana of Galilee” (Jn.2:1-11), and “the beginning miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory.”

The Bible says: “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.” (Heb.13:4) Even the triumph of Christ and His redeemed Church is symbolized by the consummation of “the marriage of the Lamb” (Rev.19:7).

app. Apostle Paul called “forbidding to marry” (I Tim.4:1-3) as “doctrine of devils”. So, celibacy of the clergy is not biblical; and the so-called founding Pope, Peter was officially married (I Cor.9:5); although Paul was not recommending restricted marriage (I Cor.7:1-9). The Bible forbids endogamy, polygamy, and fornication and such like as unethical relations. Today’s church indulging divorce & remarrying which is sequential polygamy, all of these surely will produce an ungodly culture.

Martyr

Christians believe that “None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” (Rom. 14:7,8) In Christendom, a martyr is one who for the faith & for the sake to be loyal to his Lord, willingly gives up his life, for the crown in the world to come. Martyrdom is growing out from the Lord’s promise: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Rev. 2:10)

app. Someone said with a mocking tone “One who moves along the line of least reluctance to a desired death.” But it is quite right about cowardice: “One who in a perilous emergency thinks with his legs.”

Master

There are words in Gk. being trans. as “master”:

1. *Kurios*, means Controller, Supreme in authority (Eph.6:9).
2. *Olkodespoteo*, means House holder, Master of the house (Lk.13:25).
3. *Didakalos*, means An Instructor, Doctor, Teacher (Matt.10:24).

Today we have all these usages in everyday life, but may apply differently in situations & relations.

app. “Master” relates to disciple, and is mainly to apprenticeship. Many want to be “teachers” (Jam.3:1, masters), because they are not willing to learn, or ignorant that they need to learn, which may be the problem of the Church today.

Measure

A standard of quantity or length, which one must have in trading. The same basic rule of justice is applied in ethical judgment: “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” (Matt.7:1)

app. Scripture is against “partial in yourselves, and become judges of evil thoughts” (Jam.2:1-9). “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”

Meat

In the Bible, meat means food in general, synonyms of loaves & bread, not the animal flesh only. Food supply has had become a major issue since ancient time. Jesus said: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed.” (Jn.6:27) Only it is to specific Dietary Law items, the word “meat” is referred to as animal flesh (cf. Gen.9:3; Lev.11:34 etc).

app. Since the very beginning of the Church, there were people come to the church without conviction of any kind, but professors for all kinds of carnal benefits, seek “the meat which perisheth”, even today. Certain people who aimed to make a crowd, & using such people to fill the pew is needed, but by so doing is quite unlike Jesus who desired to do the will of God (Jn.4:34).

Mediator

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (I Tim.1:15) That seems to be the theme of God’s plan of salvation, and the purpose statement of the N.T. “One mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (I Tim.2:5), in summed up His saving ministry. A mediator is the one who brings two parties together for a settlement of re-conciliation (Eph.2:16; cf. Col.1:20).

app. Jesus is the great “Peace Maker”, so we Christians are commissioned to preach the gospel of peace (Eph.2:17), we as to carry on the office of mediator. Therefore, by no means we should ever be widening the gap.

Meekness

There are always people who try exploiting & manipulating the masses for their own purposes. Jesus declared Himself that “I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matt.11:29). He is gentle with strength and principle unyielding.

app. Meek is gentle, but not gullible. There are people with guile & craftiness; to those we should deal with discernment as Christ have said, “as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” (Matt.10:16)

Mercy

As the sample definition put it: Grace is the unworthy receiveing what one does not deserve; Mercy is the penalty one deserves that did not receive. Jesus said that “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” (Matt.6:12-14) “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.” (Jam.2:13) Jesus has drawn a parable of huge contrast: one servant owed his lord ten thousand talents and had nothing to pay; and “the lord of that servant was moved with compassion” upon his begging, forgave him the debt. “But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat ...and cast him into prison ...” Then his lord upon receiving such report, “was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors, till him should pay all that was due” to his lord (Matt.18:21-35). Obviously, it is quite hopeless.

app. The lack of mercy is not infrequently shown in society, even within the societies which are supposed to be of love. What is needed to be taught? “Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment!” (Jam.2:13) Perhaps we should consider this at the Lord’s table.

Mercy Seat

In the Tabernacle, after the second veil, “which is called the Holiest of all, had ...the ark of the covenant overlaid roundabout with gold ...and over it the Cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat” (Heb.9:3-8). In the O.T., only the high priest once a year, under the cover of the blood, enter the inner room to offer prayer for the people. Now, “having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.” (Heb.10:19,20) “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb.4:16)

app. It is proper & important that to have “supplications, prayers, intercessions”, for these are the church’s normal function. It is not only the pastor’s role, but all Christians are priests; so everyone should be aware and exercise their privilege to approach the mercy seat to obtain the grace directly.

Millennialism

Millennialism aka Chiliasm, which means One Thousand (Rev.20:1-10), with its interpretation, came the seemingly endless contentions, which generally is divided into different schedules of the second advent of Christ, i.e., Pre-Millennialism, Post-Millennialism, and Amillennialism.

App: When will “The End” of the world be? Or when will “The son of Man” come? Jesus’s answer: “My Father Only” knows; but He charged “be ye ready, for in such an hour ye think not the Son of Man cometh” (Matt.24:36,44). We should always be ready to meet our Saviour, either in body or out of the body, either at the time of the world ends, or one’s time in the world ends.

Mind

In old times, the seat of the soul is called mind, or, heart. Human minds can be “blinded” by the veil (II Cor.3:14), or capture by the enemies. Therefore, Apostle Paul described his ministry as battling for the occupation of minds: “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor.10:3-5)

app. A rebellious mind could have imaginations, being proud, wrongful use of knowledge, and disobeying Christ. So one should not boast of one’s keen mind, or of others, nor destroy the minds; but rather bring it to the service of Christ.

Minister, Ministry

Minister derives from minor, which means lesser, or a little-person, which is not to be served, rather than to serve. “For even the Son of man came not be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mk. 10:45) Therefore, a minister’s duty is in assisting others. Hence at a religious or public office, the term is being applied as head of a department, but its original meaning is diminished.

app. However mightily used by Christ, or by the Crown, a minister should remain in the serving attitude, and never be thinking or behaving as lords over others, esp. the minister of the church should not “own” the place or the people he serves either.

Miracles

The signs & wonders performed either by God or human agents, commonly known as miracles. God commanded Moses & Aaron to perform miracles with the purpose of liberating Israel out from Egypt (Ex.4:21,30,31). While

in the battle of Gibeon, God “hearkened unto the voice of” Joshua, and let “the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day” (Jos.10:12-14). Also miracles were done by the Lord’s disciples, by Peter (Acts 3:1-10), and other disciples (Acts 5:12-16); by Paul (Acts 19:11,12); and by Philip (Acts 8:6-8). But there are miracles performed by sorcerers and evil spirits too (Ex.7:11; Matt.24:24; II Thess.2:9; Rev.13:14; 16:14; 19:20).

app. The power of the gospel and the Lord works with His own, one of the evidences is “confirming the word with signs following” (Mk.16:20) It is not all the miracles are from God, either one should not say that no miracle is from God. We should be discerning of the miracles whether they come from God; but denying all the miracles definitely is not rational.

Mirth

“The joy of the Holy Ghost” (Rom.14:17) is not sure come with mirth, which is often from a festival mode rather than spiritual; yet to have dragged down into despondency and ceasing mirth altogether and being in a miserable state of carnal people, which may eventually lead to their repentance.

app. Christian gatherings should be following “righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (II Tim.2:22)

Modest

Keep oneself within measure, well regulated, this means modesty. One is not self-assertive, but observing propriety of behavior, dressing and talking (I Tim.2:9; I Peter 3:3). Thus it tends toward diffidence, and seems often at a disadvantage in the modern society, but God will advance such in His time (I Peter 5:6).

app. Those who promote themselves as “spiritual” in the church, often is proven they are lacking in such quality exactly. We should appreciate people’s modesty and propriety.

Mock

A keen, effective double-edged sword, which one must handle it carefully.

1.Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel: “Cry aloud, for he [Baal] is a god, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.” (I Kings 18:27) Of course, there is no sign of kindness, yet doubtlessly it did help those people who halt “between two opinions” to allow their mind to take decisive action to purge the evil of Baal worshipers.

2.The evil people who were mocking the suffering Christ, who is dying for their salvation (Matt.27:29).

3. “Who so mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker.” (Pro.17:5) That is to teach us respect to people even when they do not have wealth.

app. In a commercial society, money talks loud, and frequently, we can hear all kinds of noises, but kind words & deeds are in short supply. In certain society, onetime people who have wealth assumed to be wicked, now turned to poor as pox! “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col.4:6) This applies to the poor also.

Money & Morality

Money corrupts morality. When Lot moved his tent toward Sodom, his heart desired it before he moved his feet. Then he adopted the value system of that city of perdition (Gen.13:13).

app. Apostle Peter refused the money offered by Magus Simon by saying that “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased by money ...” (Acts 8:18-23) “Simony” since then had been ill-reputed in Church, and became a curse up to now, though it never ceased in practice completely.

Money Laundry

1. In the old days when metal money was the only one in use, sometimes one need to wash off the dust & rust from its surface.
2. In modern days, one need to wash off the money’s surface of guilt & shame, usu. thru financial institutions &/or religious institutions.

app. 1. Some illegal or immoral practices, such as the gain from bribery, or abortion, one passes such gains to the church, in hope that God will share such blood bonus, but the righteous God wrathfully declines. The Bible says: “Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!” (Hab.2:10-12) All of these sound no less than huge church building projects; God will surely destroy such also.

2. If a similar evil practitioner asked his client to “donate” whose gain to church in order to avoid or reduce income tax, besides gain the good pleasure of man, in fact who is stealing the money from the state. i.e. from the populace, which could not wash off one’s guilt, though in the name of Christianity. His action is not “rob Caesar to pay God” (Matt. 22:21), but rob the populace to put into his own purse.

Moon, Month

In the time of creation, God said: “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for

seasons, and for days, and years ...And God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made stars also.” (Gen.1:14-16)

Of ancient calendars adopted by sundry nations, some use Solar Calendar, such as by Egyptian; some use Lunar Calendar, as by Hebrews, Chaldean, and Chinese etc. The Feasts of the new moon is practiced by Jews (I Sam.20:5). Some people idolatrously worship the moon (Deut.17:3), but God sees it as abomination.

app. Most countries now use Solar Calendar, yet not a few remained in their traditional calendars. These cultural differences did not make anyone inferior; instead we should understand them and use it for evangelization accordingly.

Mortality

Job believed that after the body was being destroyed, he will remain in existence and sees his Redeemer & God (Job 19:25-27). Paul says: “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day...For the things which are seen are temporal, but things which are not seen are eternal.” (II Cor.4:16-18; 5:4)

app. Since we are saved by “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Heb.9:14), we do hope for the immortality, and inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor.15:50).

Mother

After the Fall, & the prototype of gospel, “Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.” (Gen.3:20) This is faith in God’s promise: Her Seed, the suffering Christ will be victorious, to win the new community from the serpent’s domain (Heb.11:39).

app. Though in a seemingly all lost situation, God still reigns. We must have faith in His plan, which surely can work things out from appeared disadvantages.

Mount

1.The Mount Horeb: The LORD appeared to Moses, & called him & gave command to him to see Pharaoh, to bring Israel out of Egypt (Ex.3:1-22); Then after, He gave them the Decalogue to tutor them (Ex. 20:1-17).

2.The Mount Calvary: “No man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, the just shall live by faith ...Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; For it is written: Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Gal.3:11-14)

3.The Mount Olivet: Jesus sat upon the mount of Olives, in answering the disciples' quest of the end of the world, stated the Discourse, not giving a set date & program, but letting them "take heed that no man deceive you", and be ready for the Eschatology, or *Consummatione Saeculi* (Matt.24:3-25:46).

4.The Mount Herman: The highest peak of the Promised Land (2814 m). "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! ... As the dew of Hermon..." (Psa.133:1,3) From that mount, the pure & clean moisture formed the upper stream of Jordan.

5.The Mount Carmel: On Mt. Carmel, the fiery Prophet Elijah summons Israel to choose between Yahweh & Baal; then Elijah Called down fire from heaven, prevailed & purged Baalism (I Kings 18:17-41)

app. Christians though are not justified by obeying the Law, yet through which we know that "Christ is the end of the Law" (Rom.10:4), and have to follow the mores & norms of the Law. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and waiting with hope for His returning.

Mourn, Mourner, Mourning

By going to the house of mourning, one is reminded one that mortality is the destiny of every human being (Eccl.7:2). Hence we ought to "weep with them that weep" (Rom.12:15), for sympathy. Another occasion is mourning for the abominations of fellow citizens, and their sins will meet divine retribution. (Ez.9:4).

app. If one did not mourn for oneself (Matt.5:4), but feel comfortable at a sinful culture, or run "with them to the same excess of riot" (I Peter 4:4), then one should consider one's own salvation. For "in seeing and hearing" the "filthy conversation of the wicked ...their unlawful deeds", a righteous soul cannot help but be vexed day by day (II Peter 2:7,8).

Mouth

The cardinal function of mouth is to utter one's heart. So one should only speak the truth, or to keep one's mouth shut. "A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof." (Pro.18:20,21) So, the good fruit comes salvation, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made into salvation." (Rom.10:10) says the Bible. On the other hand, when the mouth is misused, it reveals the true nature of oneself. Jesus said: "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come... The tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh... But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account

thereof in the day of judgment. For by the words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” (Matt.12:33-37)

As for Christians, “Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.” (Heb.13:15) But be cautious: “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God; out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing, My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” (Jam.3:9,10) “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another... Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Eph.4:29) These seemed to be easy enough of the beneficial to everyone.

Yet one’s mouth often does not express one’s true mind. The LORD said to Ezekiel: “And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.” (Ezek.33:30-32) The mouth not only can be used to proceed words out from it, but can be used for in-taking of foods, that which is profitable also could be a problem: what can be edible & edifying at the same time.

app. Christians’ principle of life is making the right use of the mouth, to utter good words & eat the good food at the same time: both not only be good for oneself, but for others also. “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.” (I Cor.6:13) The Church is supposed to care for the benefit of the souls. People love to be pleased, not be instructed. Certain churches are catering for what these people wanted, but not what they needed. Then, what the gain is only their mouth. What is their purpose?

Murder

Human beings bear the image of God. Therefore, with premeditated plan to take a human life, or unlawfully with malice to cause someone to die, is murder. As early as God at the Noachic Covenant: “Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at hand of man; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth the man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man.” (Gen.9:5,6) according to the Bible, such great evil must render capital punishment (Deut.19:11-13).

app. Nowadays many countries abandon death sentence altogether. Their reason is human not God, prone to make mistakes, & no less often under that influences doing so; and again, once someone is being put to death, there is

none that could make restoration. Another reason is that they evoke God's Commandment "thou shall not kill" (Ex.20:13), and erroneously make Capital Punishment equal to murder. So, those the ones in authority, should have the responsibility to take great care when making their decision.

Murmuring

Humans should thank God at all times. "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28) Apostle Paul warned the Corinthian Church that "neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." (I Cor.10:10) This referred to the Israelites on the way to the Promised Land, in the wilderness when they met with difficulties; instead of trusting God, they grumbled. That shows being ungrateful and distrust toward God, by even wanting to go backward to Egypt.

app. As Christians we were told that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) One should not expect the alternative. Instead of murmuring, one ought to trust and be truly thankful to God.

Music

In N.T. times, Christian gathering for worship often use music. This can be traced back to O.T. times, vocal & instrumental music both were used in temple worship (II Chr. 7:6; cf.Psa.81:1-4). Music in aiding for didactic & dedicative effects were taught by the Apostle to using in early churches: "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col.3:16)

app. Some people discourage the use of instruments in church based on the fact that it is invented by the children of Cain; but so did many other kind of tools in civilization are that cannot be all denied. Some disagree in using human composed songs which are not all coming from inspiration. In general, not only songs, even David's harp can have its beneficial effects on Saul (I Sam.16:23). But music should be used with discrimination; certain diabolic tunes, or those capable of rousing improper emotions, should be avoid.

Muzzling

"It is written in the law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn' ...Do you not know that they which minister about holy things live of the thing of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" (I Cor.9:9-18) This is what Apostle Paul said to the Church that they ought to supply the physical needs for those who

care for their souls. Nevertheless, Paul did not want personally use this privilege to have the Corinthian church's provision for himself.

app. Christians serving for salary is not a noble motive (Heb.13:5-7). On the other hand, the church should consider that "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine ...The labourer is worthy of his reward." (I Tim.5:17,18)

Myrrh

A kind of tree gum, yellow-brown in colour, used for its fragrance (Psa.45:8), or, for burial (Jn.19:39). The Sages of the East brought with them "gold, and frankincense and myrrh" as treasured gifts presented to the infant Jesus (Matt.2:11), at the time when they were doing their homage to Him.

app. Myrrh has to be burned to produce its nice fragrance, therefore it traditionally signifies suffering. Saints often need to go through sufferings, then will result in the fragrance of Christ.

Mystery

Mystery is a sacred truth that only by divine revelation can be made known to someone & cannot fully understand. The mystery of the kingdom was made known by Christ, hence entrusted to the Apostles. Paul said: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." (I Cor.4:1) This divine revelation is far above human knowledge, as Paul said that "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, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph.3-6; cf.Col.2:2; 4:4)

app. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (I Tim.3:16). This including the mystery of the resurrection, and the fulfillment of the Kingdom. One who has this great hope, would act accordingly & manifested on their action, & has a godly life (I Peter 3:15); hence it will arouse other's interest & attract them, irresistibly, to Christ.

N

Name

In Bible times, a name is representing that person's character, mind, heritage, & whole being, much more than an identity in modern days. Israel taking as their glory on trusting that Holy Name: "O LORD, in the midst of us, and we art called by Thy name; leave us not." (Jer.14:9)

Apostle Peter pronounced that only by the name of Jesus one is saved: “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12) At the same time comes with the grave responsibility for bearing the name: “Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (II Tim.2:19)

app. Christian was a respected name, because the disciples followed the teaching of Christ that they were so called “first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26). But if one behaved badly, it will result in dishonouring God; “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you” (Rom.2:24). Thus said Apostle Paul referring to the unbelieving Jews.

National Emblem

The ancients had no national sentiment as those of the nineteenth century had. When Israel came out from Egypt, on the first day of the second month, God commanded Moses to count the children of Israel, everyman by his own tribe to camp “by his own standard, throughout their hosts” (Num.1:1,52; 2:1-34). What they had but tribal identities, and their ensign symbols very likely were from their forefather Israel’s prophetic blessings (Gen.49:1-28).

app. The Royal Standard of the Kingdom of God is love, the divine sacrificial love on the cross. Jesus says: “A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (Jn.13:34,35)

Natural Religion

The religion came from human reasoning & natural revelation, which believes a certain body of religious knowledge is inborn in every person or that it can be acquired by the use of reason, and is not from the tradition of any church orthodox. The representative is Deism. This trend may be traced far back to Renaissance Humanism, then as a station upon the road that leads to complete atheism.

app. The Church needs to teach people the limitation of human reason, and elevate the knowledge of the Special Revelation. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.” (Pro.9:10) At the same time, one should be careful to avoid the trap of despising or denying of human knowledge, but to have conviction & confidence in “Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” (I Cor.2:2)

Neighbor

Anyone other than blood-relations, with whom one has contact with, whether Israelites or alien (Lev.19:16-18,34; cf.Lk.10:27-37). Jesus teaches His disciples to even “love your enemies” (Matt.5:43-48). So, “If ye fulfill

the royal law according to the scripture, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself’, ye do well.” (Jam.2:8)

app. Certain people among the Christians go around spreading contentions and separations, picking others’ faults, & instead of love, hatred; one should avoid such a one. Remember well that even if others did all the wrongs, which has no difficulty to proof, yet usually it could never proof that you are right.

New Birth

Once Jesus told a Jewish sage that “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (Jn.3:3) This second birth makes one to have a new life and inherit the new kingdom. Therefore, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor. 5:17)

app. Church should pay more attention to it’s member’s Christian nativity, rather than activity: Without the “nativity” of New Birth, one can never be a member of the body of Christ.

New Heaven & New Earth

Apostle John in the Isle Patmos has written that “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.” (Rev.21:1) The place is far more beautiful beyond anyone’s dream. However, Apostle Peter described it also that “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away, with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” (II Pter 3:10-14)

app. As one who not only enjoy the master paintings of such a place, but really cherishes it “this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is Pure.” (I Jn.3:3) Because “there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (Rev.21:27)

New Jerusalem

Today, some so called “Pilgrims” have an out-dated concept of the “Holy-Land”, and even dream to see the New Jerusalem on earth. If one seriously

considers the size literally, the question will not be whether the New Jerusalem in Israel, should be that Israel will or will not in this New Jerusalem: “He [the Angel] measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs” ca. 1,380 miles in all (Rev.21:16). Can anyone imagine that the nose how much over-sized the face?

app. To Christians, there is none of the Holy Land on earth, but where God is. “The great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” (Rev.11:8) For those who are identified with our Lord, the real Holy Ground is the presence of the Lord (Ex.3:5; Jos.5:15). The now popular tour program should be called The Bible Land.

New Man

The purpose of Jesus Christ “having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself”, which not only achieved salvation for individuals, but “to make in Himself of twain a new man, so making peace, and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross” (Eph.2:15,16). That is to say, this “new man” is in contrast to the Fall of the first man, Adam; He is to make Jews & Gentiles into one body anew, & to share the same inheritance.

As referring to individual salvation & regeneration, “Ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph.4:24)

Again, Christians “have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after Him that created him ... Christ is all, and in all.” (Col. 3:10,11)

app. It is not new theories & new organization that count, but giving new life, even in old organizations.

Nicaea, Councils of

The first (A.D.325) ecumenical council of the Christian Church, meeting in ancient Nicaea (modern day Iznik, Turkey). It was called by the Roman Emperor Constantine, a catechumen, not yet baptized, who presided over the opening session. He hoped that a general council of the church would solve the controversial heresy caused by Arius of Alexandria, who claimed that Christ is not divine but a created being. The council condemned Arius, and incorporated the word *homoousios* (“of one substance”) instead *homoiousion* (“of similar substance”). The council failed to establish a uniform date of Easter, and also failed to enforce the celibacy of the clergy.

app The Church universally acknowledged the result of the conference.

Nicene Creed

This Christian statement of faith is the only ecumenical creed accepted as authoritative by the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, and

Protestant churches in general. Its modern day English version is as following:

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father,
Thought Him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered, died, and buried.
On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.
And his kingdom will be no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in the holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen. (trans. from Gk. EB)*

Night

The night is in absence of light (Gen.1:5). Figuratively, it means Jesus is the light (Jn.9:4); His second coming is the New Day: “The night is far spent, the day is at hand” (Rom.13:12). Christians anticipating the Sun of Righteousness appear to cast away the darkness of this sin-stained world. In the New Jerusalem “there shall be no night there” (Rev.21:25).

app. As Christians, we “are all children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” (I Thess.5:5) Because “we are members one of another, be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” (Eph.4:25,26)

Nobleness

Someone said: “The monarch can dub knights; but he cannot make a gentleman.” Nobleness is not come with might, wealth, but character. The

apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: “In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purpose and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purpose, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.” (II Tim. 2:20,21 NIV) So, noble works depend not on one’s title or office, cleanness must come first. Christian has the responsibility: “Every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.” (I Thess.4:4)

app. The role of play of the worldly corporations is that often the biggest share-holder has the say, without wealth is nobody; but with spiritual institutions, that noble mindedness is God’s chosen. Just like Daniel, a captive in position, but none can make him low.

O

Obedience

For a son, or servant, the cardinal quality desired is obedience. When Jesus said that He is “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt.11:29), what He meant is that He was following the Father’s order for His earthly life. Saul on disobeying God’s command, Samuel pronounced that “Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” (I Sam.15:22,23) Because disobedience is, in fact, one denying the Lord, and having another master, or likely be himself.

app. When Christ came into the world, He said that “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire, mine ears has Thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering has Thou not required ...I delight to do Thy will.” (Psa.40:6-8; cf. Heb.10:5-10) So, the business of the Church is not to do one’s own, or some leaders’ project, but trust & love the Lord, doing His will.

Offence

In fending, “offence” means come in front, knock, against. Hence offence caused harm to others, mentally or physically. Jesus said “Woe to the world because of offences.” (Matt.18:6,7) So, if offended by a brother, one should not take revenge, “go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican ...” (Matt.18:15-19)

app. The church must have love and authority, not neglect to take corrective & disciplinary actions, in order to have the Lord's promised heavenly power & His presence (vs.18,19).

Offering

The basic meaning of the word "offer" is "bring to", which shows the willingness of the giver. It is an act of worship or devotion. Therefore, it must not be short of perfect (Mal.1:13). Offering is not the same as love gift or sharing with fellow Christians (II Cor.8:1-7). It is not a kind of alms-giving (Matt.6:1-4).

app. The Church ought to pay careful differentiation between teaching & being in the right spirit & motives of giving, even the words & terms in use should not be confused.

Oil, of Olive

In the ancient times of the Bible Land, olive oil was in common use. For religious purposes, the Israeli people would bring the "pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." (Ex.27:20) Oil also was used for anointing for sanctifying the tabernacle and consecrating the priests who were ministering in it (Ex.30:22-33). For cosmetic purpose, oil was also used to anoint the head (Eccl9:8; Matt.6:17). For medical purpose, oil was used to sooth the wound (Lk.10:34). Figuratively, oil symbolizes the Spiritual blessings & power (Psa.23:5; Zech.4:2-6).

app. The order of consecrating the priests or equipments of the tabernacle, were first applying blood, then oil. The Church should first preach repentance & purifying by the Blood of the Lamb, then, apply oil over it, followed by the blessing of filling with the Spirit.

Ointment

When Jesus Christ was on the earth to do His Father's business, He was contempt & envied by His contemporaneous religionists, but loved & honored by His disciples. He was anointed with ointment "in the house of Simon the leper" (Matt.26:7; Jn.12:1-3; cf.Lk.7:36-50).

app. Cosmetic adornment of god's people should be done in moderation, in general; so some saw that woman anointing Him with costly perfume on Him, they had objection; because they did not know that it was used for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is more than advisable.

Old Age

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree ... be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." (Pas.92:12-14)

app. Care for their parents is Chinese tradition. When asked how to be filial & do honor to one's father, a sage answered: "Simply treat your father as you would treat your son." God so declared His love & treatment of Israel by saying that: "Even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." (Isa.46:4) Christians should so care for their aged ones, giving them much need the way they would do on infants, i.e. tender care, carry & caress.

Oppression

God wants His people to be treating others with kindness to reflect His love. So, forbid the people to be oppressive toward other humans, especially orphans & widows, & the Poor, & even mistreating aliens is against His law (Ex.22:21-27).

app. God reminded the Israelites should not forget their unpleasant experience in Egypt, that they should not do to others. Since nineteenth century's evil trend of nationalism, xenophobia became common. Christians ought to recognize & voice our principle that oppressing any human being is an assault & insult to his Maker.

Oracle

The special revelation from God by His messengers to human is Oracles, i.e. The Holy Scriptures, "The lively Oracles" (Acts 7:38), as the first Martyr Stephen called it. The Apostle said, "unto them were committed the oracles of God." (Rom.3:1,2) On the same token, as regard to N.T. Church preaching, "Let him speak as the oracles of God." (I Peter 4:11)

app. The church's pulpit is not used for performing orators, much less comedians. If one wants to show himself, there is no way can he be God's messenger at the same time.

Ordination

The state of a person being ordained to perform certain purpose, e.g. For the eternal salvation, the ordination of Christ. Jesus Christ ordained the twelve apostles (Matt.10:1-15). In N.T. church, there were apostles' ordination of deacons (Acts 6:6). Paul was "ordained a preacher, and an apostle ...a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity" (I Tim.2:7). The rules were set for ordination of bishops, deacons & elder (I Tim.3:1-14; 4:17-19; Titus 1:5-9).

app. The church is a community of saints, therefore should not follow the fashion of the world and make the offices as "shareholders", and only count money talks laud, but ethical & spiritual qualifications must be the primary consideration.

Ornaments, Ostentation

Since the value of the inward person is what really counts, no outward apparel & ornaments is necessary in church. Most importantly, a good moral character is a worthy ornament (Pro.1:9; 4:9;25:12). On the other hand, excessive display is ostentation, which is generally condemned (Pro. 25:14; Matt.6:1).

app. The use of Geneva gown in Reformed Churches is proper & solemn rather any academic decorations. As for women, the Orthodox Churches on stress being moderate. Old fashion it may seem to be, it is a worthy godly witness always (I peter 3:3).

Orthodox

The right opinion, or one who believe that he held the right opinion, is an orthodoxist. Gk. “*orthos*” is right; “*doxa*”, opinion. In Jesus’ time, there were throngs of religionists, who claimed to be Bible-believing, everyone is wrong except themselves. Only problem is that Jesus said that they were no more than “sit-ins”. If you follow their work, there is none. “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.” (Matt.23:2,3)

app. It is true that those missionaries who go afar are not enough orthodoxies, but a more pitiable fact is that those who knew the orthodoxies remain “as the door turneth upon his hinges.” (Pro.26:14) Obviously that will not go very far, or help much.

Orthopraxis

The Samaritan only knows the Pentateuch, much less theology. At least he practices the *Sh’ma*: “Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” (Lk.10:27) But he helped the half dead lone victim on the Jericho road. No doubt Jesus gave His rightful command: “Go, and do thou likewise.” (v. 37)

app. Many centuries later, came Margaret Thatcher, not trained in theology, nor well versed in orthodoxy, who said that “No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he’d only had good intentions. He had money as well.”

Outcasts

Israel disobeyed God, and became captives. “Until the fullness of Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written: There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away, ungodliness from Jacob ...” (Rom.11:25-18) The promised Restoration will be fulfilled. “It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again to recover the remnant of His people ...And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and

shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth ..." (Isa.11:11-14)

app. God promised to Israel: "Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch ... His name shall be "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jer.23:5,6) That day shall Israel turn to God, & believe Jesus Christ as their Saviour & be counted righteous.

Overcoming

One need not have lots of courage to be defeated. But one must through strive suffer to be an over-comer. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Rev.21:7)

As Church in all ages have defects & trials, so every church has a few distinguished ones as over-comers (Rev.2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21).

app. These people are willing to stand against the tide; They are not only brave, but also do not avoid sufferings, when others go astray, they used what gifts God gave to them & do their duty faithfully: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (II Tim.1:7). Those are who triumph through trials.

Overseer

In order to have the temple built properly, & the ministering of the sanctuary maintained according to the ordinance, the overseers were appointed. In N.T. Church, the apostle Peter is also an elder, & overseer, sub-shepherd (I Peter 5:1,2), & sometimes called bishop (I Tim.3:1-7).

app. If there is no overseer, or, overseers neglect their duty, most potential great task would never have been achieved, but would end in failure. So, on the overseers hinged the success. Be faithful, God's steward must be prepare to give account to the Lord.

Ox

The faithful obedient servant of God, is often symbolized by ox. So, the scripture made it clear on what seems trivial, but unlawful: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treated out the corn." (Deut.25:4) The Apostle teaches the church: "The labourer is worthy of his reward." (I Tim.5:18)

app. God's faithful steward should never make the church's treasury his personal piggy-bank. On the Church's part, what their needs must be cared for. Some interpreted the scripture this way: The Elders that rule (pastors) "will be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." (I Tim.5:17) In application, certain churches take average income of the congregation & double it, as the standard to set their pastor's compensation.

P

Pagan

L. *Paganus*, came into use in the fourteenth century, which means “a peasant”. Since the countryside people were neglected in education & evangelization, they were generally left to practice superstition; hence pagan culture is despised. The Church should be careful by not using that unkind & uncivil term on unbelievers.

app. Commonly believed that in despising of others is the way to show oneself to be superior over others. Christians have to consider that that is against our Lord’s command.

Palace

Originally derived fr. L. meaning royal abode, enclosed place. When the Bible says: “The palace is not for man, but for the Lord God” (I Chr.29:1; cf. Psa.48:3), which was applied to the Temple. Later on, the term “palace” for was not only used for kings & princes, but for religious leaders as well; because they metamorphosed to dignitaries also, so it follows changed their hermitage to palace, e.g. “the palace of the high priest” (Matt.26:69; Jn.18:15), & thus the meaning of same edifices extended their use from royalties to those in high position, from royalties to rogues, or those with means (Lk.11:21 NKJV).

app. Church leaders should not care for their own dwellings, nor pay special attention to & be familiar with palaces & manor places; and never forget that there are poor & oppressed, for they are in the majority, and need more comfort also.

Palm

Native plant in the Bible Land, the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) is the commonly known species, which is cultivated for its economically importance. It grows 30m (100 ft) tall, & may bear of dates 250 kg annually for over 100 years (cf. Ps.92:12-15). A certain kind of palm grow in the desert, which indicates water source (Ex.15:27). Palm branches used for the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev.23:40). People used it to symbolize triumphal entry to Jerusalem of Christ, and cried: “Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!” (Jn.12:13). At the end of the consummation of the ages, the “great multitude, which no man could number, of nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palm in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb...” (Rev.7:9-12).

app. With eager anticipation, as the apostle was hoping for the Lord's appear says: since "ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (II Peter 3:14) We Christians should have the same hope & to lead such a life.

Paper Reed

The paper reed of Egypt is the resource & symbol of their civilization (Isa.19:7), as the pride of Niles. The same papyrus was the material which producing writing instrument, got the name "paper", & used as the earliest among humans. It also was known as "bulrushes" which could be used for building sea-worthy vessels, by the ancients (Isa.18:2).

app. At a point of history, Egypt appeared to be the world power of a time, but God's people should always trust the Almighty. As the Assyria's strong army is at the gates, what they said is true that "Thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it; so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him." (II Kings 18:21) We should out our trust in God, all the time.

Parable

Parable is a similitude, usu. a short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. Jesus spake many things to the public in parables, e.g. the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt.13:3-50). "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: I will open my mouth in parable; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the earth." (Matt.13:35)

app. Wisely employing parable in preaching to reveal the deep truth, were used in O.T. times by prophets & N.T. times where the Lord Himself especially, & His servants, achieved the profound purposes. But Church should not use senseless & main jokes for hilarious effects.

Paradise

Gk. *paradeisos*, means "a park", "walled enclosure". It is a real place for the righteous souls before entering eternity. It has been promised by Christ on the cross to the penitent thief (Lk.23:43). Paul related that, regarding himself: "I knew a man ...he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (II Cor.12:3-6).

app. Unlike Paul who avoided glory himself, but after fourteen years he then revealed reluctantly his special experience. On the contrary, some people in today's church, claimed that they had the experience of Paradise, but after that did no contribution to the church, which made us doubted the worth of the supposed transport story to the Paradise.

Pardon

Pardon is an act purely based on God's mercy. At the time of salvation, it is for us to receive the grace: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought; and let them return unto the LORD, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isa.55:7) Not because one deserved it, but as the Bible says: "For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." (Psa.25:11)

app. Christians are those who obtained God's pardon, & would not indulge themselves to "continue in sin that grace may abound" (Rom.6:1). But should act as Zacchaeus who did joyfully make his retrievable restoration (Lk.19:8-10).

Partiality

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal" is one of the best-known sentences in English language, is not a direct quote from the Bible, yet is the principle of it. The Bible says: "Thou shalt do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." (Lev.19:15) It firmly condemned partiality. Those who "having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude:16), shows sure sign of false teachers.

app. After these words were announced for many long years, evidently the people in the U.S. still not all had been treated equally. Christians should not take the social standard to weigh on persons. Those who did such evil, will be found want on God's balances (Jam.2:1-10).

Passover

Among the feasts Israel observed, most often mentioned in the Bible, is Passover: "This day shall be unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever." (Ex.12:14) Passover Day is on the Fifteenth of the First Month of the Year (First full moon after Vernal Equinox) at even.

At the time, the Lord led His people of Israel out of Egypt; the Pharaoh would not let the people go, & the Lord told Israel, that they shall take a lamb of the first year, without blemish, & kill it in the evening. "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the house, wherein they eat ..." When the Angel of the Destroy pass through the land of Egypt that night, according to the Lord's command, and "smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ...the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you ..." The Passover, is the type of Christ our Redeemer (Ex.12:1-28; Jn.1:29; I Cor.5:6,7; I peter 1:18,19)

app. The Church should always remember the Lord's salvation, at the Lord's Supper: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (I Cor.5:7)

Pastors

The Lord in bestowing the spiritually gifted men to the Church, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph.4:11). Those are gifts, but do not mean a hierarchical system. As to the local leadership, there are Elders, Bishops, Overseers, Pastors, they are similar names & offices (I Tim.3:1-12 cf. I Peter 5:1-3), generally; ministers, usually the leaders of the local church are called Pastors (shepherds), meaning those who are leaders, and tending to the sheep. As for deacons, they are in charge of daily affairs of the church (Acts 6:1-7).

app. The function of the ministers is more important than their titles. God's words spoken by Jeremiah: "Ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not 'Where is the LORD?' And they handle the law knew me not. The pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walk after the things that do not profit." (Jer.2:7,8) The fault of the faithless shepherds is "feed themselves" (Ez.34:1-10), and do not care for the flock which is entrusted to them. Nevertheless, some unfaithful, selfish & lazy shepherds should be faulted all for a few.

Patience

Rest while in wait is patience. "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him." (Psa.37:7) David was anointed king over Israel, yet he had to wait, waited a long time. His patience was not because he had no other way, but because it came from "trust in the LORD ...delight thyself also in the LORD...Commit thy ways unto the LORD..." (Psa.37:3-5)

app. Individual Christians, organizations as well, often lose their patience & walk outside God's ordained way. David being the man after God's own heart, always lift his eyes on the LORD, & waiting for His mercy (Psa.123:1-3). If one's patience is lost, it should be found in the LORD.

Patriarch

Father in L. *pater*. Hence Patriarch can be a chief or leader, guardian, or protector; then comes patriot (native, inhabitant), and patrimony. The nation of Israel, collectively, recognized God as their national Father: "O LORD, thou art our Father" (Isa.63:16; 64:8 cf.Ex.4:22). Only through Jesus Christ, we could be born-again, individually address God as our heavenly Father, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph.3:15)

app. Christians ought to “remember them which have the rule over you” (Heb.13:7). Most importantly, respect & not to dishonor the Holy Name of our heavenly Father.

Pattern

The word “pattern” means model, example, which came from *patter* (father). Follow one’s father, was the way which the ancients’ trade was learnt & handed down continually.

When Moses followed God’s command to build the tabernacle: “According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.” (EX.25:9,40) So as Moses obtained his ministry, God admonished him: “See... that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.” (Heb.8:5)

app. So, the Christian ministry should not follow the fashion of the world, but “measure of the pattern.” (Ez.43:10)

Peace

Problems of human relations should be avoided as far as possible; to “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Tim.2:2) is desirable. “For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.” (Jam.3:16-18)

app. The ones supposed to be “peace makers”, as Christians are, find peace as the thing often wanted among them. Because “the wisdom that is from above” is “having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.” (Col.1:20) So, without “the Prince of peace” reigning in the heart, there is no peace.

Peace Offering

Christ is our peace (Eph.2:14-18), by whom we have fellowship with the Father & fellow-believers; therefore peace offering is fellowship offering. One who eats the peace offerings shall not touch any unclean things (Lev.7:11-21).

app. Fellowship has its spiritual state, & is not the same as friendship. Church that mixes the two, will have confusion & strife.

Pearl

As a natural product of high value, pearls often are used for adornment (cf. I Tim.2:9; Rev.17:4). There is a saying that “Gold has a price; pearl is priceless.” Jesus used pearl in His mystery of kingdom parable “merchant man seeking goodly pearls” (Matt.13:45,46), to symbolize human souls.

app. Church should not judge one's value by the outwardly adornment, but by the inward value of souls.

Peculiar

Peculiar means characteristic distinctness of only one person, group, of cattle or thing. It commonly means a category of some odd or weird character or things. People of this world "think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (I Peter 4:4), just because they do not have the standard based on which to make the right measurement.

app. Christians are ordained "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom.12:2). We are not the same as the world; it's because the world goes astray from God's word. Know for sure that you are in the right, and stand firm upon it. To be different is nothing wrong. Dare to be different. One day we will be judged by God.

Pentecost

It is called Feast of Weeks in O.T. (Deut.16:9-12) It is the only feast day mentioned in N.T. The descending of the Holy Spirit on that day (Acts 2:1), so it signifies the birth of the Church. Besides the Passover, Pentecost was mentioned in Paul's epistle (I Cor.16:8), and the Apostle himself seemed to have noted its significance (Acts 20:16).

app There are people in Church, who have no concern for the Passover Lamb, they have no fear for sin & its infection, but fear of the Holy Spirit, and avert of Pentecost. What they should remember is that, without the guidance of the Holy Spirit one can never get into the truth (Jn.16:7-14); without the Holy Spirit, one even cannot become a Christian & confess Christ (I Cor.12:4).

People

A state's populace collectively called people. There are many peoples in the world. We are hoping for that day when "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev.21:3)

app. Since the Church is one new people in Christ, that no divisive narrow patriotism or nationalism should exist in it; because such is the denial of our common Father.

Perdition

Destruction, lost eternally. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in

destruction and perdition.” (I Tim.6:9) At the end time, is “the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (II Peter 3:7) Jesus prayed to His Father for the disciples: “I kept them in Thy name; those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.” (Jn.17:12)

app. The Prevenient Grace & Sustaining Grace of salvation is made ever secure for Christians in Christ. So, Christians are told they must “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”, it is not fear of being lost, but to fulfill God’s expectation: “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (Phil.2:12,13)

Perfection

To be perfect is not for men’s plume, but for performance in serving God. So, perfection is not an end in itself, but a requirement to start with. Since by the law almost all things purged with blood, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb.9:14)

“For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Heb.10:14)

app. The perfection of Christian is by the perfect Saviour, offering Himself as perfect sacrifice made possible for service to God.

Perfume

The LORD said unto Moses: “Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum, these sweet spices with pure frankincense, of each shall be a like weight; and thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy. And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee; it shall be unto you most holy. And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof; it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from the people.” (Ex.30:34-38)

app. This precious holy perfume is strictly for offering to the LORD only, not for any human to enjoy, even as “Moses was faithful in all His house” (Heb.3:2). So, our praise shall all direct to Christ only.

Perjury

God’s Commandment says: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.” (Ex.20:16; Deut.5:20) One should tell truth, nothing but truth.

app. Perjury is one with evil intention to do harm to others, and give untrue statement about that person(s); either in the form of rumor, or black-mail, all are condemned. The Community of Love should never see this kind of most coward and shameful thing. The best policy is speaking truth in love, and also have the courage to witness against perjury.

Persecution

One must go through trial to have triumph. “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (II Tim.3:12) Yet persecution may cause “some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white.” (Dan.11:35) It was revealed to Apostle John who had gone through severe persecution, and “in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ” (Rev.1:9), that those “arrayed in white robes... These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev.7:13,14)

app. “Scars became stars”, Miguel de Cervantes said, referring to his wounds. But to the ears of people of Gospel of Prosperity, they choose to believe otherwise. Do they prefer to be treated as “Stars” now and down here?

Perseverance

“Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matt.24:12,13) The one who prevail is the one who has perseverance. “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the Patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord [brought about]; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (Jam.5:11), He only seemingly severe.

app. The Christian community, today, are no in short supply of Job’s three friends, they could not see the end of Job. So, to the suffering saints, comfort & encouragement are needed.

Person

Person means actor’s mask, used in Greek play, hence means what one has; since it exists with the real being, thus it is individual.

The King Jehoshaphat against the corrupted court culture, brought the restoration to the country, and charged the new officials: “Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.” (II Chr.20:7) Christians were sinners, equally; saved by the grace of God, equally. If one respect certain persons & show partiality, thus would slidden the scale & causes one’s judgment to be unbalanced. So such practice would form a corrupted culture, that will end with an unequal society.

app. As a solid building must be built on even ground, so the one who makes judgment should without discrimination and treats every person fairly.

Pestilence

In the Bible, God used pestilence as penalty to the rebellious. That invisible terrible plague may cause great number of deaths. Disobedience of the people, who is stiff necked toward God, which caused the divine punishment, one of them is in pestilence: "I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your citizens, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy." (Lev.26:25) God warned the people through prophet Jeremiah: "I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence." (Jer.14:12)

app. On the improvement of the medical science, many diseases seem to have disappeared; yet there are many invisible plagues in existence, which can be used by God to chasten humans, physically & spiritually. The wrong beliefs can also lead people astray, or, a group can be plagued by a cruel or foolish leader, who would to entice a nation engage into war & destruction, etc. All these could be the equivalent to pestilence.

Pietism

In the seventeenth century German Lutheran Church became secularized. Under the influence of English Puritanism, arises Pietism. Philipp Jakob Spencer assessed his contemporary orthodoxy's weaknesses & advanced proposals for reform: 1) greater use of the scriptures; 2) greater assumption by the laity of their priestly responsibilities as believers; 3) the importance of bearing the practical fruits of a living faith; 4) ministerial training that emphasized piety & learning rather than disputation; & 5) preaching aim at edification. The *Collegia Pietatis* advocate for such ideal of reforms. The leadership passed to August Herman Franke who founded the University of Halle. One of the Halle alumni, the famed Nikolaus Ludwig Count von Zinzendorf, founded the Moravian Church among the refugees, on his estate in Saxony. Zinzendorf & his followers' belief in Christ's atonement as the only requisite for salvation, & they extended their mission field to the world. They influenced John & Charles Wesley brothers, & George Whitefield, & directly or indirectly, in its turn fired the revival movement on both shores of Atlantic which reached afar.

app. The Pietism & the mobilization of laity, attributed to the evangelism of the world even today. The Church should not let this fire to be incinerated.

Pilgrim, Pilgrimage

The O.T. saints & Christians, were seeing the world but their lodge, on their way toward another country. “These all died in faith not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” (Heb.11:13) Apostle Peter says: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.” (I Peter 2:11) The Psalmist put it in the same way: “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.” (Psa.119:54) So, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psa.119:105)

app. Many religions have their tradition of doing pilgrimage, one of the requirements is leading a simple way of life & abstain from sexual lust. To have an aim of life, will help Christians to put their value system in the right aspect. For the edification of Christians, the Church’s priory task is to help her members to set their priority in order.

Pillars

When Israel led by God came out of Egypt’s “security” zone, & stride into the wilderness, which means fear & darkness. “The LORD went before them by the day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.” (Ex.13:21) It is not hard to imagine what confidence & comfort could give the people.

At the time Temple was built, there two pillars of brass were erected up “before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.” (II Chr.3:17) The meaning: “God makes firm” & “In Him is strength”. It is to say, God’s work must be in His will & by His power.

app. We are the people delivered by the Lord Christ, and must always remember His redemptive & sustentating grace, not by ourselves.

In Paul’s epistle mentioned that there were James, Cephas, and John “who seemed to be pillars” (Gal.2:9) in the Jerusalem Church. Yet in today’s culture, the church’s pillars may in err, need to be built by gold and silver.

Pit

The Bible uses “pit”, which is a prison, a grave, to symbolize death & hell. “Unto Thee I cry, O LORD my rock, be not silent to me; lest, if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.” (Psa.28:1) In this case, “pit” means separate from God & without hope. “They shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.” (Isa.24:22)

app. The redemptive grace changes one’s countenance & outlook of the world. The Psalmist says: “He brought up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And

He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.” (Psa.40:2,3) Hope all our congregation has experience this blessed new live.

Pleading

In a court of law, one to entreating or appeal sincerely on a certain case or cause, is making a plea. In the Bible, God reasons with His people: e.g. “Like as I plead with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you.” (Ez.20:36) When Job was in deep distress, he said: “O that one might plead with God, as a man plead with His neighbor!” (Job 16:21)

app. Being a Roman procurator Festus held the law & said that “It is not the manner of Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.” (Acts 25:16) Yet, in the modern society, even Christian community, people commonly biased against the accused. This attitude should change, and let many un-sound grounded litigation cease, and mere rumors, be stopped at wise ears.

Pleasure

To avoid pain & seek pleasure, is the human concern since ancient time. But what is the definition of pleasure, and by what means one gains that pleasure, whether it may last long or end with pain, there is no way to determine. But “riches and pleasure of this life” (Lk.8:14), often hinder the fruits of the word, even the wise king Solomon, end by lamenting the vanity (Eccl.2:).

So, the Bible encourages people to go for the lasting satisfaction by saying that “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.” (Rom.2:7)

app. There is little benefit by arguing between enjoyment & pleasure, the variety of expression, makes subjective to objective matter of judgment. Christians ought to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, in the light of the Bible’s teaching: “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Rom.14:17)

Pledge

One made a promise, before the fulfillment of such an obligation, a pledge is given to as a security or guaranty. In the spirit of mercy & trust, according to the Law which says: “No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge, for he taketh a man’s life to pledge.” (Deut. 24:6)

In the N.T., at the fulfillment of God’s promise to indwell His people, “After ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.” (Eph.1:13,14)

app. The word “earnest” in Gk. is used for as a token of engagement, e.g. a ring, etc. to hold until the consummation of the marriage, which is the hope of the Church’s glorious day.

Plough

In ancient agricultural society, hand held plough were used to loosen the soil in preparation for sowing the seeds. Jesus used the metaphor by saying that “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Lk.9:62) Paul talked figuratively also that “He that ploweth should plow in hope.” (I Cor.9:10)

The prophets announced the day shall come: “He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” (Isa.2:4; Mic.4:3)

app. The purpose of war is to exert one’s will over other’s, and to make other party to submit. The Church shall by no means be used as war-monger or, to endorse such endowment; but to advance God’s will be done on earth.

Poet

Since ancient days, oracles were utterance which often came into poetry. It may come in symbolical or allegorical or mythical language, so, to a certain extent, almost every culture treated poets as seers. Only Bible poetry is from divine inspiration. Apostle Paul quoted heathen poetry using as spring-board for purpose of evangelization, but not as revelation.

app. Christians using poetry are allowed, sometimes even essential; but always should use with care, because its language may not all in line with orthodox, doctrinally.

Poison

The poison is an invisible killer, coming from deep inside of some dangerous creature. This could fit the condition of certain unconverted human. The bible says: “The wicked... their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear.” (Psa.58:4) To describe how the evil effect of misusing language: “The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” (Jam.3:8)

app. As the poison can spoil a whole fountain making it undrinkable, so evil affects a society. The church should spare no effort to carefully guard against such erroneous doctrine.

Politics

Gk. *politikos*, fr. city, state, to managing affairs of populace. So, those who are on the helm can exert influence on the society, or nation.

Theocracy: “1. a form of government in which God or a deity is recognized as the civil ruler, the God’s or deity’s laws being interpreted by the ecclesiastical authorities. 2. A system of government by priests claiming a divine commission.”

Hagiocracy: “government by a body of persons esteemed as holy.”

Kakistocracy: “government by the worst persons; a form of government in which the worst persons are in power.”(WD)

app. Since we are born in the world, the relationship established has never been individual AND society, but individual IN society. As Martin Luther’s theory of “Two Citizenship”, the Church should encourage Christians to get involved in politics, because we are the people. Thus Christians can have the effect of Salt & Light (Matt.5:13-16).

Polity

The form of a political organization or government as following:

Despotism: A Master, or Head of the state, ruler with absolute authority & power, tyrannically, though some are benevolent.

Oligarchy: A small group of Leaders, or noblesse who exercises control of government, and deciding on state affairs.

Democracy: Anarchical, or some forms of representatives chosen by public voting, constituting the political authority.

app. Personality decides political direction. Though system holds a certain degree of influence, a charismatic figure as king-maker may alter all.

Pollution

Since a Holy God is the One whom we worshiped, so ritual pollution should be waded off, which is prescribed in the O.T. There were certain regulations governing people’s daily life, which when one has physical sickness, uncleanness, or touch unclean things, should not be allowed to approach God. Yet, the most serious problem is not environmental but is moral pollution. What the pressing need is to purge off the evil (Ez.36:29), and bear good fruit for the Lord.

app. Environmental pollutions are the most concern of the day. Often the church people talk of Puritanism & holiness with contempt, or in mocking way. May the religion not turn to filthy mud (II Peter 20-22). Since the mass media via electronics came into being, the minds of the children were polluted before they come to age; thus a poisonous milieu is formed. May we pray for the rain to come down from heaven to clear the pollutions!

Pomegranates

On the priest’s robe (Ex.28:33), & on the capitals of the bronze pillars in the temple (I Kings 7:20), both were decorated with pomegranates. These symbolize the importance of bearing good fruits for witness.

app. What the Church needs most is not building, or ritual, not even the deep knowledge of mystery, but sweet fruits which offer to a bitter world.

Potentate

Christ Jesus is the Saviour, Sovereign, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things are created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. 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.” (Col.1:15-18) He is the Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of the Universe.

“The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.” (I Tim.6:15,16)

app. To such a great Lord, the Church ought to subject to Him; if any man try to usurp His position, is no other than a rebel and idol.

Poor

Before the Israelites set their foot on the Promised Land, God has promise concern of the poor: “For the poor shall never cease out of the land, therefore I command thee, saying: Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” (Deut.15:11)

On the other hand, “He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” (Pro.22:16)

When Jesus delivered His first public sermon at His community synagogue, He quoted the scripture and spoke thus: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor...” (Lk.4:18) Though these might apply to spiritually poor, by no means it excluded the materially poor. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.” (II Cor.8:9)

app. There is no surety that poor must be superior morally, but quite possible that those who have less, have less means to do evil also. However, one should make sure that they do not treat poor if they penalized by God, nor neglect of their want. “Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.” (Psa.41:1)

Power

Force comes by legal authority, and is the source of power; the ultimate source is bestowed by God. “For there is no power but of God; The powers

that be are ordained by God.” (Rom.13:1) The physical power also comes from God.

“The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. There is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.” (Isa.40:28,29)

app. It is right to believe that God is power-source. But that does not mean that all the seemed power is come from God. “Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses” (II Tim.3:8 cf. Ex.7:11), as it is true that they had “power”, but not the true power that came from above. It is true that the Holy Spirit has power; but Holy Spirit is a divine person, so that one who received the Holy Spirit must be controlled by Him, and then uses that power.

Pragmatism

What is true must be practical is the motto of pragmatism. Hence the “truth” is based on “cash value”.

The Galilean multitudes had seen the miracle that Jesus did, & fed by the loaves, said that “This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.” (Jn.6:14) But after they heard His hard-sayings, they were not reluctant “went back and walk no more with Him.” (v. 66)

app. Pragmatists cannot be true friends of truth. In time of need, they could find that it is unpractical, then they vaporized away. Thus who follow the “gospel of prosperity” or alike are on the same trend of thinking.

Praise

Since the word “worship” is to celebrate the worth-ship of God, in the Bible, one had the act of praise done in public.

When David brought the ark of God into Zion, he delivered first his psalm to the choir, and he rallied a public celebration to give thanks to God’s “holy name and glory in thy praise.” (I Cor.16:35)

app. Praise is not the time to show men’s praise worthiness, only to give praise & adore God’s being & what He had done for His people. It is to say, that everyone can pray, only God’s people can give praise to Him. Thus in Christian worship we should always be having time of praise. s

Prayer

In private, or in public gathering, Christians can prayer to God, directly.

“My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.” (Psa.5:3)

Prayer must be uttered in words; thus the disciples requested Jesus: “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” (Lk.11:1)

At public prayer, a distinct, clear, loud enough voice should be used, thus making all who are at the meeting able to say “Amen” with one accord.

app. Prayer is so important, like breathing to Christians, so this spiritual flame should never be allowed to be quenched. One even said that the decline of the church, is simply rested on the pastor who has had not enough prayer. That may not be a fair assessment after all; but prayer can't be over emphasized.

Preach, Preacher

Proclaim the Good-Tidings is to “Preach”, which means to “publish”, or to make it known to the populace (Mk.13:10). Jesus thus announced His mission: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” (Lk.4:18)

Even before His incarnation, the Spirit of Christ was by the O.T. prophets “preached the gospel” (I Peter 1:11,12; cf.3:19; II Peter 2:5), to the ancients. Thus “in due times manifested His word through preaching” (Titus 1:3) is the ministry throughout N.T. times, “even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. 28:18-20)

app. The Church who believe in the second coming of Christ, should carry on to fulfilling this great evangelical mission: “The gospel must first be published among all nations.” (Mk.13:10)

Predestination

The great mystery thus proclaimed by Apostle Paul: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom.8:28,29; 9:1-11:36; Eph.1:5) It is essential of the plan of salvation, that nothing can be short of an omniscient, omnipotent God. There is no way to be fully understood in our human capacity. Paul though with no less endeavor for the gospel, resulting in “as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Acts13:48) “He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works.”(Psa.33:15 NKJV)

app. In the world there are many things we do not know “why” more than we do; yet with sincere believe in and do we achieve. We should accept this hard truth of predestination though beyond our ken, & at the same time, in Paul's steps, redouble the effort of evangelization.

Presence

The omnipresent God is always with His people; yet the same almighty God's manifestation is awesome & terrible: “The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.” (Psa.68:8) As the prophet said: “Oh that

Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.” (Isa.64:1) Yet with the eternal God’s Son, Christ Jesus incarnate, He was “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt.11:28), that He might redeem the Fallen race, & bring them to the Father’s family.

app. Christians, as the redeemed people, “that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in the holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.” (Lk.1:74,75)

Preserver

Human beings usually keep safe by their precious treasure; so does God toward His people & declared that “Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou has been honourable, and I have loved thee.” (Isa.43:4) Thus “The LORD preserveth the faithful.” (Psa.31:23) “The LORD...forsaketh not His saints; they are preserved for ever.” (Psa.37:28) So they can have confidence that “Ye that love the LORD, hateth evil, He preserveth the souls of His Saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.” (Psa.97:10)

app. To those who are greedy, feel insecure of their future, the Bible says: “Let our conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He has said: ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The lord is my help, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me’.” (Heb.13:5,6)

Presumption

A self-important man is often overstepping due bounds. During the Israel’s journey in the wilderness, God had chosen the Levi tribe to minister in the tabernacle, but the gang of Korah seemeth it is a small thing, even trying to seek “the priesthood also” (Num.16:8-14). Thus they treated with contempt toward Moses, “who was faithful in all His house” (Heb.3:2). That means exalted themselves against God’s ordained servant. In the primitive N.T. church, the similar event happened also. The Apostle of Love, aged John, said that “I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have preeminence among them, receiveth us not.” (III Jn:9)

app. In a semi-anarchical condition, some of the church leaders acted as if they are a kind of nobility, or “Church-lords”, arbitrarily seizing power & acting with authority. This should be checked.

Prevenient Grace

God’s grace is not a remedy of men’s failure only, but prevenient grace is Divine Grace operating in advance, on the human will & conditions, prior to its turning to God. This is based on God’s omniscience, omnipresence & omnipotence. The closest suitable term may be “pre-established harmony”, though it seems somewhat extreme.

app. Christians should not lightly assume this or that one is enemy of the truth, but deal patiently with everyone, and try to gain some from the captivity of Satan. Who knows that that “Chief Sinner” will not turn to the least of apostle?

Price

Certain merchandise on the market, its unit price is determined by demand & supply. Jesus said to His disciples that: “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.” (Matt.10:29) What one sees is only price, but not its true value. Judas Iscariot betrayed the Master for the price of “thirty pieces of silver” (Matt.26:14-16).

But Peter by revelation sees the value of the “precious blood” (I Peter 1:18), for its redemption eternaly.

app. Oscar Wilde: “They know everything of price, but know nothing of value.” Only Jesus valued the poor widow’s “two mites” (Lk.21:2-24), which was not based on its price.

Pride

One thinks oneself is being somebody which is not, thinks he has something which has not, that is vain pride. Pride is the main hindering to one’s salvation. “God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” (I Peter 5:5) Because the right attitude to approach God is to “look up” (Psa.5:3).

app. A proud person looks down on everyone, and of course shall never see God. The Church if they look up for the “haves”, lack the teaching of humble attitude towards those who come. As Mary says in *Magnificat* that “He hath scatted the proud in the imagination of their hearts, He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree; He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away.” (Lk.1:51-53)

Priest

Under the Leviticus order, the priest acted on behalf of the people before God. Christ is “a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” (Heb.2:17) Christ Jesus manifested in flesh, as everlasting High Priest & offered Himself as sacrifice once for all, “By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Heb.10:20-22), could we be approaching God. Thus not only could we no longer need a human priest as mediator, but every Christian is a priest himself.

app. As Martin Luther had emphasized that Christians are all priests, we do not need to have any other priest but Christ only; in turn our ministry is as Paul says, to make intercessions for all men...and all that are in authority.” (I Tim.2:1-6)

Prince, Principalities

In the Bible times, the head of city-state, chieftain of tribe, were called prince; hence the territories or jurisdiction subjected to the prince’s reign are principalities. Christ is “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” (Eph.1:21)

app. So, we Christians are anticipating Christ, “The Prince of Peace” come to reign, & shall have all things under His feet. Now, we shall hallow Him as “The Head of the body, the Church...in all things... have the preeminence.” (Col.1:18)

Prodigal Son

There are three parables told by Jesus, all of them centered on the “Lost”: The lost sheep, The lost coin, The lost son, in responding to the religionists’ murmuring of the Lord receiving sinners. The aim is to show those self-righteous Pharisees & scribes what the right attitude toward the lost should be. The parable starts with “A certain man had two sons.” (Lk.15:11-32) This parable describes one son physically away from the father, then repented & have returned; while the elder son though physically at home, but has never be a part of the father’s heart. Thus formatted the right answer to the elder son & reached the statement of His mission: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk.19:10)

app. Certain church-men like the elder son, keen to maintain the self-righteous attitude of separation, do not understand the father’s love, who rather seek the lost, but do not restrain to criticize others who enjoy the lost son’s return home. What they need is to heed the Father’s entreat & come in.

Profane, Profanity

Do not concern, to debase or defile the holy or consecrated, this constitute the act of profanity. The Law prohibit people from profaning the name of the Lord (Lev.18:21; 19:12). If believers acted improperly, it also caused the Lord’s name to be profaned.

app. As believer of the truth, one should always be careful in words & in deeds of righteousness, never cause any profanity, nor give chance to others to profane the Holy Name.

Profession

In a church or religious community, one openly declaring or publicly claiming, confirming a belief, faith, or opinion is called profession; the one who makes such action is a professor. Henceforth the same has the obligation to act accordingly. Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage him, “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” (I Tim.6:12)

app. It is not uncommon that one made a profession, but failed to act upon it, such a one is a back-slider. One who willfully act on the contrary is a religious hypocrite.

Promises

God is a faithful & truthful God, “the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepeth covenant and mercy” (Neh.9:32). “If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.” (II Tim.2:13)

app. Some nominal Christians fall short of a good record of keeping their promises; they just behave like some politicians who only out of necessity & for benefit then, as an exception, let their promise stand. God never bless one who break promises for one’s own good, because there is no truth in the devil, “for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (Jn.8:44)

Prophet

Sometimes a.k.s. as Seer, is because prophet can see the future. Therefore, there are true prophets lead politicians; false prophet led by politicians, & go after profits. Since they are “blind leading the blind”, result in both falling into the ditch.” (Lk.6:39) Jeremiah spoke the true message which came from the true God, but was not pleasing to the then leaders of Judah; later on, the prophet talked to the last king Zedekiah: “Where are now your prophets... saying: ‘The king of Babylon shall not come against you?’...” (Jer.37:19)

app. All the time in history, there are true & false prophets. True prophets lead the age, lead the politicians; false prophets lead by the politicians, because is led by his appetite & profits. Thus it became “the blind lead the blind...both fall into the ditch” (Lk.6:39) Even today there are people speaking about “seeing vision” in fact they see nothing. We should beware.

Prophecy

Religionists & false prophets for profits, proclaim wrong messages & attribute it to God saying this & that.

“The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD truly sent him.” (Jer.28:9)

App. 1.Ahab’s Ramoth Gilead War (II Kings 22:1-40).

2. On the event of 9/11 of the U.S. e.g. a. The false prophets follow the evil leader, the pulpit became government's stooge; b. "God's Salesman" could not explain why a loving God allow this tragedy to happen; c. Pronounced that that is God's punishment descent on the wicked; d. A proposition nearest to the truth: It is not God's punishment but a warning of God's wrath to come, which followed that His real punishment is raised for an evil leader who is a "corrupted, incompetent, liar" (former House speaker Nancy Pelosi's words), by manufactured accusations started an unrighteous aggressive war, which destroyed over a million souls (both sides), directly & indirectly, & wasted half of the U.S., & alter the culture for generations to come.

Propitiation

Because sin evoke God's wrath, hence humans need to atone, or to regain the favor & goodwill of God. Therefore, it means Christ's office of redemption & reconciliation. The most amazing grace is that "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all (Rom.8:32), that "Herein is love: not that we love God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (Rom.3:25; Heb.2:17; I Jn.2:2; 4:10)

app. The Church constitutes of all the redeemed people, and should not have any form of discrimination, as "he that despiseth his neighbor sinneth, but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he." (Pro.14:21) Since men bear the image of God, & the believers are God's children, we should treat all with honour.

Proselyte

A new convert to the faith is a proselyte. Those need to be looked after & edified. When Paul on his mission trip at Antioch in Pisidia, preached at the synagogue, it resulted in "many of the Jews and religious proselytes following Paul and Barnabas; who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." (Acts 13:43)

app. It is not enough to have zeal for mission, but the right motive & truth is needed. Jesus spoke against such by saying: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matt.23:15)

Prosperity

Economic well-being is not the only measure of prosperity. It can mean also being strong, & flourishing, & vigorous growth. When Joseph was imprisoned wrongfully, "the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper." (Gen.39:23) That was in a situation of no high repute, nor position, even without liberty.

app. The erroneous Gospel of Prosperity is caused by the definition of "prosperity", so it is not gospel. If one hoards wealth for oneself, by any

means it could not be a good thing to any. What the Church needs is to teach the right value to the world.

Proverbs

Proverb is an adage, a brief maxim, by word, or epigram. The Scripture Book of Proverbs is such work of sages collected by King Solomon; the chapters 25-31 is collected & copied out by the men of King Hezekiah.

app. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good work.” (II Tim.3:16,17) The Church should preserve & practice the good work.

Providence

The deliverance of Israel out from Egypt is the manifestation of the wondrous & mighty power of God; yet the multitudes travelled forty years with the providence of God still being the greater work. So, observe such systemic work every day; the psalmist could only say: “O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.” (Psa.36:6) Jesus pointed to His disciples: “Therefore I say unto you: Take no thought for your life... Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are you not much better than they?” (Matt.6:25,26)

app. Providence & preservation is the proof that God cares for His own. Christians should always remember who said: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt.6:33)

Psalm

Psalm is a song or poem usu. sung with harp, or stringed instruments. In primitive church, as Paul wrote, psalm was used not only in worship, but as didactic medium: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Col.3:16) Again, saying to the Church: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” (Eph.5:19) Sometimes, it is an expression of praise: “Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.” (Jam.5:13)

app. In some denominations now only singing psalm is allowed in services; while others use all kinds of melodies improperly for public worship, or text without didactic effect. People who conduct the worship should be acting with prudence & discrimination with music, to make it suit the purpose of worshipping and edifying.

Publican

Publican was a tax collector, who worked at the time the Bible Land was under Roman rule. So, to the Jews, those who collaborated with the foreign power are traitors & corrupted thieves; thus they are despised & hated. The religionists could not comprehend the reputed Rabbi & His disciples: “Why do ye eat and drink with publican and sinners?” And Jesus gave them an astounding answer: “They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Lk.5:31)

app. The Jericho chief publican, or the superintendant of tax-collector, the city’s rich man Zacchaeus, was despised by the citizens; when he repented & received Jesus, by the Church accepted him not because he is rich, but because he is poorer now, he did retribution & restored what he had stolen plus many fold. Blessed be those who turn over a new leaf in their lives.

Publish, Publishers

Publish simply means to make certain information known to the populace, as the word indicates: “The gospel must first be published among all nations.” (Mk. 13:10) The “Preacher” took over the “Publisher” in most cases.

app. Since the printing machines came into the world (ca. 1550), the word “publish” was changed to mean Printed materials, mainly. Thus event followed, under Pope Sixtus IV established the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in 1559. But the Reformation took place in European countries; so this censorship never became as effective as those enforced intended to be, sometimes it even became another form of promoting instead. Now the inter-net publishing, desk top publishing as deluge flooded the world, the Church not only should prohibit, but should do something effectively to reshape the culture.

Punishment

In the ancient culture, the society often gave cruel physical punishment to the offenders for retribution, the most severe is capital, including stoning, burning, etc. The ultimate cruelty is crucifying, which is reserved for the vilest & slaves. Some of the Romans did not want to think of it, much less to look at. Yet Jesus Christ humbled Himself “become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil.2:8) Though He was perfect & sinless, He willingly bore our sins & suffered for us, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.” (Isa.53:5)

app. Christ receiving the unjust punishment, is for believers’ justification. This amazing grace is the theme song of the gospel, which the angels had not the experience, but the redeemed can sing forever till eternity.

Purchase

From bartering system human came to the trading with currencies. The common medium is silver. With silver one purchased slaves (Gen.17:27), land as possession (Gen.23:4), and to purchase properties & food for sustaining life (Gen.47:18-26). And in the commercial culture, almost everything of price could be traded as merchandise or luxurious objects (Rev.18:11-18). But by His grace, the Lamb with His precious blood “purchased men for God...made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God.” (Rev.5:9,10 NIV)

app. “For the fashion of this world passed away” (I Cor.5:31), We have to consider the true value in life, and engage in worthwhile endeavor, only which can endure forever.

Purge, Purity

Our God is a holy God. “But as He which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written: ‘Be ye holy; for I am holy’.” (I Peter 1:15,16) Therefore, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which no man can see the Lord.” (Heb.12:14) So, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (II Cor.7:1)

app. It is without any controversy that one’s belief can be manifested by action more than word. So, those who really believe & hope for the second coming of the Lord, he himself must be prepared: “Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” (I Jn.3:3)

Q

Quails

Israelites were travelling in the wilderness, at Kadesh-barnea, were tired with their diet of manna, & desired to eat meat as they were in Egypt. In His great displeasure, “He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.” (Psa.106:15) So, before they could yet fully digest the quail meat, there was a very great plague resulting in killing many; the name of that place called Kibroth-hattaavah, “because there they buried the people that lusted.” (Num.11:33-35)

app. If one prays with a worldly lust, though sometimes their desire might be fulfilled, that prosperity surely is not a blessing. We should seek nothing outside God’s will, but accept His will be done.

Quarreling

Not to contend for truth, but the parties dispute with a different approach. The Proverbs says: “Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to

do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame.” (Pro.25:8) So, Abraham on the sight of heathens, he endeavors to avoid it, and said to Lot: “Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are brothers.” (Gen.13:8 NIV)

app. For the sake of good witness, between Christians, their contentions should be settled by a “wise man...be able to judge between his brothers”, since we shall judge angels (I Cor.6:1-8 cf. Matt.18:15-19). If the offended party do “rather suffer...to be defrauded”, rather than go to the law, it is even better suit Christian conduct. Except clearly in criminal cases, then any person is obliged to be witness.

Quickening

Quick means come to life, renewal of vitality, mentally, or physically; hence it can be used to describe the rekindling of a fire, or a light to shine more brightly. “All things that are reprov’d are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore He saith: ‘Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.’ See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil...understanding what the will of the Lord is.” (Eph.5:13-17)

app. Some Christians though may have a keen sense in business, but dull in spirit. Thus the Lord says: “I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” (Rev.3:1) These are the people who lack the purpose of life & vigor, hence become “lukewarm” (Rev.3:14-17). So, a spiritual awakening or revival is the cardinal need.

Quietism

Almost paralleled with Pietism is a doctrine of Christian spirituality which holds that in passivity of the soul, in the suppression of carnal effort consists of the way to perfection. In seventeenth century France, an influential figure Janne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guyon, a mystic, gained the support of the Archbishop of Cambrai, Francois de Salignac de la Mothe Fenlon, developed a doctrine of pure love, devoted toward Christ. This doctrine permeated into Catholics & Protestants as well, and was condemned by Pope Innocent XII, both Fenelon & Guyon submitted. In the century, John Wesley of England also opposed it. Wesley admired Pietism but alienated Quietism.

app. Quietism seems to do no harm to any; but by doing nothing to oppose the evil and it can hardly be justified as love to do good.

Quietness

Sensing somehow the end of the world is coming, & not infrequently stricken by panic, human society do not know where we should go. The scripture says: “Study to be quiet” (I Thess. 4:11) or, in other words: “Make

it your ambition to lead a quiet life.” (NIV) “In returning and rest shall ye be saved, and in confidence shall be your strength.” (Isa.30:15) Unlike the unbelievers, though Christians cannot control the situation, but can determine to, not to be influenced by outside, but learn to keep their minds in peace.

app. “Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...And then shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory...then look up, and lift your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Lk.21:25-28) Christians do not look for the things happening on the earth, but look up for their coming Lord.

Quo Vadis? “Where are you going?”

Full title *Quo Vadis Domine*, in L. which means *Where Are You Going, Lord?* Written by Henryk Sienkiewicz, original in Polish, trans into many languages. Pub. In 1895, Nobel Prize for Literature in 1905, was adapted in film for a few versions.

In order to get historical details correct, not merely based on traditions, its author studied Roman history of Nero period extensively. Then he set the scene at ca. AD 64. During a severe persecution, Peter fled Rome. On his way he met with Jesus, and Peter asked Him: “Where are you going, Lord?” The reply is that “I am going back to Rome & be crucified again.” Which made Peter recall how the Master appoints the time & manner of His servant’s death (Jn.21:18,19), then he went back and accepted the martyrdom & glorified God.

app. The Christian literature, with the aim to please & to teach, if for the glory of the Lord, do it correctly, surely will be master piece & win people to Christ; because its theme is always great, & plotted by the Master for great purpose. May God bless the faithful VDMs (*Verbi Dei Minister*).

R

Raca

The Jewish Law sanctions against the specific insult *Raca*, in Aram. Meaning “Empty Head”, or “Good for Nothing”, “shall be in danger of the council” judgment. Jesus shows that any verbal abuse as to say to someone *More*, in Gk. means “You Fool”, or “Apostasy” (JB), “shall be in danger of hell fire.” (Matt.5:22)

app. Verbal abuse is a certain expression caused by anger. As Christians, ought to follow that “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your

mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearer.” (Eph.4:29)

Race

On ancient battlefield, one who could run fast is in definite advantage. For the same reason, running was the main item of athletic competition. Yet it is by no means the sure cause. “The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong... but time and chance happeneth to them all.” (Eccl.9:11)

Paul uses the illustration of a race & its prize to emphasize the need for singlemindedness, determination, & perseverance, which are the basic principle being applied to Olympic Games, Isthmus of Corinth Games, etc. (Phil.3:12-14; II Tim.4:7,8)

App. Modern mind often think of award by cash, or in commercial benefit terms; but to the ancients, for the achiever it was only to obtain a laurel “corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible” (I Cor.9:25). We should bear in mind this different value consideration.

Rahab

A sea monster of the mythology of the Central Asian, standing for forces of evil & chaos (Job 9:13; Psa.89:10; Isa.51:9; Ez 29:3). It also referred to Egypt (Psa.87:4; Isa.30:7).

app We ought to trust God only, and always; We should not pay our homage to other powers, because they are evil & against God.

Rain

The Bible often uses rain as emblematic sign as the gift of God (Lev.26:4); as common grace to all people (Matt.5:45; Acts 14:17). This is obvious, esp. in agricultural society; on the other hand, withholding rain by God is punishment for the evil, rebelliousness (I Kings 17:1; cf. Jam.5:17). The Deluge was the first rain the world had ever seen, which brought destruction to the lives on the face of the earth (Gen.7:12-24)

app In Noah’s time, that Righteous Man preached something called “Rain” the world had not seen; but one day the destruction did come (II Peter 3:5-7). So today Christians are believing things the world never experienced, nor scientifically proved, only those who believe can have salvation.

Rainbow

After the Deluge, God said to Noah: “This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the

cloud, and I will remember my covenant ...and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh ..." (Gen.9:12-15) What the Prophet Ezekiel had seen "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the LORD." (Ez.1:28)

app God made His covenant by rainbow, which means "hang the bow" as a token of peace. So, at the end of the world, in the heaven appeared God's throne, and "a rainbow round about the throne" (Rev.4:3), which shows that perpetual peace & grace reigns forever. May His kingdom come!

Ram

Ram is a male sheep. "God did tempt [test] Abraham, and said unto him... 'take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burn-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.'" (Gen.22:1,2) Abraham obeyed God; at the verge of striking the blade to slay his son, the angel of the Lord called him to stop, and "a ram caught in a thicket by his horns" was prepared in the stead of his son. Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. (vs.10-14).

app. This substitution of typical lessons showed to us that God "spared not His own Son, but delivered up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom.8:32) We in turn, shall love Him & serve Him in the steps of Abraham.

Raven

According to the Leviticus Law, raven is considered to be unclean (Lev.11:15). Yet the LORD not only cares for the lovable, but by His unexpected love, even extended "to the young ravens which cry" (Psa.147:9 cf.Lk.12:24) and gives food to them. And the unclean raven not at all useless, but were the messengers to supply the need of prophet (I Kings 17:4).

app. The believers should not be associated with the unclean of any kind; yet God in His divine providence, can use all kinds of instruments to work together (Rom.8:28) to contribute to the fulfillment of His will.

Reading

Reading can enrich one's soul, just as food can sustain the body.

Apostle Paul is an avid reader. As he wrote that "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." Yet right before his "departure", Paul charged his beloved

Timothy: “When thou comest, bring with thee ...the books, but especially the parchments.” (II Tim.4:6-8,13) We should not overlook the necessary connection of these “books ...especially the parchments”, that which can be almost certain are the scriptures. Faith & confidence comes from good reading, that is the Word of God.

app. Church above all, ought to encourage the members to read. John Wesley once said that if their members do not read, they cannot expect to see another generation of Methodist. Furthermore, if the clerics do not like to read, that profession is not for them.

Reaping

1. God preserves His own: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psa.126:5,6)

2. Love with generosity: “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” (II Cor.9:6)

3. Act with right motive: “Be not deceived. God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he be also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” (Gal.6:6,7)

4. At the end time of judgment: To the angel order will be given: “Trust in thy sickle to reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” (Rev.14:15 cf.Matt.13:38-40)

app. One who serves God must have hope for the future, and purifying one’s motive not for wrongful gain, & to harvesting on what others have sowed. But the Righteous One who is seated on the throne shall judge.

Reconciliation

Humans all are born “the children of wrath” (Eph.2:3), by nature enmity of God. But the righteous God, by His mercy, initiated the act of salvation: “All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” (II Cor.5:18,19) “Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.” (Col.1:20)

app. The ambassadors for Christ are sent by Him (Jn.20:21). Those who are not able to show their credentials most likely is because they themselves have not reconciled with God.

Redeem, Redemption

1.Why: One who needs redemption, because he is in need, being indebted and resulted in his selling himself to someone. “After that he is sold, he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him...” (Lev.25:48,49)

2.Who: Kinsman-redeemer, that one must be the nearest relative & have both the means & will. “None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.” (Psa.49:7) Then came the LORD as the only Redeemer: He would, He could.

3.How: Jesus “gave Himself for us, that He may redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:14)

4.What: After redemption, He made us not into slavery again, nor resale to others, but set us free. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free...we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” (Gal.5:1,5)

App. “Ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” (Gal.5:13) Liberated, but serve out of love.

Red Dragon

“There appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.” (Rev.12:3) “The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (Rev.12:9 cf.20:2).

Dragon is a mythical animal usu. represented as a monstrous winged & scaly serpent or saurian with a crested head & enormous claws (WD); even spew fire. The Chinese uses “Long” as their emblem, in a royal tradition, but far nobler than serpent. Someone erroneously translated & mixed with “dragon”. So the Sino-phobia people conveniently made the “great red dragon” to symbolize China, to suit their purpose of abuse.

app. Hermeneutics by no ways could have been biased & should always be so in context. In this case, one should consider that “his tail drew third part of the stars of heaven...” (Rev.12:4) Most amusing is that some man-haters even assign the “number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand” (Rev. 9:16) to Chinese & without considering how to mobilize & sustain such a huge army & whether to find room to contain them. The right interpretation is that they are spiritual entity, that do not apply to earthly nations.

Red Sea

God set the Red Sea, which lay between Egypt & Arabia, “even unto the Sea of the Philistines” (Ex. 23:31), as the bounds of the Promised Land. The Bible mentioned repeatedly about the Red Sea, for reminding the people that

“the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.” (Ex.14:13) “The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone.” (15:5) The division by the Red Sea, shall make the people forget the misery & shame of slavish life in Egypt.

app. Christian ought to set their value system right, as Moses, by faith, forsook “the pleasure of sin...” (Heb.11:25). Yet, on the other hand, many of the Israelites do think of the life in Egypt, “whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.” (Phil.3:19)

Reed

The Bible uses reed to symbolize human fragility & weakness.

1.Do not trust man’s power. Egypt was compared to only “a staff of broken reed” (Isa.36:6), one could not lean on it. All human resources are the same.

2.The Lord is merciful to those humble who repent & trust Him: “A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench.” (Matt.12:20)

3.Trust the Lord, and be steadfast & hold the principle of truth without compromise. Jesus commended John the Baptist, that John was not a weakling as “reed shaken with the wind”, but “among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist” (Matt.7,11), who was the mighty prophet Elias.

app. The Lord wants people to trust Him, & by His power & might, stand up for Him against the wind but hold to the principle, & to prepare the way of salvation.

Refiner

The LORD is a holy God. He will not allow His people to remain in sinful condition, which not only be polluting the culture, but will pollute His Holy name also, so He let them go through captivity in order to be purified & be fit to inherit a new land: “Behold, I have refined thee but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for my own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another.” (Isa.18:10,11)

app. One of the reasons God’s people is destined to go through suffering, is because He has a good purpose on them: “For I know the thought that I thought toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” (Jer.29:11) So “we glory in tribulations also” (Rom.5:3), have hope & patience, & trust in God.

Reform, Reformation

Due to a long trend of events of corruption that happened in the Catholic Church, including the sales of Indulgence, a German monk of Augustine Order, Professor of University of Wittenberg, Martin Luther (c.1483-1546)

on Oct. 31, 1517, the Eve of All Saints' Day, posted his Ninety-five Theses on the University chapel's door, inviting people to debate on theological & ethic issues. Thus marked the beginning of the sixteenth century religious Reformation; then joined by Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) in Switzerland, & later, John Calvin (1509-1564), then extended to Holland, England & Scotland, in European continent, & changed the political milieu. As the Protestantism developed, there are some minor tenets differences existing, yet the basic principles: *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Christo*, *Sola Fide* remains.

app. Form is a shape, formula, of material or idea of what it should be. But due to some wrong concept, method came in, henceforth misshape or deform happened; that is to say, things did not happen as the pattern should be. Thus reform is needed. Reformation must follow by action or performance, without performance it would have no way to result in transform.

Refuge, Refugee

One who being uprooted, and homeless, is a refugee, often an alien, or stranger. Jesus was only an infant, taken with Joseph & Mary, & to seek refuge in Egypt. (Matt.2:13-15 cf. Hos.11:1)

God is divine refuge to His people. Unlike humans who often made lies their refuge to hide themselves (Isa.28:15), which never work out well; we can trust that "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say: Destroy them." (Deut.33:27) And God is trust-worthy: "It was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb.6:18)

app. Although we are refugees in an always unsettled world, we have "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb.6:19)

Rejoice

The conviction & confidence which manifested in Christians is joy. For Israelites as slaves in Egypt there was no joy; they rejoice only after they crossed the Red Sea. The Apostle Paul encouraged the believers: "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice." (Phil.4:4; cf.3:1) It is God's will that His children have joy: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess.5:16-18)

app. Christian community should share their joy together: "Rejoicing in hope...Rejoice with them that do rejoice." (Rom.12,15) So, believers should not only rejoice with their own family, but with the spiritual family also.

Rekindle

Sometimes Christians' fire of love seems quenched, the sign shows that they are no longer "fervent in spirit" (Rom.12:11). If that is so, to rekindle it is necessary. That is called revival, or spiritual awakening.

app. The Lord warned the church of Ephesus, because they "hast left thy first love". If they do not repent quickly, the Lord "will remove thy candlestick [lampstand] out of his place, except thou repent." (Rev.2:4,5) One lost love is as if an oil lamp lost its light, which only could cause others to stumble. This implied that the church should not forget to pray for the pure olive oil, to trim the lamp & rekindle the lamp with light to shine forth.

Release

In O.T., if a Hebrew brother becomes poor, & is sold to someone as a servant & is serving his master for six years, "in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing." (Ex.21:2-4 cf. Jre.34:8-22)

app. The Lord had liberated His people out from Egypt, so, they should not be slaves again. Christian brothers should treat each other with love, & not hold others as debtors: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt.6:15)

Relief

When Christian brothers are in need, & it comes to the notice of other brothers: "Then the disciples, everyman to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea." (Acts 11:29) The church of Macedonia, "in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much intreaty that we should receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." (II Cor.8:2-5)

app The emblem of a living church is love: "to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." (II Peter 1:7) This is a positive sign of one who is not in spiritual blindness.

Religion

"Religion" is root from ligament, ligation, which means anything ties one part to another, or, to bind together, physically, mentally, or materially; hence liganee, & have certain adherences to that doctrine, then constitutes religion. Because of this re-bound, binds stronger.

Jesus talked about His contemporaries: "Ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not...How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:38,44)

app In the not so old days, the Western world, referred to Christianity as “the religion”, or, “the true religion”. Now it seems quite in fashion that some Christians claimed that they do not believe in a “religion”, but Christ’s believers! That is not only illogical, and on the other hand, they advocate religious freedom, or, claimed that they are religious organizations; is there anything short of hypocrites?

Remission

Fallen man has the problem of sin & guilt, which becomes a heavy burden to his conscience. “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of remission of sins.” (Mk.1:4) Apostle Peter’s opening message after Pentecost, in response to this pressing question of the Jews: “What shall we do?” he said that “Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:18) Again, Peter preached to the Gentiles: “Through His name shall receive remission of sins.” (Acts 10:43)

app Do not go for mission work without first having the remission of sins for oneself. Those who work as missionaries, should preach the remission of sins, thus the cross becomes necessary.

Repentance

Changing one’s mind, so that one’s views, values, judgment, goals, will & ways are changed also, & one is living a different new life. Faith & repentance are fruit of regeneration. It follows the feeling of remorse, & sorrow of sin & fear of punishment, & living a righteous life (Acts 26:20).

app. *Sola Gratia* does not mean grace without repentance. Jesus pronouncing “This day is salvation come to this house” is before all Zacchaeus’s restoration had been done (Lk.19:1-10 cf. Ex.22:1). Yet his repentance & conversion is generating his confession & the action of recompense.

Reproof

“He that saith unto the wicked: ‘Thou art righteous’; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him. But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon him.” (Pro.24:24,25)

“As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear.” (Pro.25:12)

app In the course of history, an eunuch which usu. does not require high ability, but to please & flatter is all they needed to survive. As minister & Christian, “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim.3:16), based on scripture, is a profitable ministry, in order to equip believers for good works.

Resolve, Resolution

A double-minded person can achieve nothing. So, the art of being able to distinguish & to determine, forming a single resolution is important. Paul wrote to the church of Corinth saying that “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ...was not Yea and Nay, but in Him was Yea. For all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen.” (II Cor.1:19,20)

app. One who has no determination is determined to fail.

Rescue

Salvation is to rescue one’s soul “from destruction” (Psa.35:17), just as “a brand plucked out from fire” (Zech.3:2). As Christians “of some have compassion, making a difference. [Be merciful to those who doubt. NIV] And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” (Jude:22,23)

app. The gospel of Christ is the only way which leads to salvation. Paul considered to be his duty: “that I by all means save some.” (I Cor.9:22) So, we should not “forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death and those that are ready to be slain” (Pro.24:11).

Rest

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt.11:28-30)

app. Unlike people’s common terms that rest means no work, or stop work, what Jesus means is rest and work (take yoke) at the sametime. Yoke means authority. Take Jesus’ yoke means be under His authority willingly.

Restitution

Zacchaeus at his conversion, said to Jesus: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.” (Lk.19:8) That was he willingly obey the Law: “If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.” (Ex.22:1) “Because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found...” (Lev.6:4)

app. Restore what one took ill-gotten, is not required for salvation, but from one’s conscience it is required to do the just compensation. As for today, some evangelicals are keen for easy conversion of grace, but neglects to restore the ill-gotten, surely that is not the right way to bear witness for Christ.

Resurrection

Jesus commanded the disciples: “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me...” (Acts 1:8), that is to be witness of His resurrection (1:22).

Apostle Paul asserted that “There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” (Acts 24:15) that is what Christ declared that “They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (Jn.5:29) He also considered that Christ’s resurrection is the hope of human race: “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.” (I Cor.15:20,21)

app Jesus our Lord “who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” (Rom.4:25) That is to make us to be the members of the heavenly family, and to be with the Lord in eternal glory. So our destination is not for this world. “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (I Cor.15:19)

Revelation

1. The book of Apocalypse, last book of the Bible is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It revealed to Apostle John, and commanded him, “write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter” (Rev.1:19), to the seven churches in Asia. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep these things which are written therein, for the time is at hand.” (Rev.1:3)

2. Revelations which can be divided into two categories: a. God’s works as are manifested in nature, which is called General Revelation; humans can observe & understand, thus formed the descriptive law; b. God’s words as told by His Holy Spirit through prophets, which is called Special Revelation.

app Revelation is not come from human wisdom, and should not be understood by such. Jesus said to the Father: “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.” (Matt.11:25)

Revenge

By nature, humans like to “get even”, hence want to take law into their own hands. The Bible says one should not take God’s place, even He forebears the judgment till the right time: “Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written: ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay.’ Saith the Lord.” (Rom.12:19)

app It is not easy to keep peace when one is offended. “See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both

among yourselves and to all men.” (I Thess.5:15) Again, “Not rendering evil for evil, railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing” (I Peter 3:9), which is referred to Jesus’ words of The Beatitudes (Matt.5:11,12)

Reverend

The Church has its tradition by showing “double honour” (I Tim.5:17) to the clergy, addressing them as “The Reverend Doctor”, or as “The Reverend Mister” so & so. Objection: Reverence only attribute to God. “Holy and reverend is His name.” (Psa.111:9) So, no human should have the same name. But “the wife see that she reverence her husband” (Eph.5:33) is what the Scripture said.

app Actually everyone can be addressed in such manner, e.g. “Reverend Sir”, or “Reverend Lady”, esp. to older persons. Since every calling is equally honorable, so we use “Your Honour”, “The Honourable” etc. can apply to civil servants, so let such should be.

Revolt

The society is benefitted by keeping the order; on the other hand, peaceful reform is needed at times. But the ones in power often resist any change because they hold certain benefit, thus revolt came into being. Revolt may have its cause, even have just cause, and many people easily agree that they were wronged; but it is hard for them to agree how to right the affairs. “For the transgression of a land are the princes thereof; but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.” (Pro.28:2) In the history of the Northern state of Israel, revolt came often, but there had no real improvement of the state of the affairs; comparatively, the Southern Judah was more stable, they had peace, spiritual revival & reform.

app Christians are always in the course of reform, by promoting spiritual renewal, thus spontaneously renovating.

Reward

The coming resurrected Lord says: “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” (Rev.22:12) A Reward is given in return for good or evil done: “They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (Jn.5:29) “For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Thus Moses “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches

than the treasure in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.” (Heb.11:6,23-26)

app One who renounce some benefit, may have the hope to have the greater reward either material or non-material. To this cause, Jesus said to His disciples: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me...For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matt.16:24-27)

Rich

Rich is a word akin to Rex, hence powerful, magnificent. Rich means one having abundant possessions and esp. material wealth. But Jesus assesses it differently, in the parable of the rich fool, He concluded surprisingly: “So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” (Lk.12:21)

He announced the law of kingdom regarding riches: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt.6:19-23)

app The most serious mistake in one’s life, is doing a thing which surely has no chance to be succeed. Jesus said that: “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matt.6:24) As to those who serve many Lords in the church will have very slight possibility to achieve either.

Righteous, Righteousness

In archery, Gk. *Hamartia*, which is the main word trans. as “sin”, means “to miss the mark”. So, sin comes short to God’s standard. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” (Rom.23-25)

The O.T. saint Job says: “My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.” (Job 27:6) Same as Paul’s stance before his conversion: “righteousness which is in the law” (Phil.3:6), which could not be the righteousness of God. Only “through the faith in Christ, that the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil.3:9), that is only by believing in His propitiation, one can be justified.

app Self-righteousness is the one who denies God’s standard, but set up his own “balance” which is invalid scale all together. Christians need to confess our “short of God’s glory”, & by faith accept in Christ’s righteousness.

Ring

A signet ring in ancient time, was used for one's identify & authority, even in certain parts of today's world, such tradition remains.

1.The ring means authority: "Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand" (Gen.41:42).

2.The ring means survive & heritance: "The king [Ahasuerus] took his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai"(Est.8:2).

3.The ring means forgiveness & restoration: The father said to his servants: "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." (Lk.15:22)

app In the instances above, the ring signifies authority comes with responsibility. As released prisoner & exalted Joseph; survived & promoted Mordecai; or, the once lost & found son, Christians should always remember others.

Rioting

In the society, one is expected to exercise with good manner & self-control. Riot is to indulge in revelry or violence to alter public disorder. The fashion of the world is "excess of riot" (I Peter 4:4), "Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting & drunkenness." (Rom.13:13)

app To a world flooded in strange behaviors, Christians should act in good morals & manners, to witness the life of a son of light (Eph.5:8).

River of Life

Except for the River Jordan, what the Bible Land has but a few streams & brooks. In places like Negev, water is constantly in short coming.

At the last day of the Feast of Tabernacle, Jesus stood and cried out, saying: "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly flow rivers of living water." (Jn.7:37) By so saying, Jesus referred to the wilderness experience Israel had, & Moses hit the rock resulted in water gushed out, which is the type of Holy Spirit.

app The psalm says: "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure." (Psa.36:8) Those who are fill with the Holy Spirit, shall have the joy in God, and thus need not to seek "the pleasure of sin" (Heb.11:25), but "joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom.14:17).

Robbery

Any illegal gain which is unlawful for one to get hold of it, in the law, can be defined as robbery; and is not limited to one uses force or amour, to be act as highway-man. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the

morning.” (Lev.19:13) Thus underpaid or un-paid wages is robbing the poor. In the O.T. time, though there was no one who withheld tithes unpaid having gone into prison, yet it is an in-act which God called “robbed me” (Mal.3:8,12). Yet the most serious sin is robbing God’s glory, which is equal to usurping the throne. By His grace, may we all know ourselves.

app Robbery is too gross a crime to be mentioned on the pulpit. But as tithes is a kind of religious income tax, today it is not unusual to find those set in the pew who evaded income tax; which not only is dishonest but by so doing, it added burden on others; thus it is not only an act robbing the nation, but it is a sin against God.

Robe

There was in the days of old, when wear a robe it shows wealth & prestige. Jesus talked about His contemporary religionists who were much in the fashion, by saying that: “Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets...” (Lk.20:46)

Jesus spoke of the parable of the lost son, who repented & returned home, and his father ordered the servants to “bring forth the best robe and put it on him” (Lk.15:22). Isaiah had seen with joy & prophesied the coming day of the restoration of Israel: “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garment of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” (Isa.61:10)

app A poor man may appear in the assembly with “vile raiment” (Jam.2:2), yet he may put on the Lord Jesus Christ’s righteous image, & be a good witness for Him.

As for the robe worn on the pulpit, a plain “Geneva robe” used would be more appropriate than other fancy or overly casual ones.

Rock

A large mass of solid mineral or stone is rock. Rock formed cliff in desert areas, can be used for shelter to shade sun or rain; one standing on the rock will not fear the flood; at battle time, the rock gives the defender an advantageous high controlling position. Figuratively speaking, describes “God is our Rock” (Deut.32:4), which means He is our salvation, and firm enough for one lien on. So, David reckons: “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust.” (Psa.18:2)

When Israel in their wilderness journey, “all drink the spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.” (I Cor.10:4)

app In contrast, humans & their words cannot be relied on. So, Christians should build their faith on Christ & His teachings (Matt.7:24-27)

Rod

Moses' rod represents power & authority, which came from God. The rod is an ordinary dry wood; with God's ordaining on that person, it could manifest the power of the Almighty. With it, Moses performed the miracles before Pharaoh (Ex.7:8-10:28); with it, Moses divided the Red Sea, and Israel walked over by the dry land (Ex.14:16-18); Moses hit the rock with his rod, and water springs out & quenched the thirst of the people who journeyed in the wildness (Ex.17:5,6). By God's command, Aaron with his rod grew sprout & bore fruit overnight, which manifested that his office is not taking the glory by himself but is from God. So, by the order of God, it was placed in the ark of testimony in the Most Holy (Num.17:1-10).

app Apostle Paul wrote to the Church of Corinth: "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" (I Cor.4:20,21) It does not mean that Paul would or could use corporal punishment, but that he asserted his spiritual authority in the Church. Pastors, do not spare your rod all the time.

Roll

In ancient time, documents & books are written on papyrus, leather or parchment, rolled up for easy keeping; hence volume means "to volve".

The LORD commanded the prophet Isaiah: "Take thee a great roll and write in it with a men's pen..." (Isa.8:1) And to Jeremiah: "Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day." (Jer.36:2; Ez.2:9-3:1; Zech.5:1) These manifest how God uses & preserves His oracles in written words.

app The Church's role is to emphasize on literary work, as the main effort on mission, esp. to pay great attention to the Scriptures.

Ruler

Ruler is a general term for a person who has authority or being in charge of certain institution or organization as leaders, e.g. Nicodemus (Jn.3:1) in the Sanhedrin; Jairus of the Synagogue (Lk.8:41). Some thought that none of the leaders believed Jesus (Jn.7:48); in fact, "among the chief rulers are many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." (Jn.12:42) During Paul's journey in Corinth, chief rulers of the synagogue, Crispus & Sosthenes (Acts 18:8,17) believed & suffered persecution with Paul for Christ

app Leaders of the communities are also individuals who otherwise could accept Christ, but because of their position, provision, or other consideration, which made it harder for them to make the confession. Yet, if churches could make an effort to contact & convert the leading citizens, it may be an effective strategy for evangelization (Matt.10:11).

S

Sabbath

In Hb. *Shabath*, meant “To rest”. Jewish seventh day of the week is the day of rest. “On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.” (Gen.2:2)

app Since the primitive church, in general, Christians kept the first day of the week, of the day of the Lord’s resurrection, separated from other work. Yet when Paul on his missionary journey at Troas, “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...” (Acts 20:7) The “day” was reckoned in the Jewish fashion, “and there was evening, there was morning” (Gen.1:5) The Lord’s day begins on the evening of Saturday, and it was then that meeting was held. (NEB) This means on Saturday after sunset they had communion, the next day they set out to work. Yet, “one man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike” (Rom.14:5), implying there were some room for an alterative.

Sacred

Sacred is dedicated or set apart, devoted exclusively to God. This concept of consecration, include material subjects & non-material, is the basic attitude of worship. It is holy, non-secular or profane, worthy of religious veneration. The LORD says: “I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.” (Isa.1:13) As to the relation of a person & his performance: “If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt to touch bread...shall it be holy?” The priest answered and said: “No.” “If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean?” And the priest answered and said: “It shall be unclean.” Then answered Haggai, and said: “So is this people, and so is this nation before Me. Saith the LORD; so is every work of their hands, and that which they offer there is unclean.” (Hag.2:11-14)

app The performance is sprung from the person, as the fountain determining the flow. As Paul said about the example of Macedonia: they “first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” (II Cor.8:5) So as “the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering” (Geb.4:4).

Sacrifice

Sacrifice is an act of offering. It must be “without blemish” (Lev.22:19); for “Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God any...wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness, for it is an abomination unto the LORD thy God.” (Deut.17:1)

app One should not “place defiled” on the altar, because it is a contempt to God. If anyone do it, that is “profaned” the offering. “Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering. Should I accept this of your hand?” Saith the LORD. (Mal.1:12,13) The “which was torn” also trans. as “taken by robbery” (NASB), or “stolen” (JB). That is to say, ill-gotten, or gotten ill, either one of such less than perfect conditions is unworthy to be used for offering to God.

Sacrilege

A gross disregard toward a hallowed thing to God, or a place, person of God, is sacrilege, ori. meant a stealer of sacred things. Paul was falsely accused of doing such acts (Acts 21:27-29). In Roman time, there were inscribed stone markers explicitly forbid any Gentiles, include Roman, if found within the including bounds of the inner court of Israel would be killed.

app Even if the unbeliever got away the sacred thing from God, or the thing came from unbeliever, either of that causes sacrilege, Christians should be on guard, this is why the gatekeepers are consider to be as important, and need to be able men of strength for the duty (I Chr.26:1-19).

Saint

The believers are chosen by God, and separated from the world, so can be called saints (Psa.145:10). So, the Spirit “maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom.8:27). Paul referred to believers as “all saints” (Rom.16:2,15), who “shall judge the world” (I Cor.6:2).

app The Bible did make distinction of certain persons to be venerated as “saints”, or those must be dead before can be called as such (Rom.16:24). The saints simply are redeemed & separated from the world, for God, and obliged to lead a saintly life (Heb.6:10; II Chr.6:41).

Salt

Salt is an ingredient that gives savor, piquancy, or zest, used esp. to season or preserve food. Figuratively, a person, or a group of people are consistent, stable, and respected in a society. Jesus expected and charged His disciples: “Ye are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. ” (Matt.5:13)

app Christians should not seek popularity or glory for themselves, but duly gaining “the people magnified them” (Acts 5:13), rather than be trodden is much preferred which resulted in bringing glory to the Lord’s name.

Salvation

Salve is an anointment used for healing. Hence salvation means deliverance from danger or difficulties, preservation from destruction or failure.

1.Safe from destruction: At the shore of the Red Sea, Moses said to the people: “Fear not, standstill, and see the salvation of the LORD which He will shew to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.” (Ex.14:13) “He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David.” (Lk.1:69)

2.Deliverance from difficulties. “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” (Phil.1:19)

3.Work to manifestation. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (Phil.12,13)

app Conversion is never a subjective matter; It must be shown that “His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works”; more than witness by talking about it, but one must “walk in them” (Eph.2:10), then can “shine as lights in the world.” (Phil.2:)

Sanctification

1.By the will of God. “hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” (II Thess.2:13)

2.By Christ. “That are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints”, that “in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” (I Cor.1:2,30) As the High Priest “that sanctifieth”, and prayed for the sanctified: “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” (Jn.17:19)

3.By Holy Spirit. Christians through the work of the Holy Spirit, “be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom.15:16)

4.By the word. As Jesus have prayed: “Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth.” (Jn.17:17) So, the Apostle said “have purified your souls in obeying the truth...by the word of God” (I Peter 22,23)

app Christ prayed to His Father saying about His disciples “are not of the world...as Thou hast sent me into the world, even so I also sent them into the world.” (Jn.17:16,18) As the Corinthian Christians “that are sanctified in Christ Jesus called to be saints” (I Cor.1:2), one has to attain sainthood before being sent to do mission work.

Sanctuary

1.The worldly sanctuary was built by Moses “after their pattern which was shewed him in the mount” (Ex.25:40); and the temple by Solomon, followed David said: “All this , the LORD made me understand in written by His hand upon me, even all the works of His pattern.” (I Chr. 28:19)

2.The heavenly sanctuary is “a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building”, it is real Form, “the pattern of things” (Heb.9:11,23).

3.“Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread, and He shall be for a sanctuary.” (Isa.8:13,14)

4.“When Israel out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language: Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion.” (Psa.114:1,2)

So it is in the N.T. that Jesus’ precious blood, sanctified His people to be His dwelling place, which is His sanctuary.

app God hears prayers, “Send thee help from the sanctuary” (Psa.20:2), are the same. In N.T. time, God dwell in His separated people, not in any building; so the Bible has never mention that had any material building which was made by human-hand on earth, as His sanctuary.

Saviour

The angel of the Lord appeared and announced that: “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.” (Lk.2:10,11) As the angel told Joseph: “She [Mary] shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.” (Matt.1:21)

app The Apostle Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, & said: “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Act.4:12) So, we must hold the motto of Reformation: Sola Christ!

Scapegoat

A goat bringing the sins of the people and allowed to escape into the wilderness. “He shall bring the live goat, and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them on the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.” (Lev.16:20,21) When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him, he said: “Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”(Jn.1:29)

app Paul proclaimed that, God “hath made Him [Jesus Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor.5:21).

Sceptre

The scepter signifies the authority of the monarch. When Jacob was an alien in Egypt, & even had not a square-inch of land that could be called his own, he made that prophetic blessing: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.” (Gen.49:10)

God made this prophecy about Jesus & His kingdom: “But unto the Son He says: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.” (Heb.1:8)

app When we say the prayer “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”, we have to make sure that we really wish Christ be the head in our lives as well as in the Church.

Schism

Heresies & Schism are problems of the Church from within. Schism means division, or separation, usually is not caused by heresy. Schism makes a breach of unity, & resulted in discord. Dis harmony.

Our High Priest Jesus Christ, before He went to be crucified, prayed thus: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” (Jn.17:20,21) So, the Apostle urged the Church to have unity, “Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” (II Cor.13:11) And schism is making disunity, therefore it should be condemned (I Cor.1:11-17).

app Unity is not uniformity. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity!” (Psa.133:1) One says that “If you cannot love your brother in Christ, you should love the Christ in your brother.”

Scoffers

The Bible uses “scorner” or “scoffer” almost same as to do wicked deeds. “Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.” (Pro.21:24) This kind of people abound: “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying: Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” (II Peter 3:3)

app As the Christians are other-worldly-wise, but “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...as strangers and pilgrims” (I Peter 2:9-11), the unfriendly treatment is expected. Thus “Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud” (Psa.123:4), and is nothing uncommon. But hold fast to our blessed hope, which is the coming of Christ.

Scourging

For the old legal system, physical punishment was allowed, universally. According to the Jewish law, those who were at fault, stripes could be given but by only a certain number: “Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed; lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.” (Deut.25:3) That is to say, stripes is for correction, rather than retribution. So, Paul received thirty-nine stripes accordingly: “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.” (II Cor.11:24) But Christ was handed over by the Jews to the Romans. Thus they treated Jesus with contempt; they did not observe the Jewish law of mercy, because Jesus was not a Roman citizen, could not have the privilege of humane treatment, but receive the cruel scourging & died on the cross for our atonement of sin.

app Christian community should always treat each other in a manner of amenity. Even occasioned chastisement of discipline, that that have to administer with consideration, for the purpose of correction.

Scribe

In ancient Israel, scribe is one in a learnt class who were studying the scriptures, & serving as copyist, teacher & jurist. Among whom Ezra was most venerated. The Persian great king Artaxerxes decreed Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, & allotted him the supplies; to him was given the administrative & judicial authority to rule according to the Law of God (Ez.7:11-26). At Jesus’ time, certain of the Pharisees & scribes become Herodians’ allies (Matt.22:16), and plotted their evil deeds together against Jesus, this was quite another matter.

app A religion must have adherence, thus for individuals having certain relationship with politics are unavoidable. But what is needed is that religious institution should not be under political control.

Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures is the word of God, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit through human agents (Acts 1:16; cf.Heb.3:7), regarding Christ Jesus; “in the volume of the book it is written” of Him (Heb.10:7). As to Christians,

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful...” (II Tim.3:16 NIV)

app Bible-believing is not only to make the Bible one’s belief. As Jesus said: “Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” (Jn.5:39,40) Do not believe wrongly; the Bible itself does not give life to anyone, but “testify”, that is pointing to God’s Son Jesus Christ, for in Him there is everlasting life.

Scroll

In ancient times, a written document in rolled up shape for easy storing, is called scroll, which is a form of book.

1. When the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, “The heaven departed as a scroll when it rolled together.” (Rev.6:14 cf. Isa.34:4)

2. Apostle John wrote “And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side.” (Rev.5:1) The “book” so called, was in the form of a scroll (NEB, JB), both in & out could be seen; and only the Lamb that be praised in “a new song, saying: Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.” (Rev.5:9,10)

3. The messenger of the Lord, must eat the prophetic “little scroll” from Him, then be enabled to prophesy (Rev.10:1-11 cf. Ez.2:9-3:11).

app The pre-request of a preacher is still to have the same example & pattern after John & Ezekiel: must first take into heart the message of the book, then be witness & talk to people.

Self-denial

After the excellent confession of Christ, Peter made the most foolish advice to his Master, by asking Jesus to preserve His own self. But He turned & rebuked Peter; then said Jesus to His disciples: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matt.16:24)

Hedonist never deny any pleasure to self; Ascetics deny something to self; Self-denial is denying self of everything, but to do God’s will. So, selflessness is the first step to be like Jesus.

St. Paul charged his young disciple Timothy, to beware of the perils of the last days: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves ...” (II Tim.3:1,2)

app. Modern psychologists ask people to expand their ego, exalt their self-esteem, to love oneself. We have no difficulty to see this is in direct contrast to Christ’s teaching. If one cares enough to be Christ’s disciple, one should know how to avoid these perils.

Self-Examination

As we traverse the world on our pilgrimage way, it is easy for one to go astray. “Who can understand his errors?” (Psa.19:13) “Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.” (Lam.3:40) So, at the Lord’s Supper table, “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and

drink of that cup...If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged.” (I Cor.11:28,30)

app One should avoid over-confidence. “Examine yourselves: whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (II Cor.13:5)

Separation

Christians are commanded to separate: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things, and I will receive you. And be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (II Cor.6:18)

app Separation in Scripture is away from whatever is contrary to the will of God, and unto God Himself; and separate with evil. But it does not apply to a Christian community, somebody view that anybody who has different opinion with me is wrong. Obviously, that is not biblical. Corinthian Church already has enough divisions so the Apostle could not see that they need more of it, thus he encouraged togetherness (I Cor.1:11-17).

Separation of Politics & Religion

There is a misconception about so called “Wall of Separation”. The Amendments of the Constitution of the United States Article I, reads:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

It maybe fitly called The Wall to protect the freedom of belief from political intervention.

app Christians should understand their legal right & the semantic hermeneutics, in order to have their freedom not easily infringed or disenfranchised.

Sermon

Sermon is fr. *serere*, to link together, hence a series of words, which is meant as a religious discourse delivered in public, as part of a worship service, usu. spoken didactically or dogmatically. An example is Sermon on the Mount delivered by Jesus (Matt.5:-7:).

app Sermon is not song, which is only aimed to please the audience. The hearers treated prophet Ezekiel “unto them as a very lovely voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear the words, but they do them not.” (Ez.33:32) The problem was that “for their mouth shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” (v.31) With such attitude, it shows

they never prepare to accept the prophet's reproach & correction; then there is no hope.

Serpent

The ancient foe of humans is called "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan" (Rev.20:2). It goes against God's will, and worked woe to mankind. "The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (II Cor.11:3)

app The Deceiver, who "adode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." (Jn.8:44) Christians should keep the "simplicity" in Christ, that is that single-minded trust & love.

Servant

Servant, Gk. *doulos*. In Biblical term, is not an hireling, but means bondservant. As Christians freed from sin, we should not desired to be served, but have freedom for obedience & service to his Lord & Redeemer, & serve those in the grace (Rom. 6:15-18).

app As servant of Christ one ought to have:

Scriptures: Servants must know the Master's will, & single-mindedly trust Him, which is from the scripture (Heb.10:7).

Share: Servant-leaders ought not to "lords over God's heritage" (I Peter 5:4), but share with others, both of duty & of blessings, whatever the Lord has entrusted (I Peter 5:1, cf. Matt. 24:45).

Sincere: Honesty is the attitude servant ought to have toward the Master.

Sight: One has sight first then can have vision & mission.

Sober: Which means not only abstaining from intoxicated drink (Matt.24:49), but more importantly avoid the Babylonian whore's charm (Rev. 17:4), i.e. the corrupted mind.

Spirit empowered: Not by carnal might, but by the Spirit (Zech.4:6).

Strong: Either physically weak or feeble-minded is not the quality of a good servant. Be strong.

Suffer: As servant, one must be "partaker of Christ's sufferings" (I Peter 4:1,13).

Shadow

1.In David's words said before God: "For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." (I Chr.29:15) Christians should "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world (I Jn.2:15).

2.The O.T. ceremony Law & the priest "who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." (Heb.8:5)

app The real substance is the spiritual.” While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (II Cor.4:18)

Shalom

Shalom is a Jewish greeting & farewell. Which means peace, harmony & be prosperous.

“Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah-shalom.” Which means “The LORD our peace” (Judg.6:24 cf.Psa.85:8; Pro.3:2; 12:20).

The believers are the ones who “having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.” (Col.1:20)

app Jesus sent His disciples to preach & charged them thus: “when ye come into an house, salute it; if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.” (Matt.10:12,13)

Sheep

Among the animals ceremoniously considered to be clean is sheep (Lev.1:10) In the Bible, people spoken of as sheep (II Sam.24:17; Psa.100:3; Isa.53:6; Jn.10:2,10). Sheep is also emblem of Christ (Isa.53:7). Sheep as His redeemed people: “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” (Jn.10:11; 21:15-17).

app To the shepherds, should “Feed the flock of God” with tender loving care is to show the love of the Chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:1-4).

Shekinah

The glory of God’s presence is called the “*Shekinah*”. It never appear in O.T., but not infrequently in Jewish literatures due to the writers avoiding to mention the Holy Name, and using *Shekinah* instead.

app. The Christian community though not under the yoke of law, seems to use God’s name so freely & carelessly, in doing which it is close to taking His name in vain. Therefore, we should consider, if possible, use the substitute words in following the Biblical tradition; for instance: The Creator, the Providence, the Holy One, the Righteous One, the Redeemer, the Shepherd, the Spirit, etc.

Shepherd

In the Bible region, shepherds & their flocks are always a beautiful sight. Jesus used the same analogue to describe His relation with believers: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”

(Jn.10:10,11) Apostle Peter remembered Jesus as the Chief Shepherd, so, himself & the fellow elders as sub-shepherds (I Peter 5:1-4 cf. Jn.21:15-19).

app. Today's church leaders should be reminded of the Lord's example & that He expected the servants to behave: motivated by sacrificial love.

Shield

In ancient cold weapon age, shield is the important equipment in war for defense & safety. We should trust the LORD, God Almighty: "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Psa.91:4). Shield is a broad large protective gear of the warrior, at times someone carries it walking in front, at times, the warrior can lean or lie on it for rest; if one is wounded or die, can lie on & be carried with it. Buckler is a small round shape shield one usually hold it with the left arm for protection during battle. But in general terms, both of the shield & buckler often were called shield (Eph.6:16).

app However effective defense weapon would be, one must be willing to face the foe, with faith, courage & watchfulness. Again, the shield is not used for fighting.

Shoes

1.Moses was ordered: "Draw not nigh hither; put off shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (Ex.3:5) The captain of LORD's Host also said to Joshua the same (Josh.5:15).

2.The manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor, and this was a testimony in Israel." (Ruth 4:7)

3."Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." (Eph.6:15)

app As the legend goes: an ancient king of the East, who found that the rough surface of the road was hurting his royal feet, so he decreed that it be covered with carpet. One of the Wise Men told the king that it is far easier to wrap his feet with leather. Thus came the shoes. So, one must not use one's profaned value to stand or walk, as touching on things holy. On the other hand, one ought to be prepared to walk for God's tasks.

Shoulder

The shoulder is for bearing the burden, hence symbolizing strength.

The high priest Aaron "shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial." (Ex.28:12)

Moses the man of God blessed Israel, as to Benjamin he said: "The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him, and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders." (Deut.33:12)

app As Christians now have the office of priest, our main duty & privilege is on our shoulders bearing the burden of the infirmities of the fellow Christians, and praying for them at the Throne of Grace.

Shouting

To utter a loud voice, usually without musical art, is called shouting. The Bible is written about “with shouting in the day of battle” (Amos 1:14; 2:2) also people “shouting and with the sound of the trumpet (II Sam.6:15) to express their joy.

app Normally shouting by any single person, or the masses, is not proper; especially, for moral & for manner, should not be made loud shouting at indoor situation of gatherings, as common sense tells it’s improper & inconsiderate, except for uncontrollable expression emotion of joy or ecstasy.

Sick

In a condition in which opposite to or absence of ease is disease, or sick; a body or part of it that impairs functioning, is typically by symptoms. “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (Jam.5:14-16)

In His ministry, Jesus have healed many sick, but upon heard that Lazarus the one He loved, He said: “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified there by.” (Jn.11:4)

app Spiritually or physically, corporately or individually, at the time of sickness occurring , it is a time to prove the bodily love: one should inform the church, and the church should be concerned for that member.

Sickle

Sickle is a farm equipment, which is used for harvesting (Deut.16:9).

On His parable of the kingdom, Jesus said: “When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” (Mk.4:29)

At the end of the world, as John wrote about it: “Behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud: Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap; for the harvest is ripe.” (Rev.14:14,15)

app The Bible uses many parables of agriculture. “Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Gal.5:7) “Ye are God’s husbandry.” (I Cor.3:9) The Apostle said.

Sight

The domestic servant-hood ethics can be adapted to church workers: “Not with eye service, as man-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.” (Eph.5:6,7) Do keep the LORD insight. “I have set the LORD always before me.” (Psa.16:8) Do what is right, 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.” (I Tim.2:2,3)

app The “man-pleaser” behavior, could be used as a short-hand description as Eunuch Attitude. It is an incurable disease, or doom of officialdom. Beware!

No laws or oversight elders can be sufficient for dealing with them. One must have the love & fear of the Lord in the heart, in order to serve.

Sign, Signs & Wonders

The verbal or non-verbal symbols to communicate some special message in it, is called sign. “Mighty Signs & Wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God” (Rom.15:19), is a phrase rooted in the authentication of the ministries of God’s servants.

1.Moses carried God’s command to lead Israel out from Egypt. He showed signs with authority from God, yet Pharaoh hardened his heart & refused to let God’s people go. (Rom.9:17)

2.Elijah performed signs by God’s power on Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18:39), yet people did not fully awaken, & Jezebel’s power was still there.

3.Jesus preached the gospel & healed a great multitude; yet the Pharisees & the Sadducees demanded “a sign from heaven” to prove Him as Christ the “superman”. (Matt.15:29-16:4)

4.Apostle Paul said that “The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified...the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” (I Cor.1:22-24)

app The word Theology signifies that Christians should know Theo (God) & Logos, i.e. logics. One should not utter statement which is illogical. Paul asserted that “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.” (II Cor.12:12) So, we should not be go against any of these without rational knowledge, but pray that God’s power be manifested & multiplied upon God’s true ministers in the Church at latter days.

Silence

“In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise.” (Pro.10:19)

“Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.” (Pro.17:28)

app There is a saying that “one should not talk, or utters but truth.” The problem of people is not only that they want to hear their own voices, but that they do not know the alchemical art that silence is gold.

Silver

As the earliest & commonly used trading medium, silver signifies sincerity, honesty, hence it represents wealth in almost every culture. The Bible recorded silver being used as commodity (Gen.13:2), & was used to buy slaves (17:12), & to buy property (23:16). Hence silver signifies redemption.

app Peter said: “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk!” (Acts 3:6) Thus the lame man at the gate Beautiful was healed.

In the Roman time, the silver coin bears the image of Caesar, did not allow to use for to contribution in the Temple, so the money changers were needed. When the Pharisees & the Herodians tempted Jesus, He answered about the image-bearing coin: “Render therefore the things which are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.” (Matt.22:21) That shows the different standards, and thus the Christians have “two citizenships”: outwardly bearing the image of the worldly authority, but their redeemed soul is belonging to the eternal God.

Simony

An evil practice of selling Church offices called simony. The term from Simon (Acts 8:18-22), which resulted in the evil practice “spoil” system, which persists over a long time. That name-sake case Magus tried to bribe the Apostles to buy the power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and was rejected.

app The nominal believers often carrying the world’s “almighty dollar” value system with them, giving money as buy “holdings” in the church. To establish the right concept of sacrifice it needed.

Sin

The Bible used different words to describe its ugly facets: e.g. “transgression, sin, iniquity, guile...” (Psa.32:1,2,5)

The Fallen mankind are all sinners: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom.3:23)

God’s redemption through Jesus Christ: “For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (II Cor.5:21)

What we should do: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I Jn.1:9)

app Sin is a term quite unpleasant to mention in the presence of civil society, esp. in church. So, that confession is often neglected. But without the forgiveness of sin, one can neither have fellowship with God, nor with other believers (I Jn.1:5-8). The Church members must have communication to each other, in order to be a holy community.

Slander

One’s utterance of false charges or misrepresentations with defamatory statement about a person and damages one’s reputation is slander. Slander is untrue in nature, so both the one who author it, or who spread it, are at fault. “He that hideth hatred with lying lips; and he that uttereth a slander is a fool.” (Pro.10:18)

app Slander comes in a form of back-biting. Believers as a community of the children of light in Christ, ought to be “putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.” (Eph.4:25) Christians should decline to talk anything which cannot be confirmed. Can one imagine that the members of the same body tell each other about false feelings?

Sleep

As a natural way of rest, sleep is necessary. Overly sleep is slothfulness.

1.Spiritually, one ought to be son of the light: “Wherefore He says: Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Eph.5:14)

2.The Christians have everlasting life, as “we believe that Jesus died and rose again”, so, that death to them is “sleep in Jesus”, and they shall rise again, and shall ever be with the Lord. (I Thess.4:14-17; 5:10)

App “Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.” (Psa.13:3) May that prayer of King Davidr be ours.

Slothfulness

Jesus told about the kingdom of heaven & His returning, in the parable of trusting “talents” to the servants, between “the good and faithful”, and “the wicked and slothful”; their belief made them to act differently, & so their rewards be (Matt. 25:14-30). “The desire of a slothful man killeth him, for his hand refuse to labour.” (Pro.21:25)

The Apostle exhorted the Church that there is no time to be in slothful ease: “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” (Eph.5:16)

app Faith without work is no more than a wish, which will ended in no more than talk only. The faithfulness only can be proved by their works.

Sobriety

Sobriety is a person who does not addicted to intoxicating drink; but behave in a sedate or gravely or earnestly thoughtful character, or demeanor. That is what a normal Christian should be. The Bible says: “Ye are all the children of Light, and the children of the day... For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken and drunken in the night... but let us, who are of the day, be sober...” (I Thess.5:5-8)

app Some people may not be intoxicated by strong drink, yet by fame, wealth, even knowledge, sports, etc. which can cause their minds not in a clear condition. We only can be sober by keeping our mind on Christ & His cross.

Soldier

A soldier is one who is engaged in military service. Paul encouraged Timothy: “Thou therefore endure hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (II Tim.2:3,4)

app Loyalty & bravery constitutes a good soldier. Some mercenary soldiers betrayed their patron. They are even often lack of discipline & abandoned the front altogether. God’s warriors, “be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might(Eph.6:10-18).

Son

The word “Son” means descendant, biologically or spiritually. Believers as “son of light” (Eph.5:8), “son of God” (I Jn.3:2); from “children of wrath” (Eph.2:3), to “the elect of God, holy and beloved” (Col.3:12).

1.The life of Son: “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” (Jn.5:26)

2.The nature of son: Believers have this new life, “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: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by this we might be partakers of the divine nature...” (II Peter 1:3,4)

3.The power of son. An adult son can act as his father: “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” (Jn.5:27)

4. The duty of son: “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” (Jn.5:19) And the Son submitted to Father’s will: “not my will, but Thine, be done.” (Lk.22:42)

5.The chastening of son: “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” (Heb.12:6)

6.The inheritance: “The hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” (Eph.1:18)

app Christians' most precious position is that of the Son-ship in the household of God (Eph.4:19) "Because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father." (Gal.4:6) We must grateful for that privilege & authority (Jn.1:12) forever.

Son of God

1. Apostle Paul thus introduced the Lord: "Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead..." (Rom.1:3,4) This is to say that through resurrection it manifested that Christ has the same eternal life as God.

2. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb.2:10,11) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God... and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom.8:14-17)

app "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I Jn.5:12) There is a phenomenon that some Churches accept such persons who do not have spiritual life, but because some possession they have, so they acquired the position in church, which is clearly against this principle.

Songs

The nation Israel was born with songs (Ex.15:1). Before Israel went into Canaan, Moses wrote them a "National Song" as legacy (Deut.32:1-44). At the end of the world, the victorious multitudes on the sea of glass sung the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (Rev.15:2-4).

The Apostle said about the primitive Church: "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms." (Jam.5:13)

Jesus, the Man of Sorrow, shed tears often, but only once with His disciples "sung a hymn" (Matt.26:30 cf. Mk.14:26), the traditional Psalm 115-118 to conclude the Passover.

app The Church sing songs in the categories of Supplication, Gratitude, Adoration, Didactic, Memorial, but should not sing the improper ones. The angels have not experience redemption, so they could not sing songs.

Sorcery

Sorcery is the use of power gained from the medium or the control of evil spirit. So, it is prohibited and accursed by God (Rev.9:21; 21:8,15)

app There are certain people playing fool with sorceries, usu. youths, which Christians should not participate, but be strictly against that evil practice.

Sorrow

The consequence of sin is sorrow (Gen.3:16).

1.Jesus came to the world as “Man of sorrow”, and “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.” (Isa.53:3,4)

2.One who committed sin should have feel sorrow and repent from it: “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of... what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” The godly sorrow which bringeth forth good fruit. On the other hand, “the sorrow of world worketh death.” (II Cor.7:10,11)

app The Church should abandon the role of clone, take up confessor, and it will have real comfort.

Soul, Body, Spirit

1.Some believed man as trinity: Spirit, soul, body. According to Paul: “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (I Thess.5:23) So, spirit & soul are divisible (Heb.4:12). Because man is spirit, he is capable of God-consciousness; because he is soul, he has self-consciousness; because he has, through his senses, world-consciousness.

2.While some believing dualism, it divided man into soul & body, or spirit & flesh, & view spirit-soul as one and the same.

App There is another Gnostic view of three-tiers: Pneumatic, Psychic, Hylic. Thus placing themselves on the peak as “pneumatic” (spiritual) above all others, is a harmful heresy.

Spikenard

The ancient used fragrant ointment, for cosmetic & cleansing purposes, one of the precious ones made with spikenard (Song 1:12), an aromatic plant which was originally from Himalayan region, & related to the genre of ginseng family. Mary anointed Christ with this “very costly” ointment, so that its timely dedication before His crucifixion, can be remembered. (Mk.14:3; Lk.7:37; Jn.12:3)

app The sweet odor sacrifice is offered at the right time, because Mary “sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard His word”, & indeed she did that “one thing is needful” (Lk.10:38-42).

Spiritual

There is often has the misconception among Christians that “spiritual” is equal to mysterious. Actually, “spiritual gift” (Rom.1:11) comes from God, and is for the purpose of edifying the spiritual body, that is the Church (I Cor.12:1-31; 14:1-33).

app There is a tendency in the dogmatically pure Church, which deny the gift of the Holy Spirit, under the name of “Bible believing”. But pure need not be cold, separate does prove it is right, & contention does not mean superior to others, and even if others are all wrong, it does not mean you are right.

Spoil

According to the established ordinance of war among Israel, it is the duty of the leaders, “Divide the prey that was taken...into two parts: Between them that took the war upon them, and all the congregation; and levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war which went out to battle...” (Num.31:26-28) David “made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel” (I Sam.30:23-25).

app Certain gang or political party, on gaining of power, practiced “the winner get all”. Some of the religious organizations, adapted that “law of the green world”, neither fear God or man, which is equal to robbery.

Stars

The stars on the firmament are made by God, “to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for sea sons, and for days and years.” (Gen.1:14-19) But God forbidden His people to “lift up thine eyes... be driven to worship them, and serve them.” (Deut.4:19)

app Today there are plenty more “stars”, either natural, or man-made, i.e. intellectual stars, political stars, even religious stars, commending worship & serve, instead of giving glory to the Creator God. God’s people should not have any of these evil practices.

Statutes

Statute is a decree, ordinance, established for people to stand or to depend upon it. “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.” (Psa.19:8)

app We should learn, love and obey God’s word, and let us say with the Psalmist: “Blessed art Thou, O LORD, teach me thy statutes... I will delight myself in thy statutes, I will not forget thy word.” (Psa.119:12-16)

Steadfastness

Steadfast is the quality of loyalty. In a mutable world, one should be firm in belief, determination, or adherence in the faith of Christ. “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto

the end.” (Heb.3:14) So, the Apostle urged the believers: “Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (I Cor.15:58)

app Progress is a word that has much charm intrinsically. People believe that newer is better. Christians are urged to be “holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.” (I Tim.3:9)

Stealing

The Decalogue stated that “Thou shalt not steal.” (Ex.20:15) It is God’s just order. Steal is not an act of covetousness, but is one wanting to rob other person’s fruit of labour. So the Apostle charged believers: “Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” (Eph.4:28)

app It is common among all cultures that any individual’s possessions ought to be protected, and any trespass will cause criminal offence. This is to say that those who refuses to do good works, and depend on others’ labour for support is an act of stealing. So, time is gold. Those who waste time at work, is an act of stealing from someone.

Steward

One employed by a manor or institution to manage domestic concerns, ori. “warden of the sty”. Therefore, what he has in & under his hand, all are his Lord has entrusted to him. His time, talent, treasure, all belonged to his Lord (Lk.16:1-13).

App The steward’s basic concept is that those who are redeemed by Christ, “are the Lord’s.” (Rom.14:8) One should always remember to be faithful, and is expected to have accountability.

Stone

Back from ancient time, humans used stone in their daily living & also tools. Hence it is a piece of rock for a special designated function, such as for building block, corner stone, pillar, wall, paving, millstone, recording, gaming, weighing, boundary marking even tombstone. Certain rare ones called precious stone; and also stone used for weapon or stoning as penalty. The stone tablets of Moses had the covenant written with the finger of God (Ex.31:18; cf. II Cor.3:3-11); “White stone” signifies approval (Rev.2:17), but hard heart of stone needs, by the grace of the Lord, to change it to a new heart of flesh & new spirit (Ez.36:26).

app The Church is the “spiritual house”, built by living stones (II Peter 2:5-8; Eph.2:13-21); glorious “ministration of spirit” (II Cor.3:8), and ruled

by love (Rom.12:1-5; 13:10). Thus we need to be edified spiritually and be fit as the dwelling place of the Lord.

Stranger

Apostle Peter wrote to the sojourners of the dispersions: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” (I Peter 2:11) As are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Heb.11:13), we have hope for a home. Jesus said about the disciples would face, that “the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” (Jn.17:14)

app The Law commands: “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Ex.22:21) The Church should not be conformed to this world (Rom.12:2), but must treat the aliens with love just as we ourselves want to be treated.

Strength

The LORD God (Hb. *Jehovah Elohim*) is the strength of His people: “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isa.40:30,31) “There is no king saved by the multitude of an host; A might man is not delivered by much strength; An horse is a vain thing for safety, neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.” (Psa.33:17)

app The Christians need the divine power, not the carnal strength. Samson is the strongest warrior, his strength came from his separation from life of a Nazarite; while he let go his sanctifying & sobriety, his strength is gone (Judg.13:24-16:20). So the glory is departed from Israel.

Strife

Just as a little fire can kindle the whole forest, one can do great mischief by sowing strife. “A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends.” (Pro.16:28) The Corinthian Church had but little spiritual growth, as Paul pointed out the symptom: “There is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men?” (I Cor.3:3) So an evil tongue carries hell fire (Jam.3:6).

app “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out, so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.” (Pro.20)

Stubbornness

A stiff neck bears not the yoke of the Lord, because he is self-willed and do not obey the commandment. “He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” (Pro.29:1)

App In the case of Israel, they persist in rebellion, and had to be stricken, until “from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores...” (Isa.1:5-7) Thus we can see how difficult for men to do God’s will. Let us pray that God toenable us to soften our stubbornness, to prepare the path for His will be done on earth.

Submission

1.To civil authorities: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake... for so is the will of God.” (I Peter 2:13-15)

2.To ecclesiastical authorities: “Likewise, ye younger, submit your selves unto the elders... Humble your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God.” (I Peter 5:5)

One can easily see the parallel position of both God’s will & God’s hand are directed to.

It was to this very same Peter, the resurrected Lord said: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee: When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God.” (Jn.21: 18,19)

app In “a crooked and perverse nation” (Phil.2:15), obviously this world is not prepared to do due submission to God, therefore not suitable for mission either. But as for disciples, there is no alternative course.

Suffering

Suffer is to endure discomfort, distress, or death.

When Jesus foretells His forthcoming suffer & death, His disciples could not understand it; tradition has it that suffering is the retribution reserved for the wicked; so Peter rebuked Him: “Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee!” (Matt.16:22) But God revealed that: Jesus Christ is the suffering servant, what happened to Him is necessary for redemption (Lk.24:25-27; cf. Isa.53:1-12) The believers also to have this fellowship with Him: “not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” (Phil.1:29)

app Suffer is one of the mystery in life. And people preferred to be blessed with prosperity not suffering. Job did not understand it, God asked if you are omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent? But with patience he sees the blessed end (Jam.5:11)

Sun

The sun is the emblem of righteousness (Mal.4:2; cf. Matt.5:45). Jesus manifested the Father’s mercy (Lk.1:78). Jesus said that “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (Jn.9:5) “While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” (Jn.12:36)

app Christians are “Children of light”, that is to reflect our Heavenly Father: “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” (I Jn.1:5-7) “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.” (Eph.5:8,9)

Surety

One who has become legally liable for the debt, default, or failing to do the duty of another, is surety. This involvement has high risk to damage one’s finance or reputation: “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretiship is sure.” (Pro.11:15) The debtor who is oppressed has to cry for help: “Be surety for thy servant for good; let not the proud oppress me.” (Psa.119:122) The answer came from heaven: “By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.” (Heb.7:22)

app Out of love or sympathy someone is willing to bear the smart (pay penalty). So for us Jesus did pay the heavy smart. Do consider carefully then, before involving yourself to this kind act.

Swear

People do take an oath to affirm one’s statement. It is not only somewhat debase oneself, but shows distrust, therefore is evil. Jesus said that “But I say unto you, swear not at all... But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” (Matt.5:33-37; cf. Jam.5:12)

app Certain Christians decline to take any form of oath, rather to confirm. Swear in God’s name should not be performed.

Swine

In Bible Land, swine (pigs) is considered to be unclean. So, swine is used on contemptible persons. Jesus said, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” (Matt.7:6) There were such proverb: “The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” (II Peter 2:22) Thus it is typical of unbelievers and apostates.

app One should show keen restrain for using these words. Nevertheless, the church can have their right value judgment.

Sword

Sword is a weapon for near distance combating.

1.Sword represents war, or absence of peace: “Sword shall never depart from thine house.” (II Sam.12:10)

2.Sword means violence. The first literary work of human history is “Song of Sword” by Lamech, thus it recorded: “Adah and Zillah hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.” (Gen.4:23,24)

3.Sword means power of the ruler. “If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God.” (Rom. 13:4)

4.Sword of the LORD, the punishment of pestilence (I Chr.21:12).

5.God’ word is sword. (Eph.6:17; cf. Heb.4:12)

app Christians should obey the authority of civil government because it is ordained by God. Also feared God, & obey His word.

Synagogue

The synagogue represented a new concept of religion & life.

This new form of institution was developed during the era of Diaspora. As the Jews learn that, they have forsaken God, and “served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.” (Jer.5:19) That painful experience, taught them to abandon idols, and form their communal, educational institution, i.e., synagogue, and shifted to prayer, study and exhortation, to replace sacrificing as the way to serve God. It has become community based, and no longer confined to a small coterie of priest but open to all. Services were no longer conducted at the separation of the veil, limited in Jerusalem; but was a universal institution and not confined to any special location.

app N.T. Churches is not a continuation of the Temple religion, but more akin to the Synagogue, which ori. meant “bringing together, to serve the purpose of didactic & worship.

T

Tabernacle

When Israel exit from Egypt, & on their journey toward the Promised Land, the place where God was present among His people, & communicated with them was tabernacle. Christ’s incarnation, “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn.1:14); “dwelt” means “pitched His tent”, “tabernacled” among humans. It not only merely refers to Christ’s earthly existence, as Peter & Paul (II Cor.5:1; II Peter 1:13), or other human beings, but in a way recalled ancient Israel’s tabernacle where God could be found (Ex.40:34,35).

app Christian should have the holy desire to “dwell in the house of the LORD...to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple...”

and to be hidden “in the secret of His tabernacle” (Psa.27:4,5). As the Lord said at the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matt.5:8)

Table

1. In the Bible, “table of the LORD” is referring to the offering table, or the show-bread table in the sanctuary (Ex.25:23; Mal.1:7,12).
2. Speaking euphemistically, with all the food staff on the board is called “table”. “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” (Psa.23:5)

App In most cultures, people sharing food is a form of fellowship. So The apostles warn Christians that they should not take part in the feast of idol worship: “Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.” (I Cor. 10:21) This principle we ought to observe carefully.

Tables

God made His covenant with the people of Israel: “Two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.” (Ex.31:18) Those were on two tables. “Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand; the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.” (Ex.32:15,16; cf. II Cor.3:3)

app “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of hearts.” (II Cor.3:3) Thus Paul wrote to his long-time worked church. May we all bear the positive message of gospel, to be witness of the light.

Talent

People used to mix the intrinsic ability with talent, which may be also plus some training. But originally it means a gift. Jesus uses in the Olivet Parable of the servant (Matt.25:14-30). Christians should know how to differentiate them from other attributes that talent, time, & treasures are entrusted by God; none of them is natural resources.

app As a redeemed person, all one has is the Lord’s. So, knowing that be a steward, one should not forget to be faithful to what is entrusted to him.

Talking

The stream of wisdom is precious, so it does not flow without restraint. “He that hath knowledge spareth his words.” (Pro.17:27)

Jesus said, “Every idle word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” (Matt.12:36)

Do not simply love to hear your own voice, but one ought to examine it, if there are any problem: “Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man.” (Matt.15:18)

app “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” (Jam.3:2-12) Think yourself as a lawyer, weigh your words and count your time.

Tare

A weedy ryegrass of wheat field, aka. Darnel. Jesus on the mystery of the kingdom said that “A man which sowed good seed in his field... bur while men slept, his enemy came by night sowed tares among the wheat.” The house-holder declined to act by rooting up the tares, because the wheat will be affected, and rather to wait for the reaping (Matt.13:24-30).

app The over jealous persons have no consideration for the wheat field, but keen to purge out the “tares”. May the Lord have pity on the churches of this category.

Tax, Taxation

“Give everyone what you owe him. If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.” (Rom.13:7 NIV)

app This is a test of a Christian: “not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.” (Rom.13:7) Submit to authority not for fear of being discovered and punished, but because of conscience. People do not always have concern for such.

Teach, Teacher

“Teachers” (Eph.4:7-11) as “the gift of Christ”, have important roles in the church, which is “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph.4:12).

app Those who govern the nation well, always pay high attention to education, because it is the future of the nation. So church should do the same: the elders “that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.” (I Tim.5:17) Some churches call their pastors as “Teaching Elder”.

Temperance

The temperate man can have great achievement. “Better a patient man than a warrior; A man who controls his temper than one who takes a city.” (Pro.16:32) Temperance is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:23,24). “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” (I Cor.9:25)

app Paul said confidently that “I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” (I Cor.9:27) So wish that the church have many such charismatic leaders.

Temple

Hb. *Hekal*, means “great house”; or, *bayit*, “house”. In the Bible, “temple” usu. refers to the Temple erected by Solomon, rebuilt by Zerubbabel (Zech.8:9), was enlarged and refurbished by King Herod. Gk. *naos*, “temple” is used in N.T. of Herod’s temple, meaning the sanctuary area. Gk. *oikos*, is “house”. And the Temple of Ezekiel’s vision (Ez.40:-48:). But in New Jerusalem, Apostle John said: “I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” (Rev.21:22)

app In N.T., Christian is not a temple-religion: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (I Con.3:16) So, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (6:19,20) This concept is important for Christians to keep pure & holy themselves, at all times & in all places.

Temptation

The Lord preparing His instrument, must first put it through trials. “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (Jam.1:2-4) Because He has a high purpose, God will never allow what is His to be destroyed. “There hath no temptation taken you that such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (I Cor.10:13)

app Just like steel which to be tempered, gold & silver need to be refined; temptation comes with an enticement for the natural inclination, and to have some pleasure or gain by way of doing evil. One who does the will of God, must resist temptations, though it seems have to suffer temporarily. So, “consider it pure joy...whenever you face trials of many kinds” (Jam.1:2 NIV). Not joy for trials, but with great expectation that the trials are for the Lord’s purpose.

Testament

Testament is “a witness”, “a solemn declaration”. In the Bible, it means a covenant made between God & human race. The New Testament is made with Christ’s own blood (Matt.26:28; Mk.14:24; Lk.22:20; I Cor.11:25).

Christ is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” (Heb.8:6-9:22)

app O.T. & N.T. is not based on the time factor, but is God’s own plan for the Fallen human race: “By calling this covenant ‘new’, He [God] has made the first one obsolete, and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.” (Heb.8:13 NIV) Therefore Christians could not abandon the O.T. altogether, but study the Bible as the whole counsel of God.

Testimony

1.The Lord told Moses, saying: “Thou shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee” (Ex.25:16,21), which meant the divine decree of God, in two tables inscribed with the Law are to be contained in the ark.

2.A public profession of religious experience. Paul declared to the people in Jerusalem: “While I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; and saw Him saying unto me: ‘make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me...” (Acts 22:17,18)

app The fault of certain Christians that they do not keep the testimony of God (Psa.119:2), and what they called their “testimonies” were given not in pure truth. These is going astrayed from God’s counsel.

Thanksgiving

Believers should live a thankful life. “Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.” (Psa.95:2)

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.” (Psa.100:4)

app Christians should “in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (I Thess.5:18) At the Last Supper, Jesus “took up the cup, and give thanks...” (Matt.26:27) Because “He shall see the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.” (Isa.53:11) or, “After the suffering of His soul, He will see the light of life and be satisfied.” (HIV) Trust God’s will always, one can see light as Jesus do.

Theatre

Western theatre started at ca. fifth Cen. B.C. Greece, which meant “a place of viewing”, or “a thing compelling to gaze”. Greco-Roman culture was interested in entertaining of games & performances. The size of theatre in Ephesus was quite big, & could assemble 25,000 (Acts 19:29-31). The rioting people there pushed Paul’s companions into the theatre, but his friends were concerned for his safety, and prevented him from going in.

app Christians gathering is not for entertaining or performing, & far from promoting “idols of theatre”. Because of the *koinonia* of comradeship &

brotherly love, they have deep care for each other, & they were “striving together for the faith of the gospel.” (Phil.1:27)

Thief

The one who illegally has taken other’s possession or property is a thief.

1. Conduct: Steal when people are unaware of (Matt.24:43).
2. Compensation: “If he be found...he shall restore...” (Pro.6:31; Ex.22:1) But to the converted they were willingly to confess & do recompense.
3. Conversion: Achan be found of to be covetous & stole, & met with stoning to death (Jos.7:19-26); Zacchaeus repented & restored his ill-gotten gain (Lk.19:19:8-10); Two thieves, or “malefactors” who were crucified with Jesus, one of them un-repentant, another was converted & thus with Jesus, were received into paradise (Lk.23:32,39-43; cf.Matt.27:38).

app We were all like thieves disturbing the moral & social order of God & men, stealing materials & non-materials, such as time, glory etc. So as we belong to His name, we should not remain to be old thieves, but need to believe in Jesus Christ, repent & do the restoration.

Thorns

1. It was because of man’s disobedience, thorns & thistles were the curse wrought by God to the world, after man’s Fall, thus causing labor & pain. At the time of Jesus’ Crucifixion, the soldiers “platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head.” (Matt.27:29) That is to typify that He bore the curse for mankind.
2. God warned Israel that “If ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass, those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.” (Num.33:55)
3. “Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.” (II Cor.12:7)

app A thorn not be the wish of anyone, but may be necessary as part of God’s plan “to them who are the called according to His purpose.” (Rom.8:28)

Thunder

The ancients awed by the mighty sound of thunder & lightning strike, & were inspired by the awful & fearful power of God (Psa.78:48). When God established the covenant with Israel, “there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of trumpet exceedingly loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.” (Ex. 19:16) When the LORD battled the enemy for His people, He “thundered with a great thunder on that day.” (I Sam.7:10; cf.Rev.16:18)

app Christians should not only see the Lord's love & patience, but know His mighty power & awesomeness. We have to consider both "the goodness and severity of God" (Rom.11:22), and that "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb.12:6)

Time

For humans "under the sun", time is hard to define. So, only God who is not in time, but above time, can control time. "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven... He hath made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men." (Eccl.3:1-11 NIV)

app St. Augustine said that what we talk about time, is but the length of time; it's not time itself. One thing can be sure is that we will never know what is absolute time, time of universe; but one thing we can know is that "He saith: I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (II Cor.6:2) Do trust in Christ, & pray that "My times are in Thy hand." (Psa.31:15) is all we can say, and God shall guide us.

Tithes

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal.3:10)

app With but little doubt the above verse is one of the most familiar one in O.T. Only in N.T. Church, that they never mention, far from encourage Christians to offer tithes, not even once. Why? The simple answer is that because they were Christians. At that time, the Jerusalem Temple was under The Herodian-High Priest's control, & who could imagine it to be "storehouse" of God? Who will pay their tribute to the gang that crucified their Lord Jesus Christ? In addition, the Israelites' tithes were not only for the central temple, but for storing & distribute to a national religious system; & there were local tithes every three years (Deut.14:28,29). Nevertheless, there is a standard practice we can refer to, that is the church offering for local & universal which should be 1:3, that is to say, we should spend less on local, but never fail keeping a vision that view the Lord's kingdom as a whole.

Tongue

Generally speaking, tongue is a regional dialect. Once upon a time, "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." But they counsel together, against the LORD, "let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered

abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” This was the attitude of humanistic thinking: for the glory of men, not for God. So God scattered them & confused their tongues. Therefore, the name of that place is called Babel. (Gen.11:1-9) Much later, at the time of Pentecost, with descent of the Holy Spirit, while the people gathered from different parts of the world in Jerusalem, “There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind... there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them... They speak with other tongue, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-11) They all speak “the wonderful works of God.”

app The people of the earth endeavored to develop a universal language, from Latin days early, to Esperanto, but all failed. May Church not try to build a tower of Babel, but to glorify Christ.

Tradition

By definition, tradition is an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior; a belief or story or a body of beliefs or stories relating to the past that are commonly accepted as historical, though not verifiable. Jesus rebuffed the scribes & Pharisees that “transgress the commandment of God by your tradition” (Matt.15:1-9).

app Though not all the traditions are bad, but because people’s hearts are far from God, so they rather do “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”, which caused the real problem. We should beware of the leaven. N.B. **Traditor**, an early Christian who betrayed others at the time of Roman persecutions, eq. to Traitor. It should not be confused with Traditionalist.

Traitor

One who betrays other’s trust, to hand over. “Judas Iscariot ... which also was the traitor” (Lk.6:16). “Traitors” (II Tim.3:4).

app Unfaithful is the nature of a traitor. “In the last days ...men shall be lovers of their own selves ...traitors.” (II Tim.3:4) Those who commit treason to the Lord & His Church, could not be faithful to anyone.

Trance

Trance is a state of profound abstraction or absorption, or ecstatic sleep-like condition. Apostle Peter in Joppa, when he went up the housetop to pray, and “fell into a trance” and saw the vision; thus he followed the lead of the Spirit, and opened the gate of gospel to Gentiles (Acts 10:10). Apostle Paul in Jerusalem, “was in a trance”, and saw Jesus urging him to “Make haste... Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” (Acts 22:17-21)

app There are people who claimed that they were in a “trance”, & received revelation of some kind. Do search & observe carefully that first, if there is anything contrary to the Scripture; secondly, even if it is true, that person

should not be a hireling prophet like Balaam (II Peter 2:15; Jude:11; Rev.2:14). Do not follow false teachings.

Transfiguration

Jesus brought Peter, James & John, to a high mountain top, “and was transfigured before them... there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him.” (Matt.17:1-13) Elias was “translated” & “went up by a whirlwind into heaven” (II Kings 2:11); and Moses was dead & buried by God Himself “in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day.” (Deut.34:6)

app The Bible recorded that, Michael “contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses” (Jude:9). It is not un-natural, for some to assume that Moses was resurrected, so he could co-exist with Elias in the same spiritual-body & stand with him. However, that is not essential for disputation; though no one knows for sure, but it can be considered.

Transformation

1. Since Christians who have new life, it follows then that “be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Rom.12:2)

2. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the minister of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” (II Cor.11:13-15)

app Trans means change across. Change the appearance into another, or fake to be someone else, which is natural due to Satan’s un-truthful nature. Since we know these, so we should beware of that diabolic schism by all means.

Transgression

To go beyond a bound of the prescribed limit, i.e. to violate a law, duty, or command. Hence it is synonymous with sin. The LORD proclaimed to Moses: “The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in good and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Ex.34:7) Moses warned Israel: “Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD now? But it shall not prosper...” (Num.14:41)

app Now at an age of performance, people so dread of being contemptuous of inaction, that hence more prone to err on transgression. May we pray that humble prayer: “LORD, my heart is not haughty...neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.” (Psa.131:1)

Translation

Translation means to change from one state, situation, form, or appearance to another. In literature, it means to turn into another language, or version.

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him...” (Heb.11:5,6)

app Among human race, there were only Enoch & Elijah who had been translated from flesh to spiritual existence and did not see death. But before that, their minds had first been translated, thus they could walk with God. It is more important to “be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Rom.12:2)

Treachery

Treachery is violation of allegiance or of faith and confidence. “Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” (Psa.41:9) The most notorious case, of course, is Judas’ kiss (Matt.26:48).

app Sometimes people do use “subtlety” as political art to achieve certain purpose, such as Jehu to exterminate Baal religion in Israel (II Kings 10:19). But on Christian dealings, straight forward way is always the right way.

Treason

Athaliah rent her clothes, and said: “Treason, treason!” (II Chr.23:13) The one who made such show, six years ago, “arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah” (II Chr.22:10) and usurped the throne. She by overt acts overthrew the government which she owed allegiance to, and killed the sovereign family, thus it caused treason. Such a one has no right to have loyalty of any citizen due to her as claimed by herself.

app Loyalty is a duty of subjects due to their superior. But if one betrayed God, the country & the law, which is in an act of treason, then everybody is automatically exempted from the obligation to follow such a one.

Treasure

To store up things as being precious is treasure to someone.

Jesus says: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt.6:19-21)

App Instead of storing wealth for oneself, “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD, and that which he hath given will be pay him again.” (Pro.19:17) A true Christian’s heart always has room for others.

Trespass

Trespass is overstepping, or misdeed, which violate the moral or social ethics. Jesus said: “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” (Matt.6:14) “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican...” (Matt.18:15-19)

app If there is any contention between Christians, they are expected to subject themselves to the church’s rule, as Paul has mentioned (I Cor.6:1-8). But the church should be ready to assume the duty of judging between the members fairly.

Trial

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you... but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partaker of Christ’s sufferings...” (I Peter 4:12,13).

app Christians meet with trials, & the right attitude is to face it with joy. It is not to enjoy the suffering, but the *koinonia* with Christ is great joy.

Tribes

Israel has twelve sons, all developed into tribes. “for the LORD’s portion is His people, Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.” (Deut.32:9) Yet “Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob, and He [The LORD] was King in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.” (Deut.33:4,5) That is to say, they, all the tribes, should all follow God’s law faithfully as one & only standard, & serve Him as one undivided people.

app Francis Bacon stated that “Idols of Tribe”, which made man based on themselves as standard, thus for all the perceptions resembles “those uneven mirrors which impart their own properties to different objects, from which rays are emitted and distort and disfigure them.” Thus race, culture, & group interest, all could form bias & influence our judgment. Beware!

Tribulation

Paul preached the gospel at Lystra & meeting with oppositions, had been stoned near death. After such suffering, he “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.” (Acts 14:22) That is to say, Christians are expected to have endurance with hope. Again, he related to the Thessalonian Church that “For yourselves know that we are appointed there unto... We told you before that we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass, and ye know.” (I Thess. 3:3,4) As to the people of the world, they “shall be great tribulation, such as was not seen since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matt.24:21) So, “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after these things which are coming on the earth... And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Lk.21:26-28)

app Tribulation one must face; The difference is that the world is looking for what is coming, Christians are looking for who is coming. The believers’ portion is hope without end; the unbelievers’ end without hope.

Triumph

The ancient Romans celebrate their significant military victory by a public ceremony of Triumph. Paul describes that spiritual realm himself as a captive of the heavenly city, now turned to be among the joyful participants in the blessings of the great Kings’ procession. We are in the throng who have a pleasant fragrance of Christ to God, and the captives form the enemy camp who will be facing the judgment (II Cor.2:14-16).

app When believers are engaged in spiritual battle, we trusted in Christ who always leads us in triumph. “For we are not as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.” (II Cor.2:17)

Trumpet

1.At the early history of Israel, they made two silver trumpets, to blow them for the purposes of calling assembly, battle, celebrations, & for the proclamation of Jubilee. (Num.10:1-10; Psa.81:3; Lev.25:9,10)

2.At the second coming, Christ Jesus will bring an end to human history. Jesus will descend from heaven, herald by a trumpet, a shout, and the voice of the archangel (I Thess.4:16,17). That time, it will be also called the “Last trumpet” (I Cor.15:52).

app The sound of the trumpet is always carrying with it a message. Paul the Apostle says: “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?” (I Cor.14:8-11) In the same token, the scripture reading, announcements, speech, prayer, performed in public & intended for the public to know, must be made in

audible, clear & distinct voice, so the public could understand & respond properly.

Trinity

The mystery of one God in three persons is the basic tenet of the Church. The doctrine is the hallmark of orthodox Christianity. Athanasian Creed, also called *Quicumque Vult* (from the beginning words in Latin).

*But this is the catholic faith: That we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; (3)
neither confounding the persons; no dividing the substance. (4)
But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal. (26)
So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped. (27)
Now the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man. (30)
This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved. (44)*

app The doctrine of Trinity is the basic of Christianity, and it differentiates between the right faith from Deism. It should be taught & confessed.

Trust

Trust means believe in with confidence. “Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.” (Psa.4:5) The wise psalmist said that “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.” (Psa.20:7) So Paul wrote to Timothy: “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” (I Tim.6:17)

app Being a young pastor, Timothy thus teaches, that one must do the same & commit “to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” (II Tim.2:2) By so doing, a culture of faith will soon be established & extended. “O taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him... The LORD redeemeth the soul of His servant; and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.” (Psa.34:8,22)

Truth

The opposite of Truth is falsehood.

God is Truth. So Jesus says: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (Jn. 14:6) Only the great I AM is the Truth & know the Truth.

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, abode not in the truth, because there is

no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (Jn.8:44)

Thus clearly drawn the map of the origin of Truth & Lie.

app 1.The astronomical phenomenon of supernovae, is not a new star that is born, but an old star dying off by explosion, which might have taken place many light-years ago, but because of the great distance away, the light reached the surface of our Earth much later. So the Truth is knowable only to the Omniscient God, & is beyond our ken. Thus much more about the heavenly eternal glorious truth will be known to us only by Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

2.The leader of a nation who started a war by lie, is not only a belligerent, or war criminal by nature, but to show that he is come from the profession of the eternal enemy.

Tutor

A tutor was a person of the household, sometimes a slave, appointed by the master, responsible for a child’s training, especially for instructing & punishing misbehavior (Cal.3:24). Likewise, the law serves the similar function to the people of Israel in the O.T.

App. By the grace of Christ, Christians are no longer under the law; yet as one being “le by the Spirit of God”, should also “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” (Rom.8:14; Gal.5:16)

Type

A person or thing in the O.T. to represent beforehand or to prefigure another in N.T. which relate to Christ. E.g.

Jesus is typified as Lamb of Jehovah-jireh (Gen.22:14); esp. of Passover (I Cor.5:7); & the Lamb on the throne (Rev.5:13; 7:10-17; 22:3).

As Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev.5:5).

Jesus is typified by Joseph, who was hated & sold by His brothers, and later, as the savior of peoples in a universal famine (Gen.45:5).

Also Shepherd King David, “The root of David”, feed & lead His people (Rev.5:5; cf. 7:17).

app As the rule of typology, a thing in general can be typifying both good & evil, e.g. Lion of the tribe of Judah be type of Jesus, & type of the devil (I Peter 5:8); but the specified person who typifies Jesus, cannot be the type of evil.

Tyranny

A government is oppressive & vested power in a single ruler. Such a one can be found in the violent Lamech (Gen.4:23,24); in contrast with another seventh generation son of Adam by Seth, who is Enoch (Jude:14, cf. Gen. 5:22), & “walked with God”, & God took Him away.

app Humans have the tendency to want to be above the law; that tyranny attitude should be checked, and never be allowed to develop, even in Christian organizations.

U

Unbelief, Unbeliever

In the Bible, the word “unbelief” does not only mean mentally, often it indicates a moral failure, or amoral behavior, hence such are evil-doers (II Cor.6:14-16). The term “unbelief”, also includes those lack of good work: “Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure...they profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” (Tit.1:15,16)

app The local church by no means could purge away all unbelieving elements, but to its own “professors” they should guard against such wrongful behavior, and do every good work.

Unclean

The Law requires people to keep ritually clean, but could do nothing to clean their inside “full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” (Matt.23:25-28) It need God to give a new Spirit & a new heart, then one can repent & “walk in God’s statutes, keep His judgments and do them.” (Eze.36:26,27) So to the N.T. Church, the command is “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.” (II Cor.6:17)

app Separation is not a show of hypocrisy, but for Christians to keep themselves from dirty & dark doings. If the local congregation is “carnal and walk as men” (I Cor.3:3), then it will be merely division, and in uncleanness, in spite of how they bite each other and divide.

Unleavened

Leaven usually signifies evil.

1.Jesus told His disciples to “take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees”, which should be understood as their doctrine (Matt.16:6-12).

2.The Apostle Paul urged the Corinthian Church to “purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye maybe a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (I Cor.5:6-8)

app The Church should always be minded to keep in purity. If one sees the “leaven” effect as the only standard to judge its growth, then Corinthian experience is the valid example of wrong perception.

Unmarried

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” (Heb.13:4)

Paul wrote to Corinthian Church that “To avoid fornication, let everyman have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband...I say therefore to the unmarried and widows: It is good for them if they abide even as I.” (I Cor.7:2,8) That is not to say that celibacy is superior to married, nor forbid marriage. In many major religions, male or female celibacy exists. In the sub-apostolic period, some sexually abstain idea arose, yet the Council of Nicea (AD 325), declined make celibacy or marriage a prohibition. In late seventh Century, that bishops must be celibate was decreed; but many priests were married or lived in concubinage. The sixteenth century Reformation ended the celibacy in Protestant Churches; but in nineteenth century European Protestant monastic group they were in existence.

app Christians of either sex, live in unmarried life is not wrong. Paul says that “But everyman hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” (I Cor.7:7) It is not subject to ethical judgment.

Unity

Unity is connoting that more than one part consists, therefore it is not uniformity. Christ’s High Priest Prayer to Father, which is for Christians unity in the Truth (Jn.17:19-24).

app The Universal Church is in one, since Christ’s Body is but one. Thus the ecumenicity if spiritually, it is un-alienable, therefore, it is not necessary; moreover, it is physically un-attainable. As to the local church, what it needs to do is to keep the body pure & healthy, then it automatically functioning properly, & meet for the Master’s use, to do the will of the Head.

Utilitarianism

A typical message of Utilitarianism was uttered by the shrewd politician-religionist Caiaphas, being the high priest in the year of Jesus’ crucifixion, who said unto his company: “Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” (Jn.11:49,50)

app. That utilitarian theory is to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people; except to neglect the ethical principle that “One Man”, who dies for the salvation of the people which they could not see at that high end. For the purpose of “expediency”, is to sacrifice the ethical concern altogether.

V

Vail, Veil

In the Tabernacle of O.T. there was a veil (veil) in between the “holy place and the most holy” (Ex.26:33). Later on, in the Temple, a similar veil exists. At the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, “The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom” (Matt.27:51), which clearly is not the doing of humans.

So, to the N.T. believers, having “boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.” (Heb.10:19,20) Thus we to the sanctuary we “have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” (Heb.6:19) Where the “refuge” is concerned, that meant one could flee to the sanctuary & take hold of the corner of the altar to save one’s life; but now, Christians can flee to the Holiest.

app Under the O.T. Law, only the high priest entered once a year, with “the blood of goats and calves” (Heb.9:12), to the inner room. To Christians, now we can “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb.4:16) Thus we have this privilege, should use it, and to “pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands” (I Tim.2:8).

Value System

A change of belief is always followed by one’s outlook of value. A converted Gen. Naaman of Syria, valued the soil of Israel more than silver; while the servant of Elisha, Gehazi desired silver & clothing (II Kings 5:15-27). Thus the two exchanged the disease of leprosy.

app. People of the world “know everything about price, but know nothing about value.”

Danish philosopher Soren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855) told a parable that a departmental store had thief breaking in one night, but had lost nothing indeed, having only found that the price-tags were switched. So the expensive items became marked by cents, and the cheapest items marked with astronomical price. One has no difficulty to imagine when the store opened what kind of chaos it would be. Of course, the Store is the Church, the track is played by the Prince of the World. As a result, people valued Princess Diana much higher than Mother Teresa, admired and even worshiped such a one, but despised the pious Saint.

Vanity

Something that is empty, or valueless. “All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted less than nothing, and vanity.” (Isa.40:17) The religion or a certain object having the character which draws one’s excessive admiration, or inflated pride is vanity. Those who work without the bound of Truth, “He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity.” (Pros.22:8)

app There are many people serving in different organizations, who are not serving the Creator, but for their own recreation. Thus the Bible says: “They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit.” (Isa.40:9)

Vengeance

God asserted to His people that: “To Me belongeth vengeance and recompence.” (Deut.32:35) The Apostle wrote: “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written: Vengeance is mine, I will repay. Saith the Lord.” (Rom. 12:19) On that day, “When the Lord Jesus shall reveal from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (II Thess.1:7,8)

app When one is wronged, or believe that he has been wronged, he would like to take the law into his own hands. That happened in our daily life, Christian cannot be exempted. We should believe that when time comes, the Lord will execute judgment.

VDM = Verbi Dei Minister

Minister of the Word of God is an important ministry, but has often been neglected. The scriptures we have, *Verbum Dei*, God’s Holy Word, Bible, is the source of god’s inspiration and salvation for mankind. Baruch’s ministry enabled Jeremiah’s *Verbum Audible*, Preaching, could reach outside the prison, even to later generations (Jer.36:1-32) In the end of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, there appeared: “I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.” (Rom.16:22)

app As minister of the Word, one should be well versed in the Scriptures, and be able to “rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Tim.2:15) If one is not able to do that, St. Augustine suggested that he could read other’s sermon rather than speak the wrong doctrine.

Verity

Veritas L. Truth. Verity means true, real.

Jesus said: “God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” (Jn.4:24)

Jesus said: “Ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free.” (Jn.8:32) Again, “When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.” (Jn.16:13)

app Nowadays most people believe only scientific truth; as to the religious truth, it becomes merely opinion, or, relative truth. As result, there are only few who care for ethical practice. The Church needs to prove that Truth can be found in Christ. “The house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (I Tim.3:15) What a sublime duty!

Vessel

“In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” (II Tim.2:20,21)

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” (II Cor.4:7)

The Lord Jesus Christ said to the un-repentant church that He “shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father.” (Rev.2:27)

app We are but the Lord’s vessels. A vessel has not its own will, but the Lord’s will be done. What one needs to do is like the vessels, but purge oneself, and be sanctified by blood & anointed, to be used in God’s temple.

Vesture

A garment is worn outside for covering; later in Church it is used as a “religious frock”. At the time of His crucifixion, Jesus’ vesture was cast lots by the soldiers (Maat.27:35; cf.Psa.22:18). He then appeared “clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.” (Rev.19:13)

app Investiture system introduced into the Church, as a continuation of the priesthood of the O.T., which signify the separation of cleric class from the laity. But in the N.T. Church, according to the Bible, there was no such division existing. The first Martyr Stephen is a layman (Acts 7:54-60). The first missionary Philip, again is a layman (Acts 8:5-8). It is not insignificant that “It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.” (Heb.7:14) In this trend, so, there is no necessity to have such distinction.

Victory

Jesus Christ risen from the dead, “death is swallowed up in victory”, and “The rebuke of His people shall He take away from off the earth.” (I Cr.15:54; Isa.25:8) By Him, “Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who

is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (I Jn.5:4,5)

app Christian as follower of Christ, is overcomer of death & the shame of sin, so, this is the Commission: “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon, and ye shall be the witnesses unto me...” (Acts 1:8)

Vine, Vineyard

Jesus said: “I am the true vine, my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit...” (Jn.15:1-7)

Jesus also used the vineyard parable of hiring workers who came in different hours to work, showing God’s arbitrary grace (Matt.20:1-16). Another parable is that the wicked vinedressers who refused to pay their duty, but murdered their lord’s son, & tried to seize the inheritance, thus they met with destruction. (Matt.21:33-41)

app Israel is God’s vineyard, as the prophet Isaiah sang to his people. (Isa.5:1-7) They were transplanted out from Egypt (Psa.80:8), planted at the Promised Land; God wanted them to bear good fruit; but they mixed with the heathens, and became wild grape, and bore bad fruit instead. So, the judgment descended upon them.

Vinegar

Made out of grapes, ancient vinegar of the Bible-Land, is an acetic acid, the sour liquid coming from the same source of wine, but as an inferior kind, with some medicinal value. At His crucifixion, “they gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall” (Matt.27:33,48), which served as a certain sedative.

app “As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth song to an heavy heart.” (Pros.25:20) One should not treat people with apathy, when seeing others at time of need, even “thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.” (Rom.12:20)

Virgin, Virgin Birth

When Jesus’ mother “Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost... The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying: ‘Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins’.” (Matt.1:18-25) This fulfilled the prophesy: “The Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (Isa.7:14)

app According to the Law, to keep the virginity is an essential virtue till her wedding day (Deut.22:20,21). We should bear in mind with the concept of that milieu, and will be more ready to accept that truth. Further still, that is not outdated virtue, even today, it is still fitting to be considered with.

Virtue

Originally meant strength, courage & moral worth, hence virtue is the quality of the person.

1.The whole multitude sought to touch Jesus, “for there the virtue out of Him, and healed them all” (Lk.6:19); that is the power which is issued from Jesus’s being that has the strength to heal their diseases & cast out devil.

2.Virtue is worthy action as fruit of faith, in contrast with vices. “Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue knowledge...” (II Peter 1:5), which means true faith produces virtuous action.

app If a faith does not followed with morality, is worthless. “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye are reprobates?” (II Cor. 13:5)

Vision

1.The function of sighting or conceiving is vision. “Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the Law happy is he.” (Pro.29:18)

2.In religious sense, something seen in a trance, dream, or ecstasy, that conveys a revelation, is called vision.

3.An incisive understanding. Jesus says: “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matt.6:22,23)

app For some reason people like to claim that they have a “vision”, thus it seems to satisfy their superior complex. If that is done in a sense of revelation, then it is the cause of serious concern, even alarming. The leaders ought to exam the case & verify its source & trustworthiness.

Voice

1.The voice of God. When God proclaimed the law, in majesty and power (Ex19:19; 20:1-18). God had also spoken to His prophets, e.g. Elijah, Ezekiel etc. (I Kings 19:12; Ez.1:24). “The LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” (Ex.33:11) At Jesus’ baptism, God made the public announcement from heaven: “This is my beloved Son, in Him I am well pleased.” (Matt.3:17) Again, Apostle Peter wrote his witness of His majesty: “For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory: ‘This is My Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount.’” (II Peter 1:17,18)

2.The voice of the people. “The voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.” (Lk.23:23) thus it shows that the people’s voice is contrary to God’s will.

app The Church should let God’s voice be heard, most reliable source is being the Bible, and should not let money talk loud enough & drowned out the voice of the Holy Spirit (Acts.13:2).

Vows

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed... Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.” (Eccl.5:4-6)
Paul once “had a vow” of Nazarite (Acts 18:18).

app The vow of celibacy or vow of poverty, are not uncommon in the Church, but almost equally uncommon have been violated. Christians should be more careful about their pledges of any kind.

Voyage

Voyage is a word that comes from Via, which means the way or journey. The early Church had people traveling over land and sea, “for His name’s sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles” (III Jn:5-8), mostly strangers, they expected the fellow believers to receive them. Apostle Paul is a great traveler of his time, who took missionary journeys, esp. the perilous sea voyage to Rome. (Acts 27:1-28:16)

app The Christian principle of “taking nothing of the Gentiles”, does not apply to missionary only, churches should observe also. The financial integrity should be carefully kept for a good witness (I Thess.1:1-10).

Vulgate

The translation of the Bible into Latin by St. Jerome, under Pope Damasus in AD 382. Jerome spent 20 years on the task. Eventually it gained broad acceptance among the populace, thus came to be called the *Versio Vulgata*, which means “popular translation”.

app Translation is always hard to achieve both be fidelity & beauty. Christians should be careful in choosing the right & suitable version for their use, as Ezra read before the people, “distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” (Neh.8:1-8)

W

Wages

Wage is a payment or recompense for labour or services. Sin also has recompense: “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom.6:23) But different is that “gift” of God, which is not wage, therefore one cannot gain by work, but only through believing in Jesus Christ: “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom.4:4,5) At the end of the parable to the vineyard laborers, Jesus conclude with the remark: “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? ... So the last shall be first, and the first last; For many be called, but few chosen.” (Matt.20:1-16) Thus it shows how the arbitrary grace applies.

app Christians should “receive not the grace of God in vain” (II Cor. 6:1), but as ministers, work with love, not for compensation. On the other hand, Church should treat their workers fairly & with honor (I Tim.5:17-19).

Waiting

In an industrial culture, effectiveness means much, so nonproductivity not only has less profit, is considered to be a shame. So, “waiting” to many, is suffering. But waiting time is not wasting time. Christians “wait for His Son [revealed] from heaven”, which means the second coming of Christ (I Thess.1:10), which is our great hope. Thus we labor & endure the tribulation, just as “the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and late rain.” (Jam.5:7)

So “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him... For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth... Wait on the LORD, and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land.” (Psa.37:7,9,34)

app John Milton wrote in his blindness: “But Patience to prevent / That murmur, soon replies, ‘God doth not need / Either man’s work or his own gifts; who best / Bear his mild yoke, they serve Him best... only stand and wait’.” Uzzah’s rushing hand surely not be pleasing to God (II Sam.6:6).

Walk & Talk

Jesus denounces the scribes & the Pharisees: “For they say, and do not.” (Matt.23:3) “For they do not practice what they preach.” (NIV) Which means they do not walk the talk. In the Proverbs, there is a wonderful image that “Like a lame man’s legs that hang limp is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.” (Pro.26:7 NIV)

app The Christian witness did not travel far and wide enough, most likely is halt by lack of walk. We should consider to have more exercises.

War

The purpose of this cruel action is to execute one's own will by subduing others. God's people should always consider God's will.

In the law of warfare (Deut.20:1-20), the camp & warriors should be kept clean (Deut.23:9-14). Newly married are exempted from war duty (24:5).

app In an unrighteous world, a righteous war is hard to find. Christians & Church as sons of peace, should not support aggressive war, or peddle in any such propaganda.

In the O.T. Bible referring to warfare means the armed struggles among nations. In the N.T. it often refers to spiritual warfare; therefore, Christians are urged to wade off evil, both inside and outside (II Cor.10:3-5; Eph.6:10-18).

Note: Aggression means: 1.To Invade other nation's boarder; 2.Caused damage to people's person or property; 2.Change the regime (UN).

Warning

The prophet was ordained by God as watchman for the people of the land: "If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people. Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet... So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel..." (Ez.33:1-16)

app God does not want anyone to perish. As in Noah's days, even for the evil ones, He wants it that they should come to repentance (II Peter 3:9). May God's servants pay attention to His will and warn people, that while there is still time, to leave their wicked ways, & accept salvation.

Waste

The things that could not serve the purpose for which it is created for, is called waste.

1.Waste is unfaithful to what is entrusted to them. Jesus told His disciples of such a steward (Jn.6:13; Lk.16:13).

2.The one who waste will result in punishment. (v.2)

To invest in the future instead of waste is wise. (vs.9,10)

app The world's wasting habit, will make the earth into wasteland in no time. Christians not only should be faithful of their time, talent, & treasure as God's trust, & be good stewards, but also be aware of the environment, & "to dress it and to keep it" (Gen.2:15), & let its condition be close to Eden.

Watch

1.The ancients Hebrew divided the night, from the sunset to sunrise into three watches (Psa.90:4). So called, is because there are hidden dangers in the dark, and one needs to be watchful.

2.Christians are told to be ready, and expect to meet their Lord anytime: “Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” (Matt.24:42)

3.“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” (II Thess.5:6)

4.Jesus told the disciples: “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” (Matt.26:41) this should be the watchword for all Christians at all times.

app For the world shall say: “Peace and safety”, then “sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (I Thess.5:3) Christians, be prepared!

Water

1.In the beginning, before the rain comes upon the earth, God sent moisture to the land; “There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.” (Gen.2:6) And “a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.” (2:10)

2.The Bible Land, as God had promised: “whither thou goes in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven. A land which the LORD thy God careth for; the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” (Deut.11:10-12)

3.Water is essential to life. So during their wilderness journey, they “did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same Spiritual drink; for they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” (I Cor.10:3,4)

4.Running stream called living water (Jn.4:7-15; 7:37,38; Rev.21:6; 22:17).

5.Water is used for cleaning. Walking on the dusty road, with sandals, to wash feet is necessary for travelers, so it became a kind of courtesy. Ritually water serves as a symbol of purification. Using water to wash hands, signifies innocence (Psa.26:6); Pilate washed his hands in front of the Jews, which is to show that he was not guilty of crucifying Jesus (Matt.27:25).

6.“The water thereof roar and be troubled” (Psa.46.2,3), means unrest.

7.Water could be used for God’s judgment. The uttermost destruction of the great deluge is in the tradition of many cultures. “By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (II Peter 3:5-11)

app Jesus said that “Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” (Matt.10:42) That shows the comradeship love. On the other hand, if one does not concern for the needs of the brothers, when he himself was tormented in fire, and want Lazarus to “dip of his finger in water, and cool” his tongue (Lk.16:24), it shall not be granted. So let us pray that God grant us the desire: “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee. O God.” (Psa.42:1)

Weak

In a state of being deficient of vigor is weakness, or infirmity. Believers should concern for those “weak in faith” (Rom.14:1-4), and avoid to wound others’ “weak conscience” and offend them (I Cor.8:12). As Paul said in love: “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak... this I do for the gospel’s sake.” (I Cor.9:22,23) And encourage others to “lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.” (Heb.12:13)

app Christians should also do whatever one can to help those physically weak and infirm. Church doing social concern, charity & hospitality, is a good tradition of Christianity (Matt.25:37-40).

Wedding

Celebrating weddings, in the Bible time, and running through church history. “Marriage is honourable in all.” (Heb.13:4) The Catholics made marriage one of the seven Sacraments. The Gospel of John that recorded Jesus’ first public ministry, it is in Cana’s wedding feast; there He changed water into wine (Jn. 2:1-11).

Paul wrote about the intimate relation of Christ to His Church: “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and His Church.” (Eph.5:30-32 cf. Gen.2:21-24)

Apostle John wrote that the angel announced: “‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said unto me: ‘These are the true sayings of God’.” (Rev.19:9)

app In today’s world, marriage is suffered because of the commercial culture, where most churches throng their pews with adulterous persons & divorced members. Thus they do not honor the marriage, nor they do understand the true love. The ministers ought to charge their members to care for their own marriage.

Weeks

The Feast of Weeks (Deut.16:9-12 cf. Lev.23:15-21) aka. Pentecost in N.T. (Acts 2:1; 20:16; I Cor.16:8)

app Pentecost marked the birth of the N.T. Church. It is likely that Paul & the church observes that day (Acts 20:16).

Weeping

To express passion by shedding tears is weeping. It is common in every culture. It comes at departing with sorrow, as Abraham mourn for Sarah (Gen.23:2); or, Paul at departing from the elders of Ephesian Church (Acts 20:36-38). It comes from happiness, as Joseph met his brother Benjamin (Gen.45:14); Also may be for repentance: “Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness; Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.” (Jam.9,10).

app The Church has the “common sense” of *koinonia*, which comes naturally: “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one to another.” (Rom.12:15,16) Church without community feeling is not healthy.

Weight

“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weight, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have.” (Lev.19:35,36)

app Someone’s words may carry more weight, usu. it meant that the weight of gold is added in, so people listen to. But beware that one day, the Lord will find that “thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” (Dan.5:27)

Well

In addition to stream & rain water, the towns people may depend on well for their water supply. The patriarchs have wells dug wherever they live. So did Abraham & Isaac (Gen.21:30; 26:22); Jacob’s well in Sychar, was in use at Jesus’ time, where He had the conversation with the woman of Samaria, & it still exist today (Jn.4:5-42).

app Water drawn from the well may quench the thirst for a while; only the “living water” that comes from Christ, the Saviour can give everlasting life to whoever believe in Him (Jn.4:42). The Church should not just satisfy themselves with water drawn from traditional sources, but be filled with living water.

Wheat

As in an agricultural community praying for “our daily bread” (Matt.6:11), wheat naturally is the main produce.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you: except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit.” (Jn.12:24)

In His parable of the kingdom, Jesus referred the wheat as “the children of the kingdom” and “the righteous” (Matt.13:24-30,36-43); but the “tares” (weeds) were sown by an enemy. The servants of the house offered to root out the weeds. But by so doing will damage the wheat. So, even the omniscient Lord will not judge the world before its time, and the separation of the unbelievers is reserved for the Lord, at the time ripe for harvest.

app. The over-jealous persons, or the apparently jealous ones, like to judge & execute the purge for some reason, but will not benefit the church. So, it must act with care, and with due process & order.

Wheels

Among human inventions, the wheel has great value. Ezekiel has seen “the living creature, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl, and they four had one likeness, and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.” (Ez.1:15,16)

These wheels can be identified with Cherubims (Ez.10:9). Thus it showed that the wheels seemed to have spiritual life.

app It is hard to visualize the wheel in the vision, but what we can know is that God synchronizes the spiritual & the mechanical power, to work out His divine design. We could trust God fully.

Whirl Winds

Wind symbolizes the movement of the spiritual power.

“He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.” (Heb.1:7)

1. God manifested His majestic presence: “The LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD.” (Kings 19:11)

2. To translate His righteous & faithful servant into glory: “The LORD would take up Elijah by a whirlwind.” (II Kings 2:1)

3. To punish the wicked: “Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked.” (Jer.23:19)

app Christians should be grown up & strong, not be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” (Eph.4:14)

Whispering

The Church in Corinth, had many faults, among these irregularities, “there be debates, envying, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults...” (II Cor.12:20) Whispering is some type of talebearing, usu. slander in nature, thus often be the source of troubles: “A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends.” (Pro.16:28) Paul charged Timothy that “against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” (I Tim.5:19) thus giving no occasion for faceless & groundless whispering, or slandering.

app “All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light, for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” (Eph.5:13) As children of light, the Church should give no opportunity to darkness.

White Horse

White horse usu. signifying authority & power.

John had seen Christ in the vision: “I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.” (Rev.19:11)

Yet as the Lamb opened the first seal, there appeared a “white horse” (Rev.6:2), that is not the Lamb Christ Himself, but one who does “conquer” of falsehood, and brings calamity to earth.

app Do not believe all the winsome persons, but know Christ for certitude, who will be the final Victor. Christians ought to follow Him faithfully, until we enter eternal glory.

White Raiment

1.Christ at the transfiguration: “His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light.” (Matt.17:2)

2.The Lord promised those faithful ones: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment...” (Rev.3:5)

3.The redeemed: “made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev.7:14)

4. “For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And so was granted that she should be arrayed in white linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” (Rev.19:7,8,14)

app Christians who follow their Lord, should keep oneself clean & undefiled. As one who is going to be wedded, should also keep in mind to be chaste and clean. As to the one going to seek public office, the word “candidate” came from Roman custom; those whom wanted to be elected into office, literally with glowing white (L. *candor*) toga, signifying being candid. They would sit at the roadside, begging the populace to give them a vote. In today’s world, one could hardly find those so called “Democratic” countries keep this tradition; Christians should do.

White Throne

The Apostle John wrote that “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, 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 whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev.20:11-15)

app “This is the record: that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (I Jn.5:11,12) So, the purpose of the Church is the life ministry: to make sure the members have new life, thus they do not have the second death.

Whole

Mature, perfect, complete & whole, are closely related. Jesus says: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” (Matt.9:12) That is to rebuke the Pharisees who thought they are morally perfect while they are not.

app There are self-righteous people, who see others’ short-comings, & assuming that means themselves are perfect. They, in fact, are hypocrites, who refuse to repent, and have no hope to go into heaven.

Whore

One who engages in sexual act for hire is called whore, harlot; hence one who harbour a faithless, unworthy desire, or an apostate. In Revelation, “The great whore that sitteth upon many waters”, is also called “Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth” (Rev.17:1-18:24). She is in the tradition of pagan temple Sacred Prostitute, “with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been drunk with the wine of her fornication.” And one day her judgment will come upon her.

app Babylon is the symbol of Rome. They practice fornication, meaning syncretism, mix religions; they live in luxury, and shed the blood of saints. The righteous God’s judgment will come.

Wicked, Wickedness

“They have corrupted themselves... They are a perverse and crooked generation.” (Deut.32:5) “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” (Isa.57:21)

app In the present amoral culture, Christians should not be mixed with the world system, but have to do their duty to proclaim the gospel: “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable... and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.” (Jam.3:17,18)

Widow

In ancient society, to lead a life of widowhood was hard. So God is merciful as “A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows.” (Pas.68:5)

Thus Jesus observes the “poor widow casting in thither two mites”, and commended her gift “more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.” (Lk.21:1-4)

James said that “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Jam.1:27)

In the early Jerusalem church, there was a specified food provision program for widows (Acts.6:1). Paul’s epistle to Timothy, mentions an official list of widows, with age requirement and certain religious and moral behavior in addition to the absence of a dependable family member (I Tim.5:3-17).

app It is not only a good idea, but is imperative that Church should have provision for widows as home mission field.

Wilderness

Wildness ori. meaning “place of herding”; sometimes means “desert”, but is not lifeless land; there are sparsely inhabited, and pastoral, agricultural life.

It is a hard place, short supply of food & water. Israel’s forty years journey in the wilderness, were nothing short of hardship. Yet to the ascetics, such as Essenics or the Dead Sea groups, it is desirable. Wilderness is also for people to rest, contemplation & spiritual renewal. Before beginning His public ministry, “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matt.4:1-11) It happened, during His ministry, Jesus & His disciples, from time to time, go to the wilderness to rest in their busy works (Mk.6:31). John the Baptist testified himself that “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness...” (Jn.1:23) Apostle Paul “went into Arabia” (Gal.1:17), probably then he received the revelation of the third heaven (II Cor.12:2-4).

app In a noisy society of modern life, the Church may need to have retreat, by going to the wilderness; not for making fun & activities, but to contemplation & pray, & to be alone with the Lord, for spiritual restoration & renewal.

Will

The born-again Christian is born of the Will of God, not the will of man (Jn.1:13). The Lord taught His disciples to pray to the Father that “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt.6:10). As Jesus came into the world, He said: “Lo, I come to do Thy will.” (Heb.10:7,8 cf. Psa.40:7,8) At the garden of Gethsemane, under the shadow of the cross, He three times prayed that “Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” (Matt.39-45) Paul beseeched the believers that “ye present your bodies a living sacrifice...be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Rom.12:1,2)

app To subdue one’s own will & to do God’s will, as a redeemed Christian, is the only “reasonable service”; otherwise it is not the right servitude. May all Christians say with Paul to “finish my course with joy.” (Acts 20:24).

Wine

Alcoholic liquid came from fermented fruits, or grains. Since ancient time, the grain, wine and oil are staples of life (Deut.11:14; cf. Joel 1:10). And “wine maketh merry” (Eccl.10:19), and “cheereth God and man” (Judg.9:13) it meant wine was used in festivals. Jesus used wine in moderation (Lk.7:34); Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church for using wine excessively (I Cor.11:21), & shows it used at Eucharist. Paul even encourages Timothy to “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.” (I tim.5:23); but in general, he discouraged the intake of strong drinks (Rom.14:17,21).

app The Church by no means should promote using alcohols. But the fact is that, preservation of the so called grape juice were not known in ancient times, then naturally, at Passover season one could only find wine. There is no point of contention.

Wisdom

Unlike human cleverness, wisdom is given by God. “For the LORD giveth wisdom, out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” (Pro.2:6) Paul wrote that “Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” (I Cor.1:30) So Christians by the Holy Spirit, can have wisdom: “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. Redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col.4:5,6)

app In the O.T. Bible, wisdom that speaks in female voice (Pro.8:1-9:18), are due to women’s procreative function. In the N.T. in Christ “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col.2:3). So, Christians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing

one another...” (3:16) and “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” (1:28)

Witchcraft

In ancient cultures, commonly witchcraft is practiced. It is performed with diabolic power, by a human medium. But God forbid His people to do it: “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” (Ex.22:18)

app Today in most places those who practice witchcraft need not fear for their lives; some people even call themselves “witch” for mocking or joking. The Church need to beware and keep their members away from such medium, even for such curiosity.

Witness

The resurrected Jesus told His disciples that “Ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) At the suggestion of Peter: “Must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection.” Thus Matthias was taken “and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. (Acts 1:22-26) That is for the purpose to the witness of Jesus’ resurrection. Apostle John wrote: “There are three that bear record in heaven: The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.” (I Jn.5:7-11)

app Witness is a juridical term. 1.To have personal or direct cognizance of certain event; 2.To know for sure whom one is on witness for. 3.We should always remind ourselves that we are not to witness of ourselves. Technically, one can testify & confess, but cannot bear witness for oneself (Jn.8:18). Christians sometimes quite forget that “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (I Cor.1:31)

Woes

A condition of disasters of ruinous trouble, causing great misery.

1.Woe to those who refuse to repent: “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matt.11:21)

2.Woe to those hypocrites: “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ...” (Matt.23:13-36)

3.To the one who betrayed the Lord: “The son of man goeth as it is written about Him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.” (Matt.26:24)

app The minister should not only be pronouncing “Peace”, but should also warn people of the consequences of their actions which would cause them woe, and warn them to repent.

Wolves

The Bible used wolves to signify wicked and cruel people. Jesus told His disciples: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” (Matt.7:15) Again, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” (Matt.10:16) Paul warning his beloved Ephesian elders of the Church that “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” (Acts 20:29)

app Pastor should take the oversight of the flock, & not only be the meek gentle overseer, but be a brave defender of the faith, wading off the wolves, even sacrificing one’s own life as so did the Lord. (Jn.10:11)

Woman

The role & status of ancient women generally were low. But in the Hebrew culture, women seemed to be in higher respect. First of all, after the Fall, “The Seed of the woman” (Gen.3:15) is the prototype of the gospel. “Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham”, and called the Patriarch “Lord” (I Peter 3:6); she commanded a high esteem. It runs through Israel history, that women served the important role of judge, prophetess & queen (Ex.14:20; Judg.4:4; II Kings 11:3; 23:14). In the O.T. Bible, there are books bearing women’s name: Ruth & Esther.

In N.T., It begins with Jesus’ genealogy, besides Mary, there appeared four women’s names: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, & Wife of Urias [Bath-sheba] (q.v. Matt.1:3,5,6,16) In early Christianity, many women were Jesus’ followers with men (Matt.27:55; Mk.15:40,41; Lk.8:1-3). In the early Church, Lydia (Acts 16:14), Europe’s first convert; Phoebe served as deaconess (Rom.16:1); Priscilla and her husband Aquila were missionaries (Rom.16:3-5); with Andronicus Paul mentioned Junias, both “are of note among the apostles” (Rom.16:7). Thus women’s role is equal in the ministry.

app Because of certain problems mentioned in the epistles, which happened in particular churches (I Cor.11:4; I Tim.2:9-12), it caused over-reactions, to the extreme, & even buried their talents, suppressed women activities all together. Actually, the Church should organize & mobilize women to develop their effective ministry along men. This is not to follow the feministic trend of the world, but to re-assert the Biblical examples, to revive the movement.

Word

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word was made flesh, and dwell among us, (and we behold His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (Jn.1:1,14) Thus the Disciple whom Jesus loved made this introduction of the incarnation of Christ Jesus to the world.

app What John talked about is not the wisdom of the Greeks, but the incarnated Logos, who is Christ Jesus.

“Preaching is using the spoken word, by the written word, to manifest the incarnate Word.” (Henry Edward Manning)

i.e. *Verbum Audible*: Preach; *Verbum Dei*: God’s Holy Word, Bible; *Verbum Incarnation*: WORD became Flesh.

Work

God hath not pre-ordained work as punishment.

1.In contrast to work is that we are justified by grace through faith: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph.2:10)

2.We are justified by faith alone, but faith is never alone; faith must come with work. Jesus says: “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” (Rev.22:12,13)

app. Work is not the punishment of man’s Fall. A redeemed person’s evidence is “give diligence to make your calling and election sure.” (II Peter 1:10)

Wormwood

Wormwood is God’s curse to those who against His will, the word means bitter or grievous (Deut.29:18 cf. Jer.23:15).

At the End time, when the third trumpet sounded, “there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood. And the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.” (Rev.8:10,11) To “know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God.” (Jer.2:19)

app All Christians should declare from their heart that “I delight to do Thy will.” (Psa.40:8) “For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light.” (Psa.36:9)

Worship

The Ten Commandments begins with call for humans to worship the only true God. (Ex.20:1-17; Deut.5:6-21)

With devotion & reverence offered to a divine Being is worship. The word came from worthy+ship. Jesus says: “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” (Jn.4:24)

Before the throne there was a sea of glass... “Those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to Him...The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ‘Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created’.” (Rev.4:9-11; cf. 5:12)

app In all respects to public worship, churches today are lacking in the spirit of respect to God. Though no one quite expect the ritual ceremony at all occasions, yet a sense of solemnity is absent. “If then I be a father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear?” (Mal.1:6) May be this is a timely question.

Wrath

Wrath is a strong indignation or anger; also used for divine chastisement.

“Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written: ‘Vengeance is Mine; I will repay.’ Saith the Lord.” (Rom.12:19)

At the End of the world, the wrath of the Lamb is kindled against the great leaders: “For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Rev.6:15-17)

app Christ’s ministers should utter a balanced theme: with the love of God, and the wrath of God. Let your audience make a fair decision.

Writing

Superior above other creatures, human beings have the ability to express & preserve their thoughts by writing.

1.The beginning of writing, might be traced to: “The LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.” (Gen.4:15) In this case, it would be the protoplast of common language.

2.God had given His will also “written with the finger of God” on two tables of stone (Deut.9:10); Moses received and gave them to Israel.

3.God issued the death sentence to the Babylonian king Belshazzar on his palace wall (Dan.5:1-31).

4.The scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus “a woman taken in adultery”, and to tempt Him, if He were to agree that such a one should be stoned. “But Jesus stoop down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.” (Jn.8:1-11) The Son of God granted deliverance to her: “Go, and sin no more!”

5.The “Spirit of the living God” by His Apostle written “in fleshy tables of the heart” his epistle, as ministration of life and righteousness (II Cor.3:2-11).

app God values the ministry of writing. So we should do the same.

X

Xeno-philia

Christian leaders must have good characters in order to lead others. One of them listed here, who seems significant is to receive fellow believers whom they do not know came from afar. This shows one has a large heart & love. Obviously, one with a small heart can never enlarge the kingdom of Christ. Thus “For a bishop must be ... a lover of hospitality ...” (Titus 1:8) Not only leaders, even a widow in order to be listed by the church, must have this good quality: “If she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet ...” (I Tim.5:10)

app. One may say that that is merely “social”, yet it is the social quality which distinguishes humans from other creatures. One that think of “us” & “ours”, is the characteristic of today’s culture; people of God should behave differently. Jesus said: “Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” (Matt.10:42)

Xenophobia

“The apostles and brethren that were in Judea, heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they ... contended with him.” (Acts 11:1,2)

“Timothy, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed, but his father was a Greek; which was well reported of by... Him would Paul to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews were in those quarters ...” (Acts 16:1-3)

app. In N.T. days there had not the evil of modern nationalism, yet foreigners were generally not well received. Though we have so called globalization today, that may be realized for commerce; most people, even Christians may not be open-minded enough yet. Pray that may God bless His Church with that vision, before starting the mission.

Y

Yea

Yea is affirmation. Jesus said: “Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay. For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” (Matt.5:37)

app Whatever statement one makes, must be honest. Dishonest words cannot be used as expediency for excuse; if an honest culture is created, there is never any need to swear on expediency.

Year

God established Passover in Egypt, for Israel; He commanded Moses & Aaron: “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; It shall be the first month of the year.” (Ex.12:1,2) This signifies that Israel got out of Egypt as the new beginning of their lives.

app “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor.5:17) Those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, have a new citizenship which is in heaven (Phil.3:20). Therefore “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col.3:2)

Yielding

One who possess a place usually is not willing to give it up, easily. If one wills, one is a yielding person. “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments unto God.” (Rom.6:13)

app Christians of transformed mind, show to “be courteous” (I Peter 3:8), “in honour preferring one another.” (Rom.12:10) Thus it shows the meek and humble nature of the disciples of the Lamb.

Yoke

1.Yoke means duty, or submit to authority. Rehoboam oppressed the people of Israel & threated them: “My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.” (I Kings12:14) The rough words, drove his subjects to rebel. Jesus said to those who followed Him: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt.11:28-30)

2.Yoke signifies marriage. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? ... and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? ... ” (II Cor.6:14-18) Which is based on the ancient wedding custom that the wedded couple share one yoke, and walk through the threshold. That may extend to the fellowship principle.

app “Be ye separate” (II Cor.6:17) is a phrase much being misused for any reason among believers, and which causes many disunity rather than holiness. Do not use it casually & carelessly.

Youth

1.Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” (Eccl.12:1)

2. “Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (I Peter 5:5,6)

3. “Flee also youthful lust: but follow righteousness, faith, clarity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (II Tim.2:22)

app Therefore, Youth Work in the Church should not *carpe diem*, to group together idly & aimlessly. What should one aim to do: 1.Dedication to be time; 2. Disposition to be humble; 3.Devotion to be holy.

Z

Zeal, Zealousness

Laziness, or slothfulness, is “lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot” (Rev.3:11) a state of listlessness make man, even Jesus uncomfortable. So, “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor” (Rom.12:11 NIV) is the exaltation.

app. Job talked about “an hireling looketh for the reward of his work” (Job 4:2), it shows how little such a one is keen for his work. The Lord needs only the people who are “constrained” by the love of Christ (II Cor.5:14), not for stomach.

Zealot

The Zealots (in Hebrew, *Ka-na-im*) , according to Jewish historian Josephus speaks of a certain Galilean who stirred up a revolt (*Jewish War*, 20.118); this Judas (Act 5:37) led people who refused to pay tax to Romans, and even killed the Jews who would compromise as well. Such as Simon the Zealot (Matt.10:4; Lk.6:15) among the twelve disciples, was one of from an armed rebellion party. The movement failed completely; but the kingdom of God advanced.

app. Violence & brutal force can never be a good policy, nor by anyway to please God. Members of political party may converted to be disciple of Christ, but Church should not adopt political agendas.

Zion, Zionism

Zion, also Sion in the Bible, is the name of Jerusalem.

The Jewish Diaspora longed to return to their home land. In 1790, a group of them communicated to & were accepted by George Washington to settle in USA.

In Napoleon’s period, with his conditional approval, they even established a Sanhedrin, though they only convened once. In the end of nineteenth century, came Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), the short-lived leader, who was

the Father of Modern Zionism Movement with fervent zeal, and who was often compared to Moses, who brought the idea of a Jewish State into his people's mind. Under Herzl's leadership, The First Zionist Congress was convened in 1897. Then, Britain offered a largely undeveloped area of Uganda (now part of Kenya) for Jewish refuge, or alter homeland. But the suggestion was rejected. During the Congress 1903, Herzl delivered the concluding speech.

Raising his right hand, Herzl closed his remarks in Hebrew, with words drawn from Psalm 137: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither." (JL, p.267)

After Herzl's death, a Russ-born Jewish chemist, then Prof. Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952) of the University Manchester, during the World War I, who influenced Britain to issue The Balfour Declaration (Nov. 2, 1917) favouring "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. In 1948; Israel's statehood was declared, Weizmann was elected as its first president. David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) prime minister.

When John Wesley, the eighteenth-century founder of the Methodist Church, died, it was said of him that all he left behind was a knife, a Fork, two spoons, and the Methodist Church. Of Ben-Gurion it may Be said that he left behind him a Jewish state. (JL, p.281)

app. Ben-Gurion was asked by the first minister of religion, Rabbi Judah Leib Maimon, to reconstitute Sanhedrin. He sarcastically asked where would he find seventy-one judges who will fulfill the Torah criterion of hating ill-gotten gains (Ex.18:21). Maimon replied: "Give me enough money, I will find you seventy-one judges who hate ill-gotten gains." However, most of the country's religious leadership rejected this proposal. On the other hand, the Jewish Orthodoxy sect also reject the current government, because it is not as the restoration which the Bible promised.

Holy Scriptures, The. New trans. by J.N. Darby
Jerusalem Bible, The.
King James Authorized Version
King James Version, The Scofield Reference Bible
New American Standard Bible
New English Bible, The.
New Geneva Study Bible (New King James Version)
New International Version Bible
New Oxford Annotated Bible, RSV
NIV Study Bible, The.

Encyclopedia Britannica, The.
Jewish Literacy, by Joseph Telushkin
New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, The.
Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary, by Eric Partridge
Oxford Companion of the Bible, The.
Oxford English Reference Dictionary
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