

(INSIDE THE FRONT COVER)

**THE PLEROMA**

**THE FULNESS OF CHRIST**

by

**Beulah F. Ashburn\***

**He came ... A Man ... Flesh and Blood! ...  
Alive to this world! to take our sinfulness in  
His death!**

**And now, we who are His Body ... (spiritually) ...  
Alive with Him in the Heavens, striving daily,**

**Facing our own weaknesses ... to find our strength  
In His LOVE and forgiveness, to overcome the  
weakness we find in ourselves ... so ...**

**The witness that we show to others, may bring them  
to love Him as we do.**

**October 2010**

**\*We at Scripture Research, Inc. (SRI) welcome this *outpouring* and *witness* of Mrs. Ashburn (Bea), a true Berean. Because of her tenacious and all consuming love of the Scriptures and the Christ of those same Scriptures, she has come to grasp some of the monumental, positional truths we have in our Lord. From all of us at SRI who make *Scripture Research* available to those who also share in the love of God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thank you, Bea, for sharing.**

**Just a side note. For those of you who are reading this “inside cover” note, Bea is 89 years of age. Shame on any of you who think you are too old to study the Book anymore!**

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## FOREWORD

### “What is Truth?”

Perhaps you have read or heard this question or statement. How sad to realize that the person who asked this query (in Scripture) was face to face with the living answer. There is only *one* ultimate Truth, and this same Truth is and was embodied in a person – the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ the Lord!! Also, please realize that this Truth/Person is from without, not from within. The sooner that the totality of mankind recognizes this fact, i.e., (“truth is from without”) the sooner this same “totality” can be healed of its lawlessness and aberrancy and embrace the purpose(s) of God, His Grace and forgiveness. To this end, we at Scripture Research, Inc. (SRI) are dedicated.

But now to the two papers and the two authors that are before you. During SRI’s 2009 Fall conference, this matter of TRUTH was the over-arching theme. Now, if you will, add to this mix GRACE (the main theme of the Spring, 2002, conference). In 2007, the conference’s primary theme was FULNESS. Are these not very profound in scope and important areas of Biblical research that we as a Christ-centered organization are pursuing in order that we might share with those of you who read *Scripture Research*, the fruits of these studies? As “Right Dividers” of the Scriptures, these are extremely cogent as to how we apply these three areas of thought to interpreting our Bible and to how we let them become part of our personal relationships with those around us and to the Lord Himself.

In this issue of *Scripture Research*, two very Godly men present to you some new insights into this matter of TRUTH.

The first paper, written by Mr. John Rucker, a

member of Scripture Research, Inc.'s Board of Directors, considers the matter of *The Truth of Discipline* and starts this matter back in Eden and mankind's (our) original parents. John then guides us through the divine pages considering *DISCIPLINE* as it impacts matters relating to the Old and New covenants and concluding with thoughts of *DISCIPLINE* and the Body of Christ.

Mr. Marc Leastman holds a Master's degree in Computer Forensics and, together with his family, owns a computer consulting firm specializing in information technology services for professional businesses. He designed and maintains Scripture Research, Inc.'s website. Marc presented the following thesis (*Framing the Truth*) at the 2009 Scripture Research Conference. Marc, like John Rucker, loves the Scriptures and its Author, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Christian believers who love the *INCARNATE ULTIMATE TRUTH*, we cannot bury our heads in the sand in matters relating to all of the current events which are occurring around us (both nationally and internationally). We must *recognize* the craftiness of the world system that we live in and ready ourselves with an answer when called upon. We must also stand united in our testimony with those of kindred faith and conviction both near and far. Whether we like it or not, we are in the midst of all this cultural aberrancy, pluralism, relativism and lawlessness. There is only one answer to this negative slide into "oblivion," the Lord Jesus Himself! May we and our testimony/efforts stand as a light in this darkened world.

# THE TRUTH OF DISCIPLINE

by

John Rucker, Board Member  
Scripture Research, Inc.

## INTRODUCTION

Probably we should raise the question before we start: Does the Bible reveal truth regarding the concept of discipline of man? The *King James Version* of the *Bible* actually reveals only one reference to the actual word discipline, that being in Job 36:10 (AV), where it is said:

He openeth their ear to discipline, and  
commandeth that they return from iniquity.

We understand from this that, because God has opened their ear to discipline, they are returned (or turn back) from iniquity. This reveals that discipline was for the benefit of those who were disciplined.

This, however, does not give or reveal all the references we have concerning the concept of discipline found in the Scriptures. A number of references will be cited from various other versions of the Bible referring to the use of discipline in the Word. There are other words using a term which focuses upon the kind of discipline referred to, among which are such words as adversity, adversary, affliction, chastened, chastening, oppression, correction, humbled and testing, as well as those which indicate discipline is for man's good or for his sake.

## BIBLICAL USAGE OF THE TERM *DISCIPLINE*

If we want to know what the Bible has to say on this subject, we must go to the source and open the Book. Before turning to these references and concepts cited which speak of or indicate discipline, let us consider the very first reference to discipline found in the Bible.

### *Discipline and The Original Sin in Man*

In Genesis 2:7 we read that God created the man called Adam. In verse 8 of Chapter 2 it is said (AV),

God planted a Garden eastward in Eden and placed the man He had formed or created in it. Verse 9: God caused to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food; including the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In verses 15-17:

God put the man into the garden of Eden to dress and keep it, and informed Adam that of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.

A prohibition was placed only upon the eating of one single tree in the midst of the garden, referred to as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There was not only a prohibition against eating of that tree, but a penalty which stated: “Thou shalt not eat of it: *for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*”

The penalty for eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was unambiguous and plainly stated by God. It did not say you will die tomorrow, or next week or at some later time in the far distant future; but the penalty was to be effective and carried out that very day.

**In verse 20 of Chapter two, God reveals there was no helpmeet found for Adam. God remedied this situation at once; and in verses 21 and 22, He caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam and removed one of his ribs, from which He created woman, whom Adam named Eve.**

**The language exchange in Chapter three between Eve and the serpent leaves no doubt Adam had informed Eve of the prohibition and penalty for eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**

**How long Adam and Eve could have remained in the Garden without being concerned with thinking of or having a desire to eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree we can but speculate.**

### **Enter the Tempter and The Temptation**

**However, almost immediately we observe one who arrives on the scene who challenges and opposes God's will; and who was as you might say, "Johnny on the spot." It is the one referred to as the serpent, who immediately proceeds to test Eve regarding eating of the forbidden tree. It is clear that he had an agenda which was known only to himself and to God. Yes, it is the adversary, the one referred to here as the serpent, who confronted Eve; and he is none other than the one named later in the Bible as the Devil, Satan and that old dragon. He immediately proceeds to question Eve regarding her specific knowledge of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He begins by questioning God's truthfulness; and, in fact, proceeds by calling God a liar regarding the penalty which was to be exacted for eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The serpent said to the woman:**

**Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (AV).**

This lie of the serpent was plainly meant to deceive the woman, with the result that he convinced her to eat of the forbidden tree, which was in line with his own specific purposes. Speculation regarding his reason for doing so are shown below, which will be shown to be true.

### The Penalty and *Discipline* for The Fall

Eve saw the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to make one wise, and she, being deceived, took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat. This was for the specific purpose of subjecting them to the penalty, which had been plainly specified, i.e., death in the day that they ate the forbidden fruit.

The penalty for their sin was also in line with what the Apostle Paul said by inspiration in Romans 6:23 (AV):

For the wages of sin is death.

They were sure, therefore, to receive the wages earned, or due them.

### The *Discipline* – Delayed or Immediate? (Spiritual or Physical Death?)

Because Adam and Eve did not immediately fall down dead, mankind has ever since questioned the validity of what God actually said and did, and what transpired as the result of Adam's and Eve's eating of the forbidden tree. The reasoning appears to center around two completely different scenarios: either they died spiritually as some claim and would have us believe, or they died physically that day as promised. But many do not recognize the method employed by God to this end.

It is true that to the skeptical eye Adam and Eve *did not appear to experience* a physical death after partaking of the forbidden

tree, inasmuch as we observe Adam continued to live for some 930 years after that; and Eve lived to become the mother of all living. So at first blush they may not appear to have died a physical death, but this will be given further consideration later.

Before deciding whether they experienced a literal, physical death or not, let us consider one of the usual reasons advanced by those who claim Adam and Eve died a spiritual death; and then consider the question of whether or not the Word shows they died a literal, physical death.

Failure to read and understand the Word of God appears to be the basis for the claim that Adam and Eve died a spiritual death. It is necessary to turn to the Scriptures to test any speculation of whether or not they were created spiritual beings so they could experience a spiritual death.

The claim they died spiritually does not meet the test of I Corinthians 15:45-47, which reveals *they were not given spiritual life when created*, and shows any such surmising to be patently incorrect. And so it is written:

The first man Adam was made a living soul (i.e., a natural person); the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit *that was not first* which is *spiritual*, but that which is natural (or fleshly); and afterward that which is spiritual. *The first man (Adam) is of the earth, earthy*; the second man (Christ) is the Lord from heaven (AV).

*Is it possible for a being who was not created spiritual to die a spiritual death?*

The reference in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15 reveals the first man, Adam, was definitely created a living (or fleshly) person, or soul, not a spiritual person. The last man Adam (Christ) is re-

vealed as the only one who was spiritual. There is no hint given of any possibility that Adam and Eve were created spiritual in order that they could die a spiritual death.

Others have sought to cloud the real issue by stating that God did not really say, or mean, in Genesis 2:17 they would die that day; but what He actually said was, "Dying thou shalt die." This speculation appears to be taken by some to mean only, "when you die, you die." This does not appear to reveal any discernable or reasonable meaning.

Regardless of the question concerning the language of this phrase, it would appear to have no effect on the results of what God actually did regarding Adam's and Eve's sin of disobedience for eating of the prohibited tree. The obvious question should be, did Adam and Eve actually die a physical death the day they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as God had said? Let us seek an answer from the Scripture. It was pointed out from a consideration of I Corinthians 15:45-47 that they were not spiritual, so were literally unable to die a spiritual death.

Does there appear to be any other possibility that would have allowed them to have been reckoned to have died physically but not spiritually? The answer is definitely yes, there is an answer in the Word.

### Divine Grace Applied (Substitution) To Mankind's Sin

If we but open the Book, immediately the dilemma as perceived by some will quickly disappear. God Himself settled the issue for them in Genesis 3:21 (AV), where we read:

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD  
God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

We might ask, where did God procure the skins with which he clothed Adam and Eve? Did He just find them lying about,

ready to hand out for His purpose? The answer is, He took the skins from animals which He obviously *slew* for the specific purpose of clothing Adam and Eve, to cover or atone for their sin. And so the *animals died that day*, INSTEAD or *in place* of Adam and Eve, who were *reckoned to have died physically* in THAT VERY DAY in the death of the sacrificial animals. The animals represented a type of Christ. Just so we too who are alive in this age have been *reckoned to have died with Christ* when he died upon the cross. We are alive now, even as Adam and Eve, who continued to live then in the flesh. This is the first sacrifice revealed in the Bible.

The death Adam and Eve were *reckoned to have died that day* was truly a physical death, not a spiritual death, just as the death of the animals was a physical death, not spiritual. And so we find that God is true, and the pundits are in error again. Adam was not created with a spiritual body, but with a soulish or fleshly body, and he will never have or enjoy a spiritual body until subsequent to resurrection.

### How “Today” Deals with *Discipline*

When we think of the term discipline, it is probably normal to think of it only as it relates to treatment we received growing up, that corrected or punished us as children and ignores what may be the objective or result of discipline or punishment. We fail to consider discipline from God's perspective.

When I was growing up, my parents had only a faint knowledge of the teaching of the Bible, and had no knowledge of the present-day psychologists and psychiatrists and their ramblings. If they had, they would no doubt have realized that discipline which involves spanking is now regarded as corporal punishment by these so-called people of learning, and that punishment administered in the future would produce all kinds of bad results in our later development. They used discipline for an infraction committed, and that discipline produced the desired results, which was their singular concern.

How many of the problems which have occurred in our past we can now blame on the psychologists and psychiatrists by the use of this so-called corporal punishment when we were growing up. The Bible logic is given no consideration by these people, and would make little or no sense to them if it were.

God is our Heavenly Father. He disciplines us in many ways for our benefit, and He is not concerned with the teaching of the psychologists and psychiatrists in the matter of discipline, correction or testing. He Who knows the end from the beginning is perfectly aware of the results which the discipline He administers will produce in us.

### Back to Eden

Before giving consideration to the various Biblical texts referenced earlier, I wish to consider a number of things relating to Adam's and Eve's sin of disobedience to God's command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which appears to show the result of God's discipline.

In Genesis 3:17-19 (AV), after Adam and Eve had partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam was told by God in verse 17:

... because thou hast harkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying 'thou shalt not eat of it,' *cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* (Emphasis added)

Adam's sin resulted in the cursing of the ground for his sake, and the production of thorns and thistles. He was also told in verse 19:

**In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**

This was no doubt to be a constant reminder to him of his sin of disobedience.

### **The Parable of the Sower and *Discipline***

With reference to the ground's producing thorns and thistles, we are reminded of the words of our Lord to His disciples in Matthew 13:3-8 regarding the parable of the Sower. Particular attention is focused on the concept of the productivity of the good ground. Verse 8 reads (AV):

**But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit; some an hundredfold, some sixty-fold, some thirtyfold.**

However, the interpretation of the parable shows the primary interpretation belongs to the sowing of the Word; nevertheless an application may be given consideration with regard to the actual sowing of seed, and may relate the reason for Adam's eating his bread by the sweat of his brow.

Consider also the interpretation of the parable of the sowing of the tares in the field, which follows in Matthew 13:24-42. In this parable the enemy who sowed the tares is identified as the devil, the very same deceiver who confronted Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and persuaded them to sin. The "tares" are said to be "the children of the wicked one." We might give thought to speculating whether or not these children of the wicked one may be among us today.

When considering the sin of Adam and Eve, we may also consider how they received benefit as the result of their discipline. They had been condemned to death as the result of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was discipline of the most severe kind. However, it can be seen that they received a great gift, whereby, instead of being slain out of hand as they merited, their sin was laid upon or reckoned to the animals which were slain to provide them a covering of the skins. An obvious result was they were reckoned to have died in the flesh, instead of being slain for their sin, thus allowing them to continue to live in the flesh for a considerable period of time. They lived because Christ would ultimately pay the penalty for their sin, which the death of the animals only reckoned as temporary covering.

The prohibition by their Creator should have completely inhibited Adam and Eve from any desire whatsoever to partake of the forbidden tree; instead, because of the undue outside influence of the serpent (Satan), it did not. Attention is directed to the fact that God did in no way *let them off* or excuse their sin in any way, but exacted the penalty or discipline threatened.

### Other Old Testament Instances of Divine *Discipline*

#### - Joseph and His Brothers -

Now let us consider instances of discipline from the Old Testament. In the *King James Version* of the *Bible* (Genesis 50:20), Joseph, speaking to his brothers after the death of their father Jacob, calmed their fears and said to them:

But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Joseph's brothers thought that because in their jealousy they

had sold him into bondage, now that their father was dead, he would requite them for the evil they had done him. Joseph, however, assured them that their evil against him had been overturned by God for their *good or for their sake*.

One can fully appreciate Joseph's brothers' apprehension and fear after the death of their father, in view of what Moses had said to Israel in Deuteronomy 24:7 (AV):

If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him, then that thief shall die, and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

This was what they merited under the law. They had sold their brother Joseph into bondage. So they had ample reason to be fearful.

- Moses and Fledgling Israel -

In Deuteronomy 6:23-24, the *King James version*, Moses reminded Israel of their being brought out of the bondage of Egypt, saying:

... that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He sware unto our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes to fear the LORD our God, *for our good always*, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day.

Keeping the statutes of the LORD was shown to be not only for their *good or sake*, but for *the purpose of preserving the nation alive*. Also a motive not stated, which was for the preservation of the seed line of the woman (Christ), Who was to bruise (or crush) the head of the serpent (Satan).

In Deuteronomy 8: 2-3 of the *King James Version* it is said:

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD led thee (Israel) these forty years in the wilderness, *to humble thee, and to prove (or test) thee* to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no. And He *humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna*, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Verse five of Chapter eight reveals that the chastening of the LORD was as a man *chasteneth* his son, so the LORD *chasteneth* them, all of which was for their good or sake.

In Deuteronomy 8:15-16, the *King James Version* shows another aspect of Israel's testing and discipline by the LORD which reads:

Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water. Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint. Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might *humble* thee, and that He might *prove* (test) thee, to do thee good at the later end.

In all of this we see the leading of the Lord in their *discipline* to humble and test them. They were presented with seemingly insurmountable afflictions, a terrible wilderness, fiery serpents, scorpions, drought, no water, fed with manna; all for the stated purpose that their God might humble and prove (or test) them that He might do them *good* at their latter end.

In the *King James Version* of Deuteronomy 29:5-6 we read:

**And I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy feet. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might know that I am the LORD your God.**

**In this context it is clear the LORD'S leading and preservation of Israel, including their not eating bread or drinking wine and the preservation of clothing, was that they might know that He was the LORD (Jehovah). No doubt this was a reminder of the false gods they had worshipped in Egypt, and were worshipping even at that very time.**

**In Job 5:17-18, the *New International Version*, we observe a further result of God's correction and discipline:**

*Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For He wounds, but He also binds up; He injures, but His hands also heal.*

**Correction and discipline are thus shown to be a blessing, resulting in the man who is wounded and injured being bound up and healed by God.**

**From the *New International Version* of Psalms 94:12:**

*Blessed is the man whom You discipline,  
O LORD, the man you teach from your law.*

**Rotherham renders the word "discipline" as "correcteth," and the King James version, "chasteneth."**

**This is a constant reminder that the Lord's discipline, correction and chastening was for their good or sake, resulting ultimately in their blessing.**

**In the *New International Version* of Psalms 119:67:**

**Before I was *afflicted* I went astray, but now I obey Your word. (Rotherham states: "Before I was afflicted I was *going astray*, But now Thy word have I kept.)**

**Affliction was the corrective that caused the word to be kept or obeyed, and would keep them from going astray in the future.**

### **The Israelite, The Old Covenant and Discipline**

**Verse 71 of Psalms 119 in the *New International Version* continues this thought:**

**It was good for me to be afflicted so I might learn Your decrees.**

**This thought reveals that affliction was good, prompting the learning of God's decrees.**

**In *Rotherham's Version* of Proverbs 3:11-12 it is written:**

**The *chastening* of Yahweh, my son, do not reject, Nor loathe His rebuke; For whom Yahweh loveth He correcteth, He causeth pain to the son in whom he delighteth.**

**The *New International Versions* reads:**

**My son, do not despise the LORD'S *discipline* and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.**

**Chastening and correction which causes pain is for the son's good and not to be despised, because it shows the Lord's love to**

those thus disciplined. There is a feeling here that those not disciplined are not loved of the Lord.

In the *King James Version*, Proverbs 19:18 reads:

*Chasten thy son while there is hope, And let not thy soul (i.e., thyself) spare for his crying.*

The *New International Version* reads:

*Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.*

*Rotherham* states:

*Correct thy son, because there is hope, Yet so as not to slay him....*

The disciplining of the son is for his good or sake, that he die not, nor be slain. This would indicate the disciplining of a son to be of extreme importance. The *New International Version* of Proverbs 23:13-14 shows the same need of the disciplining of a child:

**Do not withhold discipline from a child, if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod, and save his soul (person, life or himself) from death.**

Discipline and punishment of a child in this instance is for the saving of his life from death. We can certainly see a need for discipline of this nature in our society today, which obviously is so sadly lacking.

### **Israel Nationally, *Discipline*, and the Future**

The *New International Version* of Isaiah 30:19-20 states:

O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you. Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your eyes you will see them.

The bread of adversity and water of affliction are declared to be for Israel's good. We trust that we may understand both adversity and affliction are for our benefit.

In Isaiah 48:9-10 in the *New International Version* we find a change, and now, instead of for man's or Israel's sake, it is stated:

For My own Name's sake I delay my wrath; *for the sake of My praise* I hold it back from you, so as not to cut you off. See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. *For my own sake, for my own sake* I do this. How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my glory to another.

Wrath is delayed, not for Israel's sake, but for the LORD'S sake. However, it is seen that their testing in the furnace of affliction was also ultimately for their sake, that the wrath was delayed.

In Jeremiah 24:5-6, the *Rotherham Version*, we read:

Thus saith Yahweh God of Israel, 'Like these good figs so will I regard them of Judah who are carried into captivity, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, *for good*. Therefore will I set mine eye upon them, *for good*, and will bring them back upon the land, and will build them up and not pull them

down, and will plant them, and not root them up.'

Sending those away into captivity was not for their destruction, but was for their sake in order to preserve them and to eventually bring them back into the land.

In Jeremiah 31:18, the *Rotherham Version*, it is said:

I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, 'Thou hast *chastened me*, and I have been *chastened*, like a bullock not broken in. Suffer me to return, that I may return, for thou art Yahweh my God. Surely after my return I was filled with regret, and after I came to know myself I smote upon the thigh, I turned pale, and was even confounded, For I had borne the reproach of my youthful days.'

The chastisement (or discipline) like a bullock was effective and caused them (Israel) to be filled with regret, which ultimately resulted in their return.

In Micah 3:12, the *King James Version*, it was written to the leaders and prophets in Israel:

Therefore shall Zion *for your sake* be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

We may not understand how that Zion being plowed as a field and Jerusalem becoming heaps indicates the severe discipline resulting in Israel's blessing; but God had declared unto the house of Jacob this was because of their transgression and their sin. The discipline was for their sake.

Let us now consider a few references from the New Testament regarding this subject.

## Concerning Israel's Blindness

In the *King James Version*, the Apostle Paul speaks in Romans 11:5-28 regarding Israel's blindness:

For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in our own conceits; *that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the 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'; 'For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.'*' As concerning the gospel, they are enemies *for your sakes.* But as touching the election, they are *beloved for the fathers' sakes.* For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (or change of mind).

### All Israel

To understand this reference, we need to know who are "all Israel." It is only necessary to read Romans 9:6-8 (AV), paying particular attention to the last part of verse 6 and verse 7 reading:

For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called':

Abraham had sons by several wives, but only the seed of Isaac was reckoned as being the nation of Israel.

There are some who would agree that blindness has truly happened to the nation of Israel, and believe that God has eliminated them from His future purposes completely. To take

the position that Israel has been cast off forever is to ignore all the promises God has made to them throughout their entire Old Testament history and part of the New.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 11:1-5 (AV) said:

I say then, Hath God cast away His People? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His People *which He foreknew*. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, *'Lord they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars: and I am left alone, and they seek my life.'* But what saith the answer of God unto him? *'I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.'* Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

## THE NEW COVENANT

One reference from Jeremiah, chapter 31:35-37 (AV), states the New Covenant should be enough to confirm that Israel will be again God's chosen people. We read:

Thus saith the LORD which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon, and the stars for a light by night, Which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of Hosts is His name: *'If those ordinances depart from before Me,'* saith the LORD, *'then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever.'* Thus said the LORD, *'If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I*

will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done,' saith the LORD.

Israel's position before God is thus surely assured, despite being cast off. These ordinances have remained constant from that date until now.

It is true Israel was set aside in their blindness, but *only until the fulness of the Gentiles or Nations be come in*. There is no Biblical or physical written record or indication that this has happened or is about to happen. Until it does, we must await fulfillment of that event.

### Discipline and the New Covenant Administration

I Corinthians 11;31-32, the Rotherham Version, reads:

If, however, we had been setting ourselves apart, we had not in that case *been coming under judgment*; But being brought under judgment by the Lord are we being *disciplined*, Lest with the world we should be *condemned*.

Had the Christians of that church set themselves apart from eating and drinking unworthily, they would not in that case have been coming under judgment. Being brought under judgment by the Lord, they were being disciplined, that they might not be condemned with the world. The discipline of the Lord was seen to be for their good or for their sake.

Hebrews 12:5-8, Rotherham Version (direct quotation):

And ye have quite forgotten the exhortation which indeed, (with you as with sons) (doth reason) My son! Be not slighting the *discipline* of the Lord, *Neither be fainting, when by Him (thou art reprov'd)*; For (whom the Lord loveth) he doth (*discipline*), And *scourgeth* every son whom

he doth (welcome home). <For the sake of *discipline*> persevere! {(As towards sons)} (God) beareth himself (towards you) <If however ye are without discipline, Whereof all have received a share> (Then) are ye (bastards) and {{not sons>}}.

From this we understand that God's discipline of sons is for their sake; while on the other hand those who are without discipline are referenced as bastards and not sons.

### To digress for a moment.

In regard to the term bastards: The following is not meant to imply that the progeny which resulted from the inter-marriages between fallen angels and the daughters of men in Genesis 6 were considered by God as bastards, but there might be a hint here of parallel thought.

The resultant progeny was not referenced as either sons or bastards. But, according to verses 5, 6, and 7 of chapter 6, we read they were summarily destroyed by God in the flood. These verses read:

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil continually, And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created, and beast from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.' (AV)

The reason that the fallen angels cohabited with the daughters of men appears clear, when we consider the judgment of the

**serpent (Satan) in Genesis 3:15 where God said:**

**And I will put enmity between thee and the seed of the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise (crush) thy head, and thou shall bruise (crush) His heel.**

**Nor was this the last time that Satan would attempt to prevent the coming of Christ the Son.**

**The reasoning on the part of Satan appears as an obvious attempt of self preservation, by sending the fallen angels to corrupt the seed of the woman in a futile attempt to prevent the coming of her seed (Christ) Who was to bruise or crush his head, thereby ending his life.**

**Noah and his family alone were preserved, because, as verses 8 and 9 reveal, Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, or in his genealogy. In other words, his seed line had not been contaminated by the seed line of the fallen angelic host. The rest of mankind before the flood does indeed appear to have degenerated into a bastard race, being neither man nor angel, but a combination of the two. It is obvious that this was the reason God sent the flood for the destruction of those called mankind at that time, with the exception of Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives, whose seed line had not been so contaminated.**

**This same lack of discipline may be observed in the nations of the world today, such as Iran, North Korea, China, Iraq, Afghanistan and others. There are also groups continually fighting everyone such as the Taliban, al-Queda, and the Palestinian people.**

### **Discipline, The Lord and His Children**

**In Proverbs 3:11-12, reference was made to God's chastening of Israel as His son. We saw the LORD disciplines those He**

loves as a father the son He delights in.

In Proverbs 19:18 we observed that Israel was commanded to chasten their sons while there was hope, that they be not party to his death. The same is portrayed in Proverbs 23:13-14.

The Apostle Paul's warning in Hebrew 12:5-8 was noted concerning the discipline or chastening of sons. He said;

For whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

The Bible reveals there is truth of and in discipline which accomplishes beneficial results in us for God's purposes, which reveals something of His plan for our ultimate good, whether physical or spiritual.

With regard to testing during the Acts period, the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 10:13 said:

There hath no temptation (testing) taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted (tested) above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

The Apostle James in Chapter 1:3-4 has written regarding the trying or testing of faith.

Knowing this, that the trying or testing of your faith worketh patience, But let patience have her

**perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire,  
wanting nothing.**

**Because of the way discipline is portrayed in the Bible, we are aware how important it is that we know how necessary it also is for us at the present time. We may not be aware how or when we are tested, but it does actually occur for our guidance, benefit and for our sake. How we respond to discipline and testing in our lives will be for us to discover and hopefully to understand.**

## **THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE MATTER OF DISCIPLINE**

**Since the study on discipline was given, it has been brought to my attention that the issue of discipline regarding the members of the church which is the Body of Christ was not specifically addressed.**

**A question has arisen regarding whether God in this dispensation of the Grace of God disciplines or *whips his people as children* as He did under the dispensation of Law. It has been claimed by some that, because we are members of the Body of Christ, we do not or cannot sin; therefore, no possibility of correction, testing or discipline can exist in this present dispensation.**

**Regardless of what we are in Christ in this dispensation of Grace, are we no different from those who were under the law, who were disciplined by God for sin?**

**In order to address this issue, consideration must be given to the epistles of the Apostle Paul written subsequent to the setting aside or divorce of the nation of Israel in Acts 28:28, regarding testing or discipline of the members of the Body of Christ. We will endeavor to apply the concept of Scripture Research to the epistles of Paul written for us.**

It may be of interest to note that the Gentiles or nations of the the law and be circumcised after the manner of Moses or they could not be saved. In the council at Jerusalem in Acts, chapter 15, it was decided they would write the Gentiles to abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood; in other words, the believing Gentiles or nations were not under the Mosaic law.

The nation of Israel was subsequently set aside in unbelief in Acts 28:28, for rejection of their Messiah in approximately AD 62. The Mystery was then revealed by God to the Apostle Paul, because the members of the Body of Christ were not under law, but under grace. It is believed by some that because they were under grace they had ceased from sin, therefore they were not subject to testing or discipline, or subject to condemnation.

The wording of Colossians 3:23-25 shows this to be a false premise.

*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.*

These verses in Rotherham's Emphasized Bible read:

*(Whatever ye may be doing) ||from the soul|| be working at it, As unto the Lord, and not unto men, Knowing that ||from the Lord|| ye shall duly receive the recompense of the inheritance, [Unto the Lord Christ] | are ye in service; For | he that acteth unrighteously shall get back what he had unrighteous done, and there is no respect of persons....*

**Based upon these verses, it is seen that even in this dispensation there are some who do wrong; and as a result shall receive for the wrong they have done, whatever the condemnation or discipline that may be imposed by God.**

**In Ephesians 4:1-3 of the Rotherham Bible the Apostle Paul wrote:**

**I exhort you therefore, [I the prisoner of the Lord] to walk [worthy] of the calling wherewith ye are called; With all lowliness and meekness! With longsuffering. Bearing one with another in love, Giving diligence to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace,**

**This Scripture warns us there is a possibility of some who do not walk worthy of the calling they are called with, failing to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. Should we not, therefore, conclude they who do so may merit discipline, whether it may be a spanking or some other form of condemnation or discipline warranted?**

**There are many other instances in the Epistles of the Mystery which indicate some discipline may be warranted. I will conclude with the warning to servants in Ephesians 6:5-8.**

**Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eye service, as men 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; Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.**

**The manner of life of a servant, though he be a member of the**

**Body of Christ, must be circumspect, doing service as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.**

**These few references reveal that we, as the members of the Body of Christ, are subject to correction and discipline, even as was Israel under the Law.**

**Eph. 6:6-8**

**Phil. 1:12-18**

**II Tim. 3: 3-11, discipline.**

**II Tim. 4:10, Demas-hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.**

# **FRAMING THE TRUTH**

by

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## **INTRODUCTION**

From the earliest of times, mankind has been particularly interested in truth. Truth has been very instrumental in the development and improvement of virtually every form of communication since the beginning of time. Unfortunately, for the past 30 to 40 years society has made great strides in destroying the Christian perception of truth. In fact, many people in the United States no longer believe in truth, and the notion that there is absolute truth is completely preposterous. They believe that truth is something that is relative to their experiences or their environment and can be defined any way they please to meet their objectives.

### **Value Systems**

Have you ever wondered why many people seem to have a different value system? Why truth seems different for others? Why the beliefs and value system that is so basic to your life would never allow the behavior that seems to run rampant for others? The problem is that not everyone shares your common view of life. This is what is defined as the concept of World-

views. If you are not aware of this, you have either been like Rip van Winkle, asleep the last twenty years, or you chose, either consciously or unconsciously, not to deal with it.

### What is a Worldview?

This study of truth begins with a definition of what a worldview is and then offers an explanation to the understanding of the five most dominant worldviews. The most common description of a worldview is “the lens through which each person interprets all of life.” As you can see from the description of worldview, it is problematic from the beginning, because each person’s worldview is different. Not only is it different, but each worldview is correct in the mind of the individual. There is no room for true truth in their worldview; at best, it is truth derived by perception or interpretation. Under a person’s worldview, truth is defined as relational to each individual.

Each worldview provides a somewhat coherent way of evaluating things such as reality, man, values and, of course, the topic of this conference, truth. Worldviews are typically learned and people can, and do, change their worldviews. It is important to understand that people make day-to-day decisions consciously and unconsciously based on their worldview perspective. While most worldviews have been in one form or another around for some time, their popularity may have waned some. The order in which I have decided to deal with each worldview will be based on the progression of older worldviews to the newer worldviews.

- Pantheism -

The first worldview we will look at is Pantheism. Pantheism holds that reality exists only in the spiritual dimension and all else is illusion. "Man" is one with ultimate reality and connected to everything. Truth is experienced as unity with "the oneness of the universe" which is beyond rational descrip-

tion. The ultimate value recognizes the essential unity of all. An example of Pantheism from this worldview would be that the universe (or nature if you like) and God are identical. It is like the Creator of the universe created everything by “chipping off a part of Himself.” In other words, when He created the Earth, He took a part of Himself and that part became the Earth. Likewise with all created things and beings. True Pantheists would say, “If you want to know God, study His universe, because the universe and God are the same. God is better understood when you have a better understanding of nature.” You can understand that it would be very easy for human beings with this worldview to shift their focus to the creation instead of the Creator. Keep in mind, however, that Pantheists, by definition, still believed in a transcendent Creator.

- Monotheism -

The second worldview is Theism ... or Monotheism. This worldview holds that reality recognizes that an infinite God exists. Man is the creation of God, and truth is known through revelation. The moral values that are held by Theists or Monotheists are the objective expression of an absolute moral being. Theistic doctrines may differ greatly, but the underlying worldview framework remains similar. This worldview could be what many people refer to as Judeo-Christian. This is the worldview that was the centerpiece of the republic on which the United States was first patterned. A Theist or Monotheist is interchangeable for our purpose. One God exists, and this God created the universe or nature out of *fiet* (out of nothing). This God is not removed from His creation, but is actively involved in His creation. This God is a personal God who thinks, acts and has emotions. By way of definition, there are three distinguishing characteristics of a personality, and God has all three. God has a plan for all of mankind, which defines His ability to think; not only does He think, He also acts. He does not play a passive role in the affairs of the universe. The third characteristic is emotion.

**God is love! Love is an emotion.**

**- Spiritualism/Polytheism -**

**The third worldview is Spiritualism or Polytheism. In this worldview, reality holds that the world is populated by “spirit beings” who govern what happens. Man is understood to be a creation of the gods like the rest of earth's creatures. Truth is discovered through a shaman figure who interprets what the gods say. Moral values take the form of taboos or things that irritate various spirits. Polytheism was particularly true in ancient Greece and Rome. In other polytheistic cultures, such as ancient Egypt, gods take on the form and characteristics of objects found in nature, including trees, sacred herbs, cattle, animals, and animal-human hybrids. While Polytheism generally took physical form, Spiritualism took on forms that could not be touched.**

**I'd like to concentrate on the next two in greater detail because in my lifetime I have seen the impact of these two, and I believe they are the most dangerous. Of the two, however, the last one is especially dangerous. I am not saying that the previously mentioned worldviews did not have an impact on society. When the first three were most popular, they were very influential; however, the first three hold little influence with most people today. As Christians trying to defend truth, we will not meet many people who hold the first three worldviews.**

**Another point to be made is that the first three worldviews were all based on the root word *theism*. This is taken from the Greek word *theos*, meaning God. While there is a difference in the first three worldviews, the fundamental or underlying basis of all three was concerning the relationship God has to His creation. They are predicated on the notion of a transcendent Creator as the starting point of creation. While we do not have time to fully develop this concept, please notice the shift of the last two worldviews from *theism's* to just *ism's*. Probably not grammatically correct, but correct in interpretation. There is**

no room for God in the last two worldviews as we know Him. If there should be a mention of God in these two worldviews, it would be a god of someone's own creation or their own explanation. This then leads us to the last two worldviews in our study. We will see a shift away from truth or reason in exponential partition.

### **- Naturalism -**

The next worldview we will explore is Naturalism. This worldview holds that reality is just the material universe. Man is a product of chance from some biological product, and truth is understood to be science-based. No absolute values or morals exist since flexible individual or socially useful ones are adjusted as needed.

In the 60's, when ardent attacks were leveled against our Judeo-Christian principals, one of greatest attacks came in the form of Existentialism, which was at the heart of Naturalism. One of the most prominent leaders in the Christian community, Dr. Francis Schaeffer, penned the term, "True Truth." This was a term that he used when describing the truth of the Bible.

The culture during Schaeffer's day was existentialism, which expounded the myth that truth was only relative to how you viewed it and that it could be different for each individual. As a way of explaining, I add this example of existentialism for your consideration:

Imagine, if you will, a speck of nothing residing in total darkness. As time passes, this speck of nothing wills itself into a living, breathing, human being. As time passes this being discovered other beings similar in appearance to itself and wills the desire to communicate with them. They will into existence a mouth to communicate, a brain to reason and appendages to move around. In essence

what we now know as human beings is willed into creation, by themselves. They reason that somewhere out there a thing called truth exists and when they find it they will be complete. After reasoning together they decide to go and find this thing called truth, so they each set out on their quest. Slowly but surely they all return to their point of origin and reason together and agree that there is no truth. After much time has passed and boredom begins to set in, one of the beings decides that he would rather look for some form of truth as compared to sitting doing nothing. When he tells everyone what he is doing, they remind him that there is no truth. He agrees with them but explains to them that he wants to find “his truth.” As he is leaving, someone tells him that he needs to go south to find truth. He reminds them that since there is no truth going any one way, to find one’s own individual truth is left to the decision of the individual. If you want to find your truth by heading south, then “I’m happy for you; however, my direction is north.” Each other being in the course of time will leave the place of origin and head towards their own direction looking for their own truth. Just imagine how difficult it would be if someone would find True Truth, who, as we know it to be God, to explain to another being that they have found True Truth.

Thus continues humanity’s trip down the slippery slope of destruction. We have in a relatively short period of time abolished the notion that there is one God who is involved in creation. We have separated creation from the Creator, thrown away the Creator and now started to worship the creation. We are sliding at break-neck speed now.

## **- Postmodernism -**

**That brings us to the last and most prevalent worldview today, which is Postmodernism. Postmodernism holds that reality must be interpreted through our language or cultural paradigm. Man and truth are both products of a social or cultural influence. Postmodern universal values are tolerance, inclusion, and the rejection of any absolute answers (except my favorite, which is the statement “There are no absolutes.” This, of course, is a paradox because, if there are no absolutes, then how can you say that “there are no absolutes”? Isn’t that statement an absolute?)**

**Postmodernism was ushered in under a pretext similar to the one explained below. It appears that one of the biggest problems of our society is the effect of exponential change and acceleration on human nature with which most people cannot cope. It is as if most people do not think that they can collectively or individually deal with the unpredictability or rapidness of everyday events. They are overloaded with stress and uncertainty, which causes them to be continually frustrated. Their minds are overloaded with information and their values are continually eroded. They feel their whole world is one of anxiety and despair. They believe that the wisdom of the past has lost most of its validity and that there is no clear vision of the future. They believe that this results in a lack of guidance and direction in life. How will they ever overcome these insurmountable situations?**

**Along came modern philosophers and constructionists who decided that society needed a new framework that could tie everything together. They decided that this framework would allow us to understand society, the world, and our place in it. It should also help us to make the critical decisions which will shape our future. Their great scheme would synthesize the wisdom gathered in the different scientific disciplines, for example, philosophies and religions. Instead of focusing on one central theme or a small section of reality, this worldview**

would provide mankind with a picture of the whole. In particular, it would help us to understand, and therefore cope with, complexity and changes that are unexplainable and unanswered. This worldview would be Postmodernism. Once truth as we knew it was obliterated by Naturalism or Existentialism, it wasn't long before a new truth could be defined any way that it was convenient for the user through the world view of Postmodernism. David Baldacci in his book *"The Whole Truth"* summed it up pretty well for most people when he said, "Why waste time discovering the truth when you can so easily create it?" Truth for the sake of truth no longer existed, and what became important was how people could frame the word 'truth' to best suit their own purpose. It should come as no surprise, then, that "framing the truth" might prove to be the newest revolutionary force within the Christian community. Being an effective witness in today's post-modern world requires not only an extensive understanding of the God of the Bible, but an understanding of issues like framing worldviews and post-modernism, and how the relativity of truth shapes many different disciplines. It is important, then, to understanding how the post-modern man uses framing to destroy many of the Judeo-Christian beliefs that are fundamental to our life and witness.

We, in the Christian community, know that the central theme of all of the sciences is the Word of God. We know that the answers to all of life's questions are not constructed out of God's creation; rather, they are answered by the Creator. If we want a true solution to all of our problems, the answer can be found in the Person and works of Jesus Christ. We know that the Word that proceeds from the mouth of God is far greater than anything we can construct.

So how does framing the truth happen, and why is it so destructive to the Judeo-Christian worldview? There are two issues attacking truth today. They are presentation and framing. We will look into the more traditional issue of presentation first and then look into the issue of framing. The

issue of framing is far more interesting and could have far greater reaching distance if done properly.

**First we need to start with three definitions of framing:**

- **Economics – framing is the manner in which a rational choice problem has been presented.**
- **Sociologic/Political – framing is a process of relative truth over absolute truth. Framing defines how a certain piece of relative truth is packaged so as to allow certain desirable interpretations and makes absolute truth immaterial.**
- **Communications – Framing is a structure supporting or containing something**

Once we understand the definition of framing from an economic, political, and communicative perspective, we can define it closer to our context.

To view an example of the economic effect of framing, we look at a study by Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman in 1981. This study found that framing the same decision in several different packages caused people to respond differently for each different scenario. Even though the answer of each scenario was the same, how people answered the problem differed widely according to how the scenario was framed. The difference is reflected in the framing of one scenario as a risk aversion and the other scenario as a risk taking. More people were willing to avert risk than take risk. Here is the problem as it was “framed” for two groups of people.

**Problem 1 [N = 152]:** Imagine that the US is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

- If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved.
- If Program B is adopted, there is 1/3 probability
- that 600 people will be saved, and 2/3 probability that no people will be saved.

Which of the two programs would you favor? The results were tabulated as follows (72 percent picked Program A and 28 per cent picked Program B).

The only difference between them is that the outcomes are described in problem 1 by the number of lives saved and in problem 2 by the number of lives lost. The change is accompanied by a distinct shift from risk aversion to risk taking. The majority choice in this problem is risk averse: the prospect of certainly saving 200 lives is more attractive than a risky prospect of equal expected value, that is, a one-in-three chance of saving 600 lives (or 200 lives) (Tversky and Kahneman 1981).

The sociologic/political impact is quite important also. Truth is no longer accepted as absolute; rather, it is only accepted relationally. That is to say that if you cannot see it, it does not exist. This is the dawning of what is called postmodernism thought. Since there is no real truth, all we believe to be real is influenced by our senses. If we see something, our minds will give us an interpretation of what “the mind thinks is real.” Truth then is relational to outward circumstances and is different for every individual. Please note that I have not taken into account the theological impact of this statement, because this is a totally different subject and time constraints prevent us from heading down this path. Needless to say, this attack on truth leads the way to the greatest negative impact on society any generation has experienced.

Framing allows you to no longer control things by the language

you use. You do not argue specific words as being true or not, nor do you dispute the facts. What you do is “assert your frame” as so large, so omnipresent, and so unavoidable that it’s as natural as getting up in the morning. You make your opponent feel like arguing such a “fact” is counterintuitive or even sacrilegious. They use words that are packed with meaning and then assign them to our conversation. We no longer say, “You should pay your taxes.” We say, “I cannot believe that you do not want to ‘pay your fair share.’” The notion is that everyone owes the government something, and if you do not want to pay your taxes, then you are not being fair. Some of the antonyms of fair that they want to portray in their frame are unjust, unreasonable, closed-minded, partial, discriminatory, and biased. Many people believe that framing will be at the forefront of a growing conflict over American values, political languages, and the intersection of the two. Call it the “frame war” if you like. It’s a battle of style over substance, because truth is not at stake. Truth has nothing to do with it.

That leads us to the communications aspect of framing. Two of the “greatest framers” in the communications arena are George Lakoff, professor of Linguistics at the University of California at Berkley, and Frank Luntz, from the Luntz Research Company. They can collectively agree on only one thing: that the most important resource that people have is how much influence they have in the way other people view the world. Their values, their brains, and their worldviews all can be tweaked or manipulated by framing, which allows the framers control over different areas and aspects of other people’s lives. Lakoff would argue that Republicans used the phrase, “War on Terror,” to fool people into voting for Bush during the 2000 general election. “The war frame includes special war powers for the President, who becomes Commander in Chief. It evokes unquestioned patriotism, and the idea that lack of support for the war effort is treasonous. It forces Congress to give unlimited powers to the President, lest detractors be called unpatriotic. And the war frame includes

**an end to the war – winning the war, mission accomplished!”**

**As a side note, I find it very ironic that they expect us to believe their definition for what they say, when what they say is framed. Personally, I found that the difference between framing, context, and spin, as they define it, is very unclear.**

**Framers are very selective in their word terminology. They construct words that present their frame in a positive light. One side would use, for example, the word “trial lawyers,” while the other side would use the word “public protection attorneys.” Likewise, both sides would use the two terms for their framing purposes. One side would use “drilling for oil,” while the other side would use “exploring for energy.”**

**Framing from the “communication” standpoint becomes less an educational process, but rather an indoctrinating process. It goes without saying that framing that is used to manipulate people is very effective, but at what cost? Does it give you the right to frame your evidence to influence or persuade people to see things your way? What happens when framing causes people to question your evidence or authority, even though their presentation is falsely based? If there are “bad” instances when framing is used, are there “good” instances when framing should be used?**

**Once postmodern man has deconstructed the truth, it is time for them to define truth in a self-serving way. Postmodern man will seek or define truth in three forms: Moralism, Speculation and Mysticism. Remember, however, that they may construct them in different words, but the meanings will be the same. We will look at these in the context of truth and juxtapose the worldview of Postmodernism against the Judeo-Christian view.**

### **Moralism**

**For this purpose we will define Moralism as seeking to achieve**

perfection of conduct. Moralism exerts the effort of the will. Webster defines exert as “to put forth, or into use. To put oneself into strenuous, vigorous action, or effort.”

**Example of World Moralism:**

- If I just do more good than bad, I'll be all right.
- If I'm more involved in political activism or social reform
- Moralism characterizes the vast world religions.

For the Christian, Spiritual Moralism is accepting the fact that the will is in bondage. We know that no matter how hard we try, we can never perfect our conduct. In place of Moralism, the moral impulse of the will needs to be addressed by Law and Gospel.

### **Speculation**

We will define Speculation as the mind seeking to achieve perfection of understanding. Just as Moralism exerts the effort of the will, Speculation exerts the effort of the intellect.

**Examples of world Speculation:**

- The human mind is not able to comprehend the whole of existence.
- Unchecked intellect leads to a reflection of human desires more than objective reality.
- The Enlightenment of the French Revolution gave us the reign of terror, Napoleon and Nazi Germany.

Christians believe that God reveals Himself to our feeble intellect by His Word. In place of speculation, the need of the intellect for knowledge is met by the Word of God.

## Mysticism

We define Mysticism as the desire of the soul to achieve perfection by becoming one with God. Just as Moralism exerts the effort of the will, Speculation exerts the effort of the intellect; Mysticism exerts the efforts of the emotion.

Examples of world Mysticism:

- Complete detachment from the world (schools of Hinduism, including Yoga; Buddhism)
- Mormonism, being founded on visions, revelations, and angelic ordination
- Mystery religions and cults (Native American Ghost Dances of the late Nineteenth Century were mystical in origin.)
- The New Age movement
- Near Death Experiences

Christians realize that we can never become “one with God.” Christians believe that God does this for sinful man. He becomes one with man through His Son Jesus Christ. In place of a mystical union with God experienced by emotions, we need to focus on God’s union with human beings in Christ and the phenomenon of faith.

## CONCLUSION

I will readily admit that the postmodern worldview is not an easy concept to grasp. I have been studying this for just short of 10 years and I still do not have a concrete understanding. I do know, however, that if we want to make an impact on many of our peers we must make the effort to understand their worldview so we can present the God of the Bible to them.

While most postmodernists reject the notion of truth entirely, relativists, constructivists and some pragmatists (all different strains of Postmodernism) allow for certain kinds of truth.

**They do, however, reject the idea of absolute truth, which is truth that doesn't vary among cultures, or people, or fundamental goals in life. For example, many postmodernists will allow that a fact like "Alaska is the largest state in the U.S." is a perfectly absolute truth. It's the larger questions of human life, moral, social and political claims--claims on how we should live. In these areas, postmodernists definitively refuse to believe that there are any absolute answers.**

**The denial of absolute moral truth, one of postmodernism's hallmarks, is also one of its most upsetting characteristics for many people, Christians or not. To anyone of traditional cast of mind, the end of absolute moral truth is the end of ethics – anything goes!**

**The great news is that we don't have to ascend to God because we could not bridge the gap. What happens is God descends to us. I have been using two words -- religion and Christianity -- interchangeably today, but now I would like to define them a little closer. Religion is something that man does for his gods. Christianity is just the opposite. Christianity is something that God has done for man!**