

Christianity Clarified Volume 09

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[0 : 00] What is Christianity really all about? The issue remains very confusing to a large segment of our society.

At times it even extends to many who consider themselves Christian. Here in an ongoing effort to try and dispel some of the confusion is Marv Wiseman with another session of Christianity Clarified.

The disastrous results of the original rebellion of our first parents is incalculable. Their sin resulted in the moral and spiritual contamination of themselves and all their descendants.

Disease and death are the predictable and inevitable realities every generation since the first has suffered. The question almost automatically surfaces.

If God knows everything, then He knew the path Adam and Eve would take as well as the horrific consequences that would ensue. A corrupt humanity resulting in the death of every person of every generation following.

[1 : 04] Add to their deaths the mayhem and tragedies of war, famine, and disease being the vehicles resulting in those deaths. Knowing all these things were coming and would be the byproducts of sin passed on from Adam and Eve to every successive generation, why did God make them as He did?

And further, why did God ever create Lucifer, whose own fall and disobedience to His Maker resulted in His morphing into Satan, the archenemy of God and man?

God in His omniscience had to have known the misery and chaos Satan would cause. Had to have known Satan would be successful in tempting Adam and Eve to follow His path of rebellion against God and His authority.

So why did God even create Lucifer or Adam and Eve as He did? Or did God not know? But God knows all. It's part of His job description.

Omniscience requires it. God's infinitude demands it. There cannot be an ignorant deity behind it all. So back to the question of why.

[2 : 19] Let's consider God's alternative. Number one, He could have created angels and man without the ability to rebel and disobey. He could have made them robotic, like automatons that had no will of their own.

Or, secondly, He could create both man and angels with a personal volition, each being given a will to exercise in obedience or disobedience.

With that volitional capacity, there exists the potential for behavior that is beautiful and gratifying, but also behavior that is ugly and devastating.

Moral beings cannot, in this world, have the ability to engage in one but not the other. Giving created beings the moral freedom to choose a right thing from a wrong thing means there is a true risk as to what the choice will be.

While there may be other options that our infinite God had, these appear to us mere mortals to be the only ones. Create beings without wills or ability to do anything but the Creator's will, or create them with a true will of their own, and leaving the choices they make to be their own decisions.

[3 : 39] It's ironic that man wants a will of his own, freedom to make his own decisions. Yet, he often resents God for having given it. The question has been posed regarding how God, who knows everything, including the future, could be responsible for having created as he did, and whom he did, when he knew the course they would take, a course diametrically opposed to his own nature and character.

Why did he instill the ability to make moral choices in the angel Lucifer, who would then become Satan? The same Satan deceived and influenced our original parents to follow his rebellious path.

As a result, all human adversity in the forms of disease, death, conflict, war, injustice, and every other woe of humanity has been realized, and is realized daily in an ongoing, unrelenting basis.

Couldn't God have done better? Giving the power to make moral choices when you know full well that wrongful choices would be made, with very disastrous consequences, appears to make the Creator God look irresponsible, does it not?

Whatever could have been his point in bestowing volition upon his creatures, both angelic and human? There are, no doubt, multiple reasons God had that we do not know, but we do know of at least one, and it is formidable.

[5 : 13] Volition, or free moral will, contains both the ability to obey or disobey, as well as to love or to hate, and all other such like decisions that contain powerful and lasting consequences.

Yet, it is only in having this free moral base that value is realized. There is built-in value to a voluntary obedience that involuntary obedience does not have.

So, too, there is value and great desirability in a love that is rendered with the will. Love is a choice, an act of the will on the part of the one loving.

Does anyone want to be loved because their lover has no choice, but is programmed to love them? Would God want that kind of love any more than those he created?

It would appear not. On the surface, and from our finite point of view, it appears that God took a risk in creating beings with a free moral will, and it backfired on him.

[6 : 20] Would God like a do-over? But really now, with the omniscience of God, his absolute knowledge of everything, past, present, and future, so fully established in Scripture, the concept of God taking a risk must be rejected.

He who knows the end from the beginning and who calls things that are not as though they are has never taken a risk. Risk always involves an unknown outcome, and God cannot not know outcomes or all the circumstances that will occur in reaching the outcomes.

Based upon that reality, God was pleased to create whom he did as he did, volition and all. Revelation 4 informs us that all things considered and with his perfect perspective in place, God was pleased to create all that he did, how he did, when he did, and why he did.

The biblical record of the making and creating of man in Genesis 1 and 2 is thoroughly engrossing.

God made Adam physically and created Adam spiritually. Adam was a two-part being comprised of materiality and non-materiality. His body was the material and his spirit was the immaterial.

[7 : 45] Together they constituted the human soul. This combination and it alone is peculiar to human beings, separating humans from all other biological life produced by God.

Because man had this God-given human spirit, he was able to connect with God in a way that no other created beings could, spirit to spirit. But when we arrive at Genesis 3, everything will change.

Something is being added to the constitution of Adam and Eve that God did not put there. That something was an infectious, terminal disease called sin.

And this sin, produced by their disobedience to God, caused them to be out of sync with their Creator. Previously, they enjoyed harmonious fellowship, but now, that was past.

Their disobedience awakened their conscience. The conscience is activated when we violate a known standard. The result is guilt combined with fear.

[8 : 51] Guilt because we know we did wrong, and fear because we are afraid of the consequences. All behavior has consequences, whether good or bad. Adam and Eve's consequence was immediate just as God said it would be.

Remember? The tree that is in the midst of the garden, you shall not eat of it, for in the day you eat of it you will surely die. But, what does that mean in light of Adam living to be 930 years old?

It means Adam and Eve did die the day they ate, but it was the spirit component of their being that died, not the physical body. And of what did their spiritual death consist?

The same as what death always consists of. Separation. Not cessation, but separation. Death, whether spiritual or physical, does not mean the one who died ceases to exist.

It means the one who died is separated, ruptured in his personhood, disintegrated. Physical death is the separation of the human spirit from the human body.

[10 : 05] Spiritual death is the separation of the human spirit from God. That's what happened to Adam and Eve on the day they ate. Their physical death came much later, but their spiritual death was already evident.

They were separated in their spirit from God, and their spirit was in their body. So the only thing they could do to distance themselves from God was to hide physically.

They were simply following through with their physical body what they had already experienced in their inner spirit, separation. Spiritually, they were now dead toward God.

So they hid in guilt and fear. When they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden.

Right here, Genesis 3 is where the great drama of human redemption begins, and it was just as soon as there was a need. The need for the now separated to be reunited, reconciled to their creator.

[11 : 13] All the remainder of the Bible recounts the details of their ultimate undertaking toward redemption for the entirety of creation. The first man, Adam, was the father of us all.

He alone, by primogenitor, became the federal head of the entire human race. It is not an exaggeration to note that the entirety of Adam's posterity was literally in his loins.

The genetic cessation that began in this one man, Adam, is now realized in every living human being, as well as every human who has ever lived that is now deceased.

Does the Bible actually teach this? Most emphatically and straightforwardly. From Genesis 2 onward into the Gospels where we find Christ in Matthew 19 asserting that in the beginning God made them male and female, to the Apostle Paul's reference to the first Adam and then calling Jesus Christ the last Adam in 1 Corinthians 15.

Adam's being the first man and originator of humanity was then used by God to produce the first female counterpart of his maleness in the form of feminine Eve.

[12 : 32] And it is significant that Eve was not made by God independent from Adam, but rather was taken from Adam. Thus, Eve, the first woman, had something of Adam in her very being.

She is named Woman because she was taken from man in Genesis 2. But surely some would object we are not to take this literally.

And why not? She certainly arrived on the scene literally, mated with a literal husband, and produced literal children from which we are all descended literally, unless you consider yourself to be a non-literal person.

How else do you think you got here? The creation account is told to convey information, and is straightforward to be understood in a simple direct fashion. It is when so-called experts insist on mythologizing the account that the simplicity and truthfulness of the narrative is lost, as well as its implication and consequences.

Some simply cannot accept the literality of the creation account, and might even consider it an offense to their sophisticated intellect to suggest we interpret Genesis literally.

[13 : 46] But the record stands as the only authoritative account that very well fits the world we have today, and this literal Genesis account was as well cited with unquestioned acceptance by Christ himself.

In addition to the literal account of man's creation, we also have an account of the moral failure of Adam and Eve exhibited in their disobedience to their Maker, resulting in separation from him.

We tend not to see this with the seriousness it involved because we have such an inadequate understanding of holiness possessed by God, but it was demonstrated in bold relief when the divine curse was then imposed upon all of creation that would impact our first parents and all their progeny.

We see the dramatic results of this in all of history and in all of the world. No corner of the earth has escaped the ravages of disease, destruction, and death as a consequence of sin, both corporately and individually, and this called for a remedy.

How can these powerful and ever-present negative realities be reversed? How can morally fallen man be reconciled to his Creator, who has remained the holy being that he is?

[15 : 02] This is what all of Scripture is about from that moral fall in Genesis 3 to and including the present, extending well into the future as indicated by prophecy.

It might be expected to be found at the beginning of the Bible, but it isn't. It's found at the ending.

In Revelation chapter 4, in a single verse often overlooked, we find the most succinct expression of why God created anything and everything.

This alone, in the final analysis, provides us with the only true rationale behind the creative acts of God. It is here we learn why God created men and angels and imputed to them the dynamic of personal volition.

Why God would create beings that possess both the will to do great good as well as great harm is told us in these verses. The scene takes place in connection with the culmination of human activity on the earth.

[16 : 08] It is as much an end-time scenario as one could imagine. Here it is. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor, and power.

For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. There we have it in a nutshell. This is why there is everything that was and is and is to be.

It is simply because God was pleased to create them. And he was pleased to create them as he did, knowing the personal volition he would grant to each would result in their becoming something other than what he originally created and pronounced very good.

He knew this very good creation with built-in volition would result in corruption that would require redemption if he were to salvage it.

And predictably, Revelation 5 records the expression of thanksgiving and praise by the same twenty-four elders, now joined by four unidentified living creatures.

[17 : 29] This appears to be the only rationale that God entertained to justify all that he created and made. It pleased him to do so. But does he really need any other rationale?

He who alone possessed the power and ability to bring all things, living and non-living, into existence, did he have the right to do so? When something that has no existence is brought into being by a power that called it from non-existence into existence, does he somehow need the permission of that object to bring it into being?

Such is nonsensical. Does not the potter have power over the lump of clay that he may fashion it into whatever object he desires? Or is he somehow obligated to inquire of the clay as to what it would like to be, or whether or not it wants to be at all?

This, too, is nonsensical. The Creator God has chosen to bring into being all that has ever existed, does exist, or will exist, and his absolute sovereignty need not obtain permission or approval from any he has created.

He created because he was pleased to do so. He needs no other reason. An important part of what makes us human is that we, through our first parents, Adam and Eve, were endowed with a capacity of volition.

[18 : 59] This means we possess the power to make choices, to exercise our will, to do a thing or not do a thing. This freedom of choice is a necessary component of our humanness.

But with the capacity to choose, there are equally necessary consequences resulting from those choices. Actions are always attended by results, good or bad.

We live in a cause-and-effect world. It works that way universally. There are no effects without a preceding cause. Combine this volition, this power to make choices, with the reality of our innately deposited intuition, and what do you get?

You get a being that has the power to make choices coupled with the intuitive knowledge of right and wrong. Part of our humanity, and a major way we differ from animals, is that we have, by intuition, a sense of morality.

Animals do not have. We have an innate sense of right and wrong. Human intuition is not dependent upon education or experience. Intuition, the sense of right and wrong, dwells within the human spirit, along with numerous other non-physical components that contributes to our humanness.

[20 : 17] God placed them there in our first parents, and apparently, provided the ability for them to be transferred from one generation to the next, much as he has done with the physical.

But how he has done that, we have no idea. We conclude it is so based upon logic and inference, particularly from Romans chapter 1. We would be the first to admit we may simply have this all wrong.

But in attempting to put what we do know into the mix and extrapolate from there, this, at least for the present, seems to be the most likely scenario. Thus, when our parents, Adam and Eve, parents of all humanity, chose or exercised their volition to disobey the Creator, they knew they were doing wrong.

And as actions have consequences, their first was guilt. Guilt is emotional pain caused by the violation of a known standard. They also experienced fear, which was the reason they hid from God rather than face Him.

Guilt, produced by moral wrongdoing, seeks to avoid negative consequences of punishment, so hiding was a predictable course of action. When one considers the amazing impact their sin had upon all subsequent generations, how it resulted in the degradation and death of every person in every generation since, we get some appreciation of how utterly ugly sin really is.

[21 : 51] And if there is anything modern man has little sense of, it is this. Human sin and the chaos and corruption it brings upon all of humanity.

Whatever could be done to remedy this, we shall see, and we are eager to share it with you. God, in His grace, has provided the only remedy.

Romans 1 declares that God has communicated to man the fact of the Creator's existence so that man is without excuse for his denial or rejection of that Creator.

Precisely how God communicated that to man, we do not know. We only know He did, because He said He did. He says that which may be known of God is manifest or declared in them, for He has shown it unto them.

How did it get in them, or us? God put it there. Information about Himself. His eternal power and Godhead was revealed to man, leaving Him without excuse.

[23 : 02] This is information that is not written, phoned, wired, text, or tweeted, but is spiritual in nature, not discernible by any empirical or scientific method.

That's the nature of the spiritual. Yet, it's still real, as real as the physical. Man's receptivity of this information seems to constitute his cognition and intuition.

When we say we know or understand something intuitively, we usually mean we don't know how we know it, we just know it. And we know we know it.

Didn't consciously learn it, weren't aware of being taught it, we just know it. The dictionary says intuition is the direct knowledge or learning of something without the conscious use of reasoning, immediate apprehension or understanding.

The key here is not that we do not reason, but that we do not consciously or intend to reason something out. It's what we might call a no-brainer.

[24 : 08] The issue is intuitively obvious without having to even take the time to think about it. The stove is hot. Don't debate with yourself whether you'll get burned if you touch it.

You know you will, and it is intuitively obvious. The possession of intuition is God-given, and it appears to work in tandem with God-given volition.

We still have the ability to touch the hot stove if we choose to do so, because what we know intuitively does not override our volition.

That's why one who intuitively knows there is a God can volitionally deny Him. Only man, of all God's creatures, is endowed with volition and intuition.

Animals don't have this. Animals have instinct. People have intuition. Animals have no moral base for determining right from wrong. Animals do not experience guilt or remorse the way people do.

[25 : 09] You will never find a lion apologizing for killing and eating an antelope. He barely follows his instincts. He is programmed to behave like a lion, and he does what comes naturally.

And if the antelope gets away, he will not feel guilt over depriving the lion of a meal. He instinctively wants to survive. Conversely, man has a moral capacity that produces guilt and remorse because he has an innate, intuitive sense of right and wrong.

Where did he get that? It is programmed into our human spirit by God the programmer. We just know. And we know because he put it there.

Can we prove all of this? No, we can't scientifically. But we do insist it fits the facts reflected in human behavior and the biblical record.

Man is without excuse. Mankind the world over has enjoyed the benefits derived from scientific achievements, especially over the past few hundred years.

[26 : 20] Science simply means to know or to understand. In general, science has to do with knowing and understanding the physical laws of our world and how they work.

When we are able to transfer that knowledge into work-producing inventions, a society progresses and standards of living are raised. And it's truly wonderful and universally beneficial.

But it all has to do with the physical and is limited to the physical. How then can science address anything that is not physical? It cannot. Science in any of its fields is locked into and limited by the physical.

Thus, science cannot discover nor understand the non-physical spiritual. This sadly leaves some scientists to conclude that the spiritual does not exist.

The attitude of some is that if a concept is not within the purview of their examination, it doesn't exist. These are called naturalists, physicalists, or empiricists.

[27 : 22] And while not all naturalists, physicalists, or empiricists are atheistic, it is safe to say all atheists are naturalists, denying that the non-physical exists.

This, of course, means they deny the existence of anything or anyone spiritual, including the idea of God or angels. But if the spiritual does exist and it is not to be found, measured, or weighed in the scientist's laboratory, where do we get information or understanding about the spiritual?

We get it exclusively by divine revelation. And this brings us back to the Bible. It always does. Herein, and herein alone, are we clearly told by Jesus Christ that God is spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

He said it in John chapter 4. The Apostle Paul adds to this in addressing the intellectual elite of the Greeks on Mars Hill in Acts 17. He made it clear that God is not represented by gold, silver, or stone, such as man fashions in his efforts to depict deity.

The Athenians had idols placed all over town, lords many and gods many, and specific names for each one. The nation that produced the brilliance of Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and the like, was filled with the population of idolaters.

[28 : 51] God condemned the making of any graven image or idol designed to represent himself in the earliest of the commandments given in Exodus 20 and repeated in Deuteronomy 5.

The reason is simple. All such statuary, images, and idols constitute an enormous injustice to the creator God. He is by them depicted as a very limited and confined deity reflected by their man-made images, and as such insults the power, majesty, and wisdom of the creator God.

And he does not take kindly to insults from those he created. Even the intellectually superior Athenians were warped in their thinking by the fall.

Paul was there for the express purpose of enlightening them through the gospel and the revelation he would give of the true God. It's all in Acts 17 and should be under our frequent review.

Because man's fallenness leaves him with a warped intellect, he cannot reason himself to a knowledge of God. We are dependent on revelation. Mankind the world over has enjoyed the benefits derived from scientific achievements, especially over the past few hundred years.

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Because man's fallenness leaves him with a warped intellect, he cannot reason himself to a knowledge of God. We are dependent on revelation. If God is spirit and non-physical, and the Bible says he is, and if man as God created him has a non-physical spirit element to his being besides his body, and the Bible says he has, is there some way God connects with man that is also spiritual?

[34 : 04] The Bible says there is. So what would this connection provide? What would be its purpose? It would appear to be one of communication. Connection and communication are, well, connectives, are they not?

And what would be communicated between the Creator and his creatures? How about information? Can we not also say that as certainly as connection and communication are intertwined, so also are communication and information?

What purpose does communication serve other than a dispensing of information? But information about what? That would be whatever the one who initiates the contact would want to convey.

In the case at hand, God would be the initiator, conveying to his creatures what he wants them to know. And how would this information from the sender to the receiver be conveyed?

Information between God's spirit and man's spirit. It wouldn't be by telephone, nor internet, nor radio waves. These are all devices with physical apparatus behind them.

[35 : 13] But this information from God the sender to man the receiver is also spiritual information. Can we say the ultimate in wireless connection?

Has anyone ever seen this spiritual exchange between the sender and the recipient? No. Nothing spiritual is perceived by physical senses because it isn't physical.

Then how does God get information to the human recipient? We most certainly do not know. But we know he does because God tells us he has done that.

He just hasn't told us how he does it. Romans 1 says that that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it unto them.

In them? How did it get there? God put it there. How did he do that? He communicated the information to them, intangible though it was, and God put it in man, in his spirit, his psyche.

[36 : 15] What did he put there? Well, among other things, he put the knowledge and existence of himself there. And he did it so adequately that man is declared to be without excuse for failing to honor and responding to the God of creation.

Regardless of what any man, including atheists, may say about there being no God, they know very well in their heart of hearts that it just isn't so.

All the while they may deny it, they know better. Does this mean atheists are lying? Yes, it does. And they are even lying to themselves.

Tragic, but true. The Bible calls this self-deception. They know better because God says they do. He manifested his existence to them and placed it in them so as to leave them without excuse.

All this through the supernatural communication of information sent from God to the human spirit of each human being. Read Romans chapter 1 for more details.

[37 : 21] The perpetual reality of the God of creation being a gracious God who is kindly disposed to his creation is not only evident through human history, but it is found to surface as early as Genesis chapter 3.

And why there? Because it was there, in Genesis 3, that the desperate need for the grace of God was first manifested. It came hard on the heels of our first parents' moral failure and rejection of their Creator's authority.

Spiritual death, in the form of separation from God, occurred upon their disobeying God in partaking of the forbidden tree. And physical death was to come, even if many years later.

But come it would, as it has to every succeeding generation. Now the need is obvious, very obvious. No need for the dead and dying is greater than the need for life.

Man's sin was the bringer of death. But who could be the bringer of life? Here is where that grace of God shows up in the immediate provision for Adam and Eve through the sacrifice of an innocent animal, and then later in the form of a promise.

[38 : 39] The promise involved the provision of a life-bringing agent who would actually succeed in reversing the curse of death. Ironically, the promised one who would bring life is from the very loins of the first Adam whose disobedience took life, replacing it with death.

The last Adam, who will turn out to be Jesus the Christ, will conquer death and replace it with life. God states in Genesis 3.15, what becomes the first expression of the gospel or the good news, the pro evangelium, that the seed or offspring of the woman, Eve, will produce the one to accomplish that reversing of death with an all-new resurrection life.

He will be the one who, although injured by Satan the adversary, will yet succeed in delivering a fatal blow to that adversary. He will be struck at the heel by Satan, but Christ will subsequently crush the head of Satan.

The permanence and fatality are unmistakable. This gracious God of creation opted to redeem humanity, to salvage it rather than discard it.

His doing so reflects His grace toward those with no claim upon it. And even though God's Redeemer in the person of His own Son would not arrive in Bethlehem for 4,000 years after the promise, God would still be graciously dealing with man in the interim.

[40 : 14] The epitome of His grace would be toward those through whom the Messiah Redeemer would come, namely, Noah, His son Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and onward, 2,000 years to David the king, and another thousand would see the arrival of Jesus the Messiah, son of David, son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

John reminds us in the first chapter of his gospel that while the law came by Moses, grace and truth was to come through God's promised Redeemer, His very own Son in the person of Jesus the Messiah.

Adam and Eve, because of their willful sin and disobedience to God, not only hid from Him, but attempted to cover their nakedness with an assortment of fig leaves. There are multiple things here we do not understand.

Their anxiety over the exposure of their private parts caused them to fashion the fig leaves to cover their nakedness. Some have suggested they covered their privates because the sin they actually committed was engaging in sexual relations.

But this is patently absurd on at least two counts. First, it was God Himself who told them to be fruitful and multiply. Apart from the normal husband-wife's sexual relations, multiplying and reproducing themselves in their progeny would be impossible.

[41 : 42] Secondly, it was also God who designed and intended the physical act for mating purposes, as well as for the mutual enjoyment of male and female.

Sexual relations are in no way a taboo. But, like all else that God created and pronounced very good, sex, apart from its marriage commitment, is subject to corruption and abuse.

We are persuaded, however, that there is something mysterious and not well understood about human nakedness. After all, the species of the animal kingdom wear their birthday suit for their entire lives.

But man, at least what we call civilized man, wears clothes to cover his nakedness. And it appears that the sense of guilt was connected with their nakedness, which led to the feeble attempt with the fig leaf fiasco.

Guilt is realized only when a moral standard is present and violated. Exposure of our moral failure often results in shame and embarrassment.

[42 : 47] It has been said that of all the creatures God created, only man has the ability to blush, or needs to. Now that the original sin was committed, what could be done to rectify it?

Undoing it was not possible. While simply eating forbidden fruit seems to us to be a petty offense, I mean, what's the big deal? So they ate something they shouldn't have.

Yes, it does appear to be a very minor offense. But we must not lose track of the major point. And that was their clear-cut disobedience and betrayal of the very one who gave them life.

Eating the fruit was merely the vehicle through which the disobedience was acted out. Acting contrary to the express will of the one who created and sustained all things really is a big deal.

The biggest of big deals, if you will. In fact, the offense of disobedience was of such magnitude, something truly extraordinary would need to be implemented to counter it.

[43 : 56] What could that possibly be? It is all found in the principle of sacrifice, substitution of the innocent dying for the guilty. But that's not fair.

You're right. It isn't fair. It's grace. Pursuing grace and experiencing it is the most critical thing a human can do.

We shall see. While we cannot be dogmatic about our understanding of human composition, it does appear to best fit the biblical model, even though that model also is scanty in definitive description.

To repeat from an earlier session, it was noted quite clearly in Genesis 2-7 that God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

The equation would then appear to be the physical body plus the breath of life God breathed into it together comprise the human soul.

[45 : 03] We are very familiar with the physical body. It's the spirit or soul we find most perplexing. While many equate the spirit and the soul, it does not appear they are synonymous in the Bible.

We see the body as physical and the spirit as non-physical. They together comprise the totality of our being called the soul.

In other words, our soul, which every human possesses, is comprised of part body and part spirit, or part physical and part non-physical.

This would mean the brain belongs to our physical body, while the mind belongs to our non-physical spirit. Other things about our humanity that are very real but lack physicality besides the mind include but are not limited to our will or volition, our intellect or IQ, memory, imagination, creativity, personality, temperament, norms and standards, and conscience.

The spirit is also the moral base or houses the moral base of our being. All these non-tangible realities define who we really are more than does our body.

[46 : 26] It is from our minds located in the human spirit that we exercise our volition, our power to make choices. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they did so because they willed to do so.

They made a moral choice in their act of disobedience. They willfully sinned. They used their mind to do so, and the mind seems to be in the human spirit.

Sin is moral and spiritual misbehavior, and it results in the predictable death of the sinner. That death of the spirit is nothing less than separation from the one who gave them life.

Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the physical body. But spiritual death is the separation of the spirit from God. Adam and Eve died just as God said they would.

He warned them not to eat of a certain tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For, said he, in the day you eat thereof, you shall surely die.

[47 : 36] They ate. They died. But not yet physically. They did die immediately, however, in their inner self, the Bible calls the spirit. And their spiritual death now produced their moral fallenness, of falling away and separation from God.

Where they originally had compatibility and togetherness with their Creator, they are now separated, estranged from Him. This new fallenness produced guilt, coupled with fear, and resulted in their hiding from God.

Now, the need is for reconciliation and forgiveness. This set the stage for the first promise of a Redeemer in Genesis 3.15, and He would be the offspring of the woman in fulfillment of God's promise.

When Adam and Eve attempted to clothe themselves with fig leaves, it was an obvious admission of guilt.

People today still try all kinds of cover-ups to assuage their guilt, but only one thing has ever worked or ever will work. And that one thing is forgiveness.

[48 : 51] Nothing else can resolve guilt. Adam and Eve's fig leaf fiasco was a self-help attempt to cover their guilt. But guilt can never be removed by the offender.

Only the offended party can remove the offender's guilt. In their case, the offended party was the very God who created them, and only He could remove their guilt and effect reconciliation.

Yet, not even God can ignore the principle of justice. Justice is the eternal right standard of the universe.

It requires the balancing of the scales of morality and righteousness. But what could do that? The obvious way for justice to be done is for the offender to pay the price for his offense.

Then, justice would be served. This would, of course, require the death of Adam and Eve. The wages of sin is death, and they certainly qualified with their willful offense and disobedience toward their Maker, who had already forewarned them of the penalty.

[50 : 04] But couldn't God merely look the other way? Not as long as justice must be served. And injustice would be unthinkable to the God who is the personification of righteousness.

Adam and Eve would have to die, unless some alternate plan could be devised. Enter the principle of substitution.

Could another who was not guilty but innocent, could they take the place of the guilty by being a substitute? This would mean the innocent suffers the consequences of the sin of the guilty.

What could possibly prompt this arrangement? Substitution. But the benevolence, love, and grace of the offended one. The substitute would be in the innocent animals who were slain by God to provide the coverings for the guilty pair.

Thus was instituted the very practice of animal sacrifice, the innocent animal dying for guilty sinners. Substitution. Substitution.

[51 : 13] Substitution. Substitution. Substitution. It would be the very defining core of the whole of Judaism and Christianity. While the Israelites would engage in animal sacrifice for centuries involving multiplied thousands of animals, human sins were never spoken of as taken away, only covered.

That's the meaning of atonement, to cover over so as to be out of sight. But we are told in Hebrews 10 that it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin.

All they could do was cover it. Yet the text goes on to say that Christ, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.

This one ultimate sacrifice for sin, made by God's own Son, was what the multitude of animal sacrifices was pointing to. And what was behind it?

The same love and grace that was behind the animal's sacrifice to cover Adam and Eve. Justice has been served. Payment has been made.

[52 : 23] The moral scales of the universe have been balanced. This is the epitome of divine love and grace. Now, the way of access is open to God through Jesus Christ, God's Son, and man's substitute.

Hebrews 10 informs us that it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. These were innocent animals. We would also call them dumb animals.

And they were dumb. Dumb in the sense that they had no idea what was going on or why when their very life was taken from them. They were unintelligent participants because animals have no sense of morality.

They act only from instinct. Why couldn't innocent animals take away the sins of humans who offered them as their substitute? It's because animals are not of sufficient value to fully pay for the sins of people.

People alone are made in the image and likeness of God. They possess an innate value or worth that is not true of animals. Only something of equal or greater value can serve as a substitute or sacrifice for another.

[53 : 43] This is why the animals were offered perpetually. They were never enough. No amount of animals could equal the value of one human being made in the image and likeness of God.

This is why only Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, would or could suffice for the entirety of humanity. When the scriptures repeatedly tell us that Christ died for the sins of the world, they are also telling us that he and he alone was both willing and qualified to do so.

The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, and the Son was willing to be sent, willing to give himself for the utterly undeserving, willing to judicially take their penalty upon himself and die for them in their place.

Jesus Christ did indeed become the Savior of the world. The forgiveness and peace which Christ purchased in his death, burial, and resurrection is offered to all who will receive it.

And this is done by acknowledging, admitting our sin to God, and as an act of our will, placing our trust, confidence, reliance upon Jesus Christ.

[55 : 04] When anyone does so, Christ saves them, forgives them, cleanses them, accepts them to himself. He alone has the right to the title of Savior.

Can you think of anyone else qualified to wear that badge? This too, by the way, makes the case for the exclusivity of Christ's salvation.

He was the only being in the universe qualified to die for the sins of the world. Do you know of another? Christ isn't the only way to God because Christians say so.

Christ is the only way to God because God says so. And God ought to know because it was he who sent his Son to accomplish this very salvation for a lost and dying world.

And it was the agreeable, obedient love of the Son that made him willing to give himself. This is the very essence, the core, the heartbeat of biblical Christianity.

[56 : 11] Something called Christian may have lots of other aspects to it, but if it doesn't include Christ died for the sins of the world, heading its menu, it isn't Christianity.

It may be churchianity, but it isn't Christianity. He who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

2 Corinthians 5.21 The principle of substitution has been briefly examined and has its origins in the early chapters of Genesis.

It was in chapter 3 that God himself provided a substitute to answer to the guilt of Adam and Eve. He did so in the innocent animals he obviously slew, so as to provide coats of covering for the nakedness of our first parents.

But why should there be any substitution? Why institute a system of sacrifice that appears utterly unfair, in that the innocent is slain as a substitute for the guilty?

[57 : 23] Surely the all-creative God who brought the universe into being could come up with an alternative. And what would that alternative be?

It would be to dismiss the very idea of a substitution. This would require the offender to suffer the consequences of his own sin, and it would have been entirely just.

Forget the sacrifice. Forget the substitute. He who does the crime pays for the crime in his own person. That's the purest form of justice.

Then again, what's this justice thing all about anyway? Why couldn't God just cut them some slack and overlook the whole affair? After all, people are only human.

And doesn't God specialize in forgiveness? Isn't that part of God's job description? Yes, it is. And yes, God does forgive.

[58 : 24] In fact, the Bible makes it quite clear that God delights in forgiveness. So then, what's the necessity for the substitution, sacrificial thing?

The necessity is linked to the reality that we live and function in a universe of moral order. This means there is good and evil, righteousness and unrighteousness.

And when everybody acts righteously, no one gets hurt. When people act unrighteousness, they do so against others or against God, or both.

Many are offended. Unrighteous deeds and harm done to others cries out for relief, for redress. This comes in the form of justice.

Justice is real and necessary because evil and evildoers are real. In order for justice to prevail in a moral universe, the scales must be balanced, or injustice will prevail as the only alternative to justice.

[59 : 35] Injustice is when the guilty goes free and no price is paid. The victim of the injustice is denied any redress.

He is profoundly aware that he has not been treated justly. Justice is when the guilty is called to accounts and made to suffer the consequences by receiving punishment that fits his crime.

Were we as humans, sinners all, not provided with the substitute for our sin, which in our case is Jesus Christ, God's own Son, we would have no recourse but to suffer the consequences of our sin in our own person.

Those who refuse Christ's gracious offer to be their substitute have but one alternative, and that is to receive the consequences of their own sin that justice demands.

You, yourself, pays, or a willing substitute who loved you and gave himself for you pays. The choice is yours.

[60 : 44] Choose wisely. Choose wisely. We would be the first to admit that there is much we do not know nor understand about our first parents' initial disobedience and rejection of their Maker's authority.

We do, however, know something firsthand of the consequences thereof. We all do, whether we actually realize it or not. And what are those consequences?

Well, for starters, we are going to die. Yes, die. We are all infected with a terminal moral disease called sin, and it will kill us all, just like it has already killed the billions who have gone before.

Romans 5 makes it quite clear, as does 1 Corinthians 15, that the entirety of the human race has descended from our common parents, Adam and Eve. In so many respects as they were, so are we.

They possess the original gene pool with all its attendant variants, and we are descended from them. The table of nations listed in Genesis 12 has proved to be incredibly accurate as regards Adam and Eve's descendants and their respective geographical locations in the ancient world.

- [62 : 08] And we all know our supposed new world is but a spin-off of the old world. Original sin came into being when Adam and Eve rebelled against the authority and warning of their Maker, the Creator God Himself.

When they did so, they took unto themselves something that God did not put in them when He created them. When God created them as His crowning achievement on the sixth and last day of His creative work, He pronounced everything, including Adam and Eve, as very good.

Now, after their disobedience, what was very good became decidedly less than good. A contaminant has entered the picture as well as the very bodies of Adam and Eve.

The contaminant was moral, but it extended to the physical, reaching all the way to imposing death. The first and immediate type of death was spiritual and resulted in separation from their Creator.

Hence, the hiding from Him, the fig leaves, and so on. The other type of death was physical, and while not imposed immediately as was spiritual death, it nonetheless began with a dying process in their bodies that eventually ended with their physical death as well.

- [63 : 37] And so it is with us. We, all of us, are in Adam. Our parentage is inescapable. And in Adam, as stated in Romans 5, Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

And 1 Corinthians 15 adds to that in saying, As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

So, what was the scope of Adam's sin? It was as broad as the totality of all humanity. This is why we die, both spiritually and physically.

This is why everyone's life terminates physically with an obituary. And this is also why our substitute Jesus Christ came, so that death would not have the final victory.

Christ was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. We are eternally grateful. The scope of Adam's sin reached much further than just our first parents.

- [65 : 03] The moral contaminant called sin, though not a physical entity but a moral one, somehow affixed itself to the psyche or the human spirit of Adam and Eve, and was then passed on to every succeeding generation.

How this could be without having physical characteristics such as we see in the genes and chromosomes, we do not know. But evidence of this is in the death of all persons since that time.

And while we cannot prove this scientifically, all evidence points to it, and we are at a loss for another or more plausible explanation. But it did not stop with humanity.

The sin factor has tentacles that traverse the entirety of creation. Adam was installed as the federal head of all creation.

The very first chapter of Genesis confirms this. He was to rule, exercise dominion over all the remainder of creation, marine life and avian life, floral and fauna.

- [66 : 11] All was to be under Adam's jurisdiction. He was assigned the task of naming all the animals. The ancients regarded those who gave names to others, whether men or beasts, as exercising authority over them.

Several name changes occur in Scripture, and in each case reflect authority over that which was named by the one naming. When Adam fell morally by his sin against God, he forfeited his moral authority to govern the earth.

The entire animal kingdom once rendered obedience to Adam. Now, not so much. Man can domesticate some of earth's animals, but there are other species that will have none of it.

The so-called lion tamer, who climbs into a cage with his chair and whip, had better not turn his back for long on one of the big cats.

The lion or tiger does not respect the man's moral authority. He is merely a meal to him. If he has the right circumstances, he'll take advantage.

[67 : 19] And not only the animals, but vegetation as well. The text tells us in Genesis 3 that due to Adam's fall and all of creation falling as well under him, he will now till the land by the sweat of his brow.

Most farmers take that to be very literal sweat, by the way. In addition, he will have to contend and compete with thorns and thistles. What good are they?

Where did they come from? They seem not to have been part of the original creation that God called very good. But now, here they are. Thorns, thistles, and all other nutrients stealing weeds are merely vegetation's equivalent of sin.

It's sin in the vegetation plane, as man's evil works are sin on the human plane. And not to be outdone in its participation from the fall is the geothermal phenomena we call weather.

From earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes, they all flaunt their authority and make man subject to it. The only exception being in the case of our Lord, who exercised his authority over that of the elements.

[68 : 35] Such is the ongoing scope of the sin and fall of Adam. When Adam, the federal head of creation, fell, all that had been placed under his jurisdiction fell with him.

We remain living in a fallen world. The scope of Adam's transgression has been described as universal, that there was no aspect of creation not impacted and altered by it.

Adam's transgression turned the entirety of creation into something God had not created it to be when he pronounced it very good after the sixth day.

Not only did man and all his progeny, including us, fall with him and in him, but also all over which Adam had been given dominion fell also.

The well-ordered world God created crashed into chaos, maladjustment, and eventually death. Man, animals, vegetation, you name it, the original creation by God became a sorely wounded recreation at the hands of man through this one evil act of disobedience.

[69 : 55] This has been designated the fall from time immemorial, and fall it was and is. It's not a stretch to call it a crash, a mega crash, a crash the effects from which no single entity could escape.

All living things, then, had an appointment with death. Adam and Eve died spiritually immediately upon their disobedient act, just as God warned them they would.

Later, they also died physically. So it is with us. We, too, died spiritually when each of us reached our personal age of accountability.

Subsequent to our spiritual death, we will also die physically, just as Adam and Eve. Our only salvation is to be made spiritually alive after our spiritual death and before our physical death.

If we are, then upon our physical death, we become absent from our body and present with the Lord. To make this possible, Jesus Christ died for us and made the payment for our sin in full in His own person.

[71 : 11] 2 Corinthians 5 tells us, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Not part of the world, nor even most of the world, but the world in its entirety.

All the world that was fallen was all the world Christ reconciled. The scope of His reconciliation was equal to the scope of Adam's transgression.

There is no aspect of God's creation that was not purchased, redeemed, reconciled in the sacrificial and efficacious death of Jesus Christ.

All that fell in Adam was redeemed in the payment. More than adequate payment by Christ. He balanced the moral scales of the universe in His substitutionary death.

This universal redemption must not, I repeat, must not be confused with universal salvation. Universal salvation is a pernicious heresy that claims all men will one day be saved and eventually none will be lost.

[72 : 20] Universal reconciliation does not render all men saved, but it does render all men savable. Because Christ died for the sins of the entire world, as in 1 John 2, it means there is no one who ever lived in the world that could not have been saved or that could not be saved.

Most are not, but it does not mean salvation was not available to them or possible. God proved His love for His fallen world by Christ dying for the world, all the world.

The scope of Adam's transgression still bears all its telltale signs throughout the world and is best described as our last enemy, death.

It's everywhere, and it will, in one way or another, claim us all. This is the result of Adam's transgression, referred to in Romans 5. If death is a result of Adam's disobedience, what then is the result of Christ's obedience?

Life, the very opposite. In direct proportion to what the sin of Adam produced, death, the righteousness of Christ produced the opposite, life.

[73 : 46] The degree of undoing wrought by Adam was the degree of doing wrought by Christ. It is unthinkable that the disobedience wrought by Adam's sin was greater than what the obedience of Christ could rectify.

He and His righteousness was every bit the match for the moral devastation produced by the sin of Adam. This means the extent of the damage done in the fall was the same extent of the repair wrought by Christ in His death.

Such is the burden of Romans 5, stating, So then, as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so, through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

A glorious truth. Stated another way, could you suppose there was something Adam and his sin broke, that Christ and his righteousness could not salvage, repair, restore, and renew?

Perish the thought. Well then, if Christ did this for us, including the provision of eternal life, why do we still die? Well, we do, and we don't.

[75 : 11] What does that mean? Sounds like double talk. It does deal with a double issue. We all live a double life, so to speak. The believer in Christ does die in his physical body, but he does not die in his spirit.

Body and spirit are separate entities, although they dwell in the same soul. The body is material. The spirit is immaterial. The physical body is subject to physical death and decay.

The spirit is not. Both body and spirit comprise the totality of our personhood, called the soul. The soul is part spirit and part body.

James 2 tells us, the body without the spirit is dead. At physical death, the soul, comprised of body and spirit, comes apart.

It disintegrates. The body goes to the ground from which it came, and the spirit returns to God from which it came. One part of our soul may be alive, while the other part is dead.

[76 : 21] Our body may be alive, while our spirit is dead. By dead, we do not mean it has no existence, but it is separated from God. Separation of the spirit from the body is physical death.

Separation of the spirit from God is spiritual death. Adam was dead spiritually, that is, separated from God long before he died physically.

He lived, we recall, to the age of 930 years. The scope of Christ's reconciliation included our spiritual life as well as our physical life.

His death provided life for the eternity of our being. You've just heard another session of Christianity Clarified with Marv Wiseman. Understanding the term efficacious and how it is critically important to the sacrifice of Christ will be addressed on the upcoming disc number 10.

We will be looking at the distinction between saved and savable, how universal destruction is answered by universal redemption, the difference between universal reconciliation and universal salvation, and we will discuss how reconciliation to God is both corporate and personal.

[77 : 53] In addition, how is it that all human beings are born redeemed, yet later need personal salvation? And this, of course, which is a very enigmatic issue, ties in with the biblical basis and provision for babies going to heaven when they die.

And how is it that Christ drew all men unto him, as he stated in John 12, 32? Most men are clearly not regenerate. How is it that they are all drawn to him?

These and other stimulating considerations of God's provision for his fallen creation will be undertaken on disc number 10. Many of the issues upcoming will enable the listener to connect the dots of a lot of issues regarding theological subjects that we have problems in mentally processing.

This is Marv Wiseman. I sincerely invite you to explore the fascinating topics we will engage on disc number 10 of Christianity Clarified. Thank you.

Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.