

Christianity Clarified Volume 62

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[0 : 00] Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 1, Making Grace Paramount, Part 1. The final segment of the previous Volume 61 of Christianity Clarified was titled, Making the Cross Paramount.

The connection between the two, God's grace and Christ's cross, could not be more real or more vital. Underlying the cross of Christ is the grace of God, and it is the cross that provides the ultimate demonstration of grace.

Nowhere in all of Scripture do you find both so intimately intertwined as these, expressed repeatedly in the letters of Paul the Apostle. And why is this?

Well, it is due to the updated information provided to Paul directly from the ascended Christ. The most definitive treatment given to the subjects of God's grace and Christ's cross is found in the letters written by the Apostle Paul.

They are the major content he referred to in an abundance of revelations given him by his glorified Lord from Heaven. And it is critical to note, these revelations were new material, never before revealed.

[1 : 16] It is accurate to say, Paul received updates of revelation, never before disclosed. This is crystal clear, as expressed in 2 Corinthians chapter 12 and Ephesians chapter 3.

In both epistles, the frequency of God's grace and Christ's cross repeatedly shine forth, and they are inseparable. It is striking also to realize these subjects were not disclosed to the original twelve apostles as they were to Paul.

And why not? Well, simply because neither God's grace, nor the cross of Christ as the great example of it, were even available for proclaiming until after the death and resurrection of Christ.

The twelve could not have made much of what they did not know. The twelve did have the revelation they needed to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, and they did so.

But they did not have the exquisite details of what the cross of Christ involved or the extent of the grace of God behind it. And they did it because it had not been revealed to them as it was later revealed to Paul.

[2 : 29] And from that revelation obtained from the ascended Lord, Paul was inspired to proclaim those greatest of all truths, the cross of Christ and the grace of God, like no one else could.

Even a superficial examination of Paul's letters convince us this is true. Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, just for starters. Herein, the themes of God's grace and Christ's cross come leaping from their pages.

These intertwined themes, God's grace and Christ's cross constitute 100% of the provision needed by humans to be acceptable to God and forgiven by God.

It is these two concepts that comprise the entirety of God's provision for man's salvation. Yet, these are the two, more than anything else, the world finds unacceptable and tends to reject to their peril.

It is so sad, but true. Is this true of you? An elaboration is up next. Please hear it carefully. Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 2, Making Grace Paramount, Part 2.

[3 : 47] The previous segment described the grace of God and the cross of Christ to be the essence of God's provision for us humans. It is the unmerited grace of God made available to us on the merits of Jesus Christ alone and His substitutionary death on the cross that makes salvation available.

While this, on the one hand, is the greatest provision imaginable, yet at the same time, many regard it as a major obstacle that prevents people from embracing it.

Are we saying the gospel, which is the world's greatest good news ever, is at the same time soundly rejected by so many for whom it was provided? Precisely.

And it is a rejection followed by the most negative and severe consequences that could ever be imagined. So again, here and now, this issue is explained as so many have explained it so many times to so many throughout the world for the past 2,000 years.

Christianity Clarified is tasked with the responsibility and privilege of attempting to set forth precisely what this faith called Biblical Christianity is all about.

[5 : 02] We seek to clarify what it is and dispel wrong ideas of what it is not. Our work is cut out for us in that there are more people throughout the world who have mistaken notions about Christianity than there are who truly understand it.

For instance, did you know there are approximately 1,500 religions, faiths, beliefs, cults, schisms, splits, and splinters, some very large with millions of adherents, and some with tiny numbers of followers?

And did you know that biblical Christianity is the only faith of spiritual belief operating and propagating itself solely, exclusively, entirely, on the basis of non-earned, non-deserved, non-meritorious grace?

And did you know that it is through the merit of Jesus Christ and the payment He made for your sin and mine that this grace is available to us? And did you know that this act of sacrificial love, portrayed by the gospel, is available exclusively through the only one qualified to wear the name Savior?

Aha! And therein lies the rub. It is salvation exclusively through Jesus Christ. This is a major objection voiced by many as regards the gospel.

[6 : 28] Christians are charged with narrowness, bigotry, lack of compassion, and on and on, for proclaiming Christ as the only way of salvation. Yes, we do proclaim that, and we do so without apology.

But it needs to be understood. That isn't our idea. We didn't think this up about Christ alone being the way to God. That is the position set forth by God Himself in the giving of His Son, and of the Son's willingness to be given on our behalf.

Rather than complain about Christ being the only way, how about expressing gratitude to God and His Son for having made even one way, for which neither were obligated to provide.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 3 God's Insistence on Christ's Exclusivity Christians, and our insistence that Christ is the only way of salvation and approach to God, continues to meet with major objections from many throughout the world, and all through the past 2,000 years.

While we freely admit, yes, that is what we preach, but we also insist it was not our idea. We are merely relating God's position on the matter, and such is clearly expressed in the Bible where God has made it a part of His official record.

[7 : 59] Many are familiar with how the God-inspired Apostle John put it in his 14th chapter. John is quoting Jesus, who said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father but by Me. Well, what is it about that that is not understandable? Likewise, a fellow Apostle of John's called Peter put it this way in the book of Acts chapter 4, when speaking of and defending Jesus, saying, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Nothing unclear about that. And that monumental letter to the Romans, bearing the signature of the Apostle Paul as inspired by the Spirit of God, penned these words in chapter 3, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

And then followed in 6.23 as well, with these words, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And followed in chapter 8, There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. As well as he wrote the Corinthians in his first letter, saying, For I delivered unto you that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

[9 : 42] Then when Paul wrote to the Corinthians again in his second letter, chapter 5, saying, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. And in his first letter to his young protege Timothy, Paul thus stated in chapter 2, For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

All those preceding verses are but a fraction of those available, but they were chosen as the clearest. Anyone rejecting them and the authority behind them should be able to provide a greater authority than the God of the Bible.

And who might that be? You? Or have you a religious guru more worthy of trust? The point of Christ's exclusivity rings loud and clear throughout these pages.

One may reject them to his peril, but in the name of intellectual honesty, you really should provide an authority you deem more believable. And have you one in mind?

Jesus Christ, God's Son, remains the exclusive way of salvation and the only way to God because God said so and simply left no room for alternatives or negotiation.

[11 : 03] Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 4, An Everything or Nothing Issue And what might that be, an everything or nothing issue? Just what is it that can be described as an everything or nothing issue?

It is precisely what we have pursued on the previous segments of Christianity Clarified, Volume 62. And it all focuses upon the person of Jesus Christ and the bold claim of salvation provided expressly through the redemption He secured by way of His substitutionary death on Calvary.

It was with great clarity that this subject was addressed by Dr. John Lennox, who is a retired professor of mathematics at Oxford University in Great Britain. He referenced the charge, so often leveled by non-Christians, about Christians proclaiming Christ as the only way of salvation, calling them narrow and bigoted for doing so.

To the charge, Dr. Lennox replied by saying, Why should Christians be called bigoted and narrow-minded simply because they have received from Jesus Christ something that no one else has ever offered?

To which we would offer a hearty amen. We who are in Christ and richly enjoy the provisions He has made for us for time and eternity must not flag on this issue.

[12 : 32] It deserves the greatest emphasis we can give it with no apologies. It truly is an everything or nothing issue and there is no middle ground.

If it is not completely true, it is completely false. To deny the exclusivity of Christ's salvation is to automatically deny the scope and efficacy of His substitutionary death.

It is either to say it was not enough, so other ways are needed to be added to it, or other ways are equal to it. Paul the Apostle, himself a Jew and former Pharisee, addressed this issue in Galatians chapter 5 when he answered his fellow Jews regarding their zeal for the law of Moses and their mistaken notion that man could become acceptable to God by keeping the law.

Paul soundly refuted that notion with powerful but simple logic, saying, If righteousness can be obtained by the law, Christ died in vain.

Did you get that? Not only that, but the inference is, If salvation can be obtained in any other way apart from the death of Christ for our sin, then Christ really didn't need to come at all, nor die at all, nor the Father did not need to send Him at all, because there are several other ways men can become acceptable to God apart from Christ, take your pick.

[14 : 01] Well, God forbid. But such is the thinking of many who pride themselves in saying they are more inclusive than Christians.

Christians. And those thinking this way need to be advised that many of the Christians they criticize at one time held the same position as they.

But it is their new life in Christ that changed all that. They now know salvation through Christ is not only real, it is, thankfully, exclusive.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 5, Denying the Need for Salvation. There are numerous obstacles that prevent people from accepting Christ and His salvation when they are presented with the gospel.

And chiefest among them are the three we now address. And here is one of those obstacles as voiced by some. And simply put, It is a perceived lack of need on the part of the hearer.

[15 : 07] And while it is true of them, as it is true of us all, that they do have a need, a very great need, yet they do not perceive that to be the case at all. Their reasoning, which is, of course, based on a faulty assumption they have, is, I don't need that.

This idea proposed that I somehow need a Savior to save me from my sin just doesn't apply to me. I'm sure it does for some, but I'm not that bad.

And to whatever extent I do need forgiveness from God for whatever, I'm confident He will grant it. And they go on confidently to say, Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not perfect or anything like that.

But I'm certainly better than many, you know. I mean, those who have lied and stolen and hurt people, sure, they probably need what you're talking about regarding a Savior to rescue them, but frankly, I'm not one of them.

Now, like I said, I'm not perfect, but I am a good person. And I think the Almighty will recognize that and welcome me and many others like me into His heaven after maybe sprinkling a little of His forgiveness my way.

[16 : 16] Because God knows I've tried to live a good life and I've done the best I could, and God will certainly not ask any more than that. I mean, after all, we are only human, and God is forgiving, right?

Well, true enough. And we are so glad God is forgiving. And we are only human. And therein lies the problem, because God is not.

God is an utterly righteous and holy being that makes us incompatible with Him. That's the problem. And it is systemic to all of humanity.

What we call our little sins or shortcomings or faults are truly major to the one who is a perfectly righteous and holy being. And this is how the Bible portrays God as being so distant from us humans.

We present a moral goodness that is far removed from God's holiness and righteousness, and that's why Jesus came. He came to provide for us a righteousness that we do not have.

[17 : 26] And He will give that to us as a free gift, because He paid for it when He died for our sins, large and small. But it requires our acknowledging that and receiving Him by an act of our will.

Because the Bible presents God's viewpoint and requirement of all this, and they are not the same as ours. And God does delight in forgiving us, but He can do so only because Christ paid the penalty of death for our sin in our place.

And God's position that we all have a great need far outweighs our faulty assumptions that we don't need a Savior. And if you say you don't and God says you do, we all do, whom should we believe?

Are you really willing to countermand God's insistence that we all need His salvation by denying that and insisting it doesn't apply to you?

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 6, Denying God's Desire to Save, Part 1. The previous segment described a typical, all-too-frequent reason given for rejecting salvation available through Christ.

[18 : 40] Such an one simply sees Himself as sufficiently righteous as He is and not really in need of salvation, which is a position contrary to what the Bible says throughout.

And now we face another extreme as to why one would not accept God's salvation through Christ. And this one is convinced God would not and could not actually forgive and save someone like Himself because He is too bad to be saved.

Says He, God wouldn't want anything to do with the likes of me. I know what I've done and the life I have lived and I'm sure God knows too and I wouldn't blame Him one bit for wanting to have nothing to do with me.

And this one may be coming from one of two positions. He may even see His sinful past as something to be proud of. He has tasted all the world has to offer, engaged in every kind of sin and vice as He pleased, and is quite boastful of it all.

Yeah, man, I've lived it up to the max and I would do it all over again. Never denied myself of anything I wanted to do and I'm proud of it.

[19 : 48] God wouldn't want anything to do with me and I really don't want anything to do with Him. So there. I've never had any time or interest in God and I'm sure He has no time or interest in me.

Well, this tough guy talk is almost always a cover-up. It's a front designed to protect one's image as a tough guy. Truth be told, he in his heart of hearts may very well have a ton of regrets and wishes he could have some do-overs because if he did, he certainly would have made a lot of different decisions along the way.

Many of us may know someone who fits this description, but guess what? God sees through all that tough guy nonsense and looks into the heart of this one and sees what is really there.

And the amazing thing about it is, is that God remains very willing and even eager to welcome one like that into His arms, forgive him, cleanse him, and make him his child for eternity.

How's that for the extent of God's love and grace? But, God will not, cannot save such an one as we have described apart from that one coming to grips with reality.

[21 : 06] God only saves in terms of truth and reality that is acknowledged. And He will not save one who does not come to the truth of His condition and repent of it. And to repent simply means to change the mind.

And the mind is always changed based on the insertion of truth into the situation and the willingness to own up to it. And when the so-called tough guy is willing to traffic in the truth and hopelessness of his situation, God is ready.

And God will save us from our sin, but He will not and cannot save us if we are proud of our sins. Something to think about, don't you think? God will receive, forgive, cleanse, and give us the very life Christ died to provide for us, but only on His terms and not on our terms.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 7, Denying God's Desire to Save, Part 2. Contrary to the person in the previous segment, the man or woman claiming to be proud of a sinful past and so far gone that God would not even be able to save them, nor would He even want to.

Such an one needs to know that all of the Bible contradicts that. The book of Romans, chapter 5, reminds us that while we were yet sinners, God demonstrated His love for us in providing Jesus to pay the penalty of our sins.

[22 : 35] He was our substitute. He who knew no sin was willing to be made sin for us in our place so that we could positionally be made as righteousness as is God Himself.

Wow! Is that true? You better believe it. And if you don't, you are in more trouble than you could possibly imagine. But the good news is that in believing it, you activate God's grace and forgiveness, and that's why it's called good news.

You have never, and you will never, hear good news about anything to equal this good news. Now, for the one contrary to the previous person on the prior segment who claimed to be proud of his or her sinful past, we consider the one who is far from proud but actually remorseful.

And this one, if they had the chance for do-overs, would make all sorts of changes. But regret it as they may, they cannot undo whatever it is from the past that plagues them.

And God can't and will not undo it either. What's done is done. But again, that good news is just what is needed to cancel that bad news that's already in place.

[23 : 56] And anyone who thinks they are too bad to be saved and sincerely believes that desperately needs to know something. Now, hear this. You cannot and you have not out-sin the grace of God.

Can you not give God and His Son some credit? Do you think for one minute that the substitutionary death of Christ on that cross somehow came short of being able to pay for your sins?

Just who do you think you are? That you could be beyond God's ability through Christ and His death to pay for your sin?

What makes you so different that your salvation is too big a job for even God to handle? And even if you come to terms with that and believe He could save you, now you ask, would He want to and why?

It's simple. God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Don't count out or deny God's ability to save you and by all means, don't count out His desire to save you because He really does love you.

[25 : 08] Yes, even you. That was the whole point of Jesus coming and the reason God sent Him. It's all about His love that motivated Him to come and die in our place coupled with His sinlessness that gave Him the ability to pay the price we could not pay.

Jesus balanced the moral scales of the universe and you are not excluded from His love to save nor His ability to do so.

Wow, what a Savior. Christianity Clarified Volume 62, Track 8 God's Grace Exceeds Our Sin And God's grace does exceed our sin and we are so glad it does.

Romans 5.20 tells us that where sin abounded God's grace abounded more. Why? Because more grace was required to provide for our sin.

Admittedly, it is difficult, impossible actually, for us to grasp the magnitude of God's grace. But it is there for us to rejoice in just the same. Speaking of what is impossible to grasp, consider this for just a moment.

[26 : 20] Try, if you will, to imagine the billions, that's with a B, who are alive today nearing 7 billion plus all the billions of the past who have preceded us.

Now think of all the evil perpetrated by those billions upon each other, all the conflicts, murders, rapes, lies, robberies, and other evils committed by the billions past, present, and yet future.

Got that? Understand now that they all comprise what the Bible calls the world. And now, add to that, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, stated in 2 Corinthians 5.19.

What does that mean? It means exactly what it says. Jesus Christ came as God in the flesh. He was no ordinary baby born 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, nor even an exceptional baby.

He was the creator and sustainer of the universe, born to marry His earthly mother. He already had His deity. He was the eternal Son sent by His Father to be the reconciler of the world, because God is really high on relationships.

[27 : 40] In fact, He is more about relationships than anything. Do you realize that the principal reason the Father sent His Son into that manger in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, and to that cross 30 years later, was for the express purpose of repairing the broken relationship between Himself and mankind He had created that went astray from Him?

That's what that verse says and means. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. God never walked away from the relationship He had with us humans.

We did. And we started with our original mom and dad named Adam and Eve. And every human that came from Adam and Eve, which means all humans past, present, and future, constitute the world for whom Christ died.

Did you get that? Really? In Christ, the whole world was reconciled to God? That's what the text says and that's what the text means.

Well, does that mean then the whole world is saved? No. It means the whole world was rendered savable. It means there was no one for whom Christ did not die and there was no one whose sins were not paid for by Christ.

[28 : 56] Romans 5 states it so clearly, saying, By the offense of one, Adam, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. And by the righteousness of one, Christ, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

For as by one man's disobedience, Adam, many were made sinners. So by the obedience of one, Christ, shall many be made righteous. The way has been opened for you to come.

And next, we will tell you how. Christianity Clarified Volume 62, Track 9, Responding to Abounding Grace Our previous segment reminded us that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

That required nothing from the world, but it did require an incredible contribution from God. And that contribution consisted of God giving His Son to pay the price for our sin.

And it required the Son being willing to pay it. None of us can comprehend that transaction because it occurred on the level of deity. And it required that that which was offered as the payment for humanity's sin be of greater value than that for which payment was made.

[30 : 08] Simply put, the value of deity dwarfs the value of humanity. That which separates the two in every way is infinite. The Creator is superior in every way to the creature.

God is infinite. Humans, no matter how many the number, are finite. The greater, being God in the flesh, exceeded the value of the lesser, being human.

Jesus alone was eligible to make the payment in full for all of humanity simply because of who He was. And He did what He did because of who He was.

And it was because of who He was He was willing to do it. And in that, that expiation, that self-sacrifice, He purchased the right to freely throw open wide the way of access to come to God.

This is how, after saying in 2 Corinthians 5 that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and then in the very next verse, Paul adds, We beseech you then, be reconciled to God.

[31 : 13] But wait, weren't we already reconciled in the previous verse? We were as an entire humanity, and Christ in His death picked up the tab for the corporate sin of corporate humanity.

This made the way of access open, and only Christ opened it because He alone made that payment of death for sin, all sin. This also is why He alone is the way of access to God, thus requiring Christ's exclusivity as the only way of salvation and approach to God.

And why shouldn't He be the only way of salvation when He was the only one who paid for it? It is precisely what enabled Him to say in John 14 that He was the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one could come to the Father but by Him.

So how do we come? We hear this truth called the gospel, the good news, and it demands a response. The response is made in the very same way we make a decision about anything.

It is with our will. As one responds with the will to decide to marry your mate, you also decide with that same will to put your trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation.

[32 : 27] You need not be in a church, and you need not have a preacher or a priest. All that is required is the Savior, that's Jesus, and the sinner, that's you.

You can pray, Lord Jesus, there is much about this I do not understand. I only know you died to save me, and I want to accept you into my life, and thank you for paying my penalty.

Amen. Short, simple, and oh so sweet. And God will hear you, and he will save you as he has so many before. Simply trust him and tell him so.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 10, Grace Greater Than Our Sin. It ought not surprise us that the biblical truth of God's grace exceeding the sin of all humanity would become so valuable it just needs to be put to music.

All of God's great truths are worth singing about. The poor atheist has no song, and no one of whom or to whom he can sing. Not so with a believer in Christ, for he has put a new song in our hearts.

[33 : 43] He did that years ago for a lady named Julia H. Johnston. So taken by the truth of God's grace, she was compelled to express it in a song.

It's called Grace Greater Wonderful Grace of Our Loving Lord, Grace that exceeds Our Sin and Our Guilt.

Yonder on Calvary's Mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt. Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold, threaten the soul with infinite loss.

Grace that is greater, Yes, grace untold. Points to the refuge, the mighty cross. Dark is the stain that we cannot hide.

What can avail to wash it away? Look, there is flowing a crimson tide. Whiter than snow you may be today.

[34 : 48] Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe. You that are longing to see his face, will you this moment his grace receive?

And then the chorus. Grace, grace, God's grace. Grace that will pardon and cleanse within.

Grace, grace, God's grace. Grace, grace that is greater than all our sin. Romans 5 reminds us that God demonstrated his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Such love and grace far exceeds our ability to comprehend. We only know, as do countless numbers, that when this truth is personally appropriated, nothing will ever be the same.

Your life, your attitude, your actions, your interest, your perspective, and certainly your eternal destiny, all radically and gloriously changed.

[36 : 07] The assurance and peace provided from this forgiveness is priceless beyond words. This, right now, is your opportunity to activate it all.

You can actually connect with the Father through the Son he provided for your eternal salvation. Picture the Savior at the door of your heart, seeking entrance. Will you open that door and invite him in?

I pray even now, whoever you are, wherever you are, Lord Jesus, I do open my heart and life for you to enter. Thank you for providing yourself to die for my sin.

I here and now accept you and take you for my own. Amen. Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 11, Beginning New Life in Christ Anyone recently receiving Christ and His salvation, by responding to the gospel of God's grace, needs to understand you are commencing a whole new existence.

Jesus Himself described it in John chapter 3 as being born again. Upon receiving Christ as one's personal Savior, the Spirit of God comes into your life and being and regenerates you in your spiritual inner person.

[37 : 25] To be regenerated means you are spiritually made a new person on the inside. We do not understand how God does this, how He enters our being and makes us a new person with a new spiritual life.

We only know that He does. It's what the Apostle Paul referred to in 2 Corinthians 5 when he said, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation.

Old things have passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And the Apostle John adds words of confirmation regarding our new life when he tells us near the end of the Bible in 1 John chapter 5, These words of assurance from God's Word are intended to provide believers, especially new believers, with confidence as they begin their new life in Christ.

As a newborn Christian, regardless of your age, you are spiritually an infant or babe in Christ, no matter if you are in your 50s or 60s. And, like a physical newborn baby, your greatest need is for the nourishment that will aid your growth and development.

The Apostle Peter mentioned this in his first letter, chapter 2, when he said, As newborn babes, desire, or feed on the milk of God's Word, so that you may grow and develop.

[39 : 12] The goal for all Christians, whether they are newborns or older in the faith, is for their spiritual growth and development. Nothing will contribute to spiritual growth more than spiritual food.

And spiritual food is what the Bible is all about. It is to your spiritual being what physical food is to your physical body. A Christian can be spiritually undernourished in the same way one can be physically undernourished.

Get into the Bible, and the Bible will get into you and enable you to spiritually flourish and develop. Your rate of growth and development as a new Christian is linked to your intake of spiritual food from the Scriptures.

And, if perchance you need a Bible, you only need write me, and one will be sent to you free of charge and no strings attached. May God bless you and strengthen you as you feast upon His Word.

Christianity Clarified Vol. 62, Track 12 Reviewing the Issue of Authority Several times throughout the previous 61 CD volumes of Christianity Clarified, the critical issue of authority has been addressed.

[40 : 43] You may recall hearing, The issue is authority. Always has been. Always will be. Nothing could be more true. Whatever or whomever it is that anyone considers to be their ultimate authority will determine what they believe.

Believe about what you ask. Believe about anything is the answer. The issue is here revisited. You have been informed there are but three possible sources from which you can take your authority about anything.

They are first and most common, the mind of man, including your own mind. This is by far the authority appealed to by most people in deciding what they believe.

We rely mostly on our own mind as our authority for what and why we believe anything. And you can add to our own mind the mind of other humans we respect.

We call them experts or professionals. And you are still referencing the human mind. And as stated, it is the mind of humans, ours and other humans, from which we derive information, that forms our beliefs about everything.

[41 : 55] Well then, what other sources or minds besides human exist? There is the mind of Satan, the adversary, whom Christ described as the deceiver and the father of lies.

Yes, he surely has a mind, and he eagerly peddles his lies and deceptions wherever he can. And he is a consummate pro at doing so.

In fact, Satan is so good at what he does, many even deny his existence. But Jesus didn't, because he had the book on Satan, and he bested him in the 40 days of temptation in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Still, Satan has a mind, and he spews his poison wherever he can. He constitutes the second of three possibilities that we humans can appeal to for our authority.

And the third and last is the only dependable one that will not and cannot lead anyone astray, because it is the mind of God himself.

[43 : 00] The first two sources of authority are severely flawed, as attested by all of history. Every one of us, as flawed human beings, have been led astray by our own thinking, sometimes about small issues, sometimes about really large issues, because we all think with a fallen intellect and a warped logic.

Option number three, as our authority is the mind of God recorded in the Word of God. This book, the Bible, is provided by God to counter the wrong thinking of both the human mind and the satanic mind with the completely true and dependable Word of God.

It is our only safe authority to which we must constantly appeal. The mind, the logic, the truth that accompanies reality resides in the mind of God.

He has been pleased to disclose what He has disclosed to us in His Word. It not only reveals what God thinks, but it is the only reliable corrective for what we humans think.

It's the only mind to rely on. Which of these minds do you rely on? Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 13, Judeo-Christian Origins, Part 1.

[44 : 19] Having briefly disclosed the only three possible sources of authority for anyone's belief, we discovered them to be the mind of humans, which is the most appealed to, secondly, the mind of Satan the adversary, which is totally unwarranted, but still appealed to, even if by a minority, and third, the only source deemed truly consistent and reliable being that of God Himself as His mind is revealed in His Word, the Bible.

We know of no other source to which we can appeal for direction apart from these, the mind of humans, the mind of Satan, the mind of God Himself. And in our ongoing quest for truth, pursued on Christianity Clarified, we are exploring the truth claims of the Judeo-Christian origins and the present expressions of faith derived from that.

And when we say Judeo-Christian, we speak of the early revelations found in Judaism as recorded in the Old Testament. 25 CDs, totaling 500 separate tracts, were devoted on Christianity Clarified to the history and influence worldwide of the Jewish people.

In an attempt to reveal their strengths and weaknesses, we saw the Jews, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, having arrived first on the scene of recorded humanity following the flood of Noah.

Such an examination forces the seeker to acknowledge the extraordinary influence and contribution of these special covenant people of God. We believe them, the Jew, to be more strategic and critical to the plan and program of God than many are willing to admit.

[46 : 04] And we noted not only the origin of Judaism reflected in the person of Moses in Sinai, but sadly reviewed their undoing and the demise of Judaism, beginning when the veil in the Jewish temple was ripped from top to bottom at the crucifixion of Israel's Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

And this is recorded in the Gospels. We are just now beginning to note how Christianity was birthed out of the demise of Judaism.

And as we noted the many faulty assumptions of the Jews that led to their erroneous conclusions, history reveals that out of that Judaism, Christianity emerged.

And this is why it is frequently referred to as the Judeo-slash-Christian history and culture. And when Judaism became defunct, which is a concept denied, of course, by today's Jews, there were Jews, and Jews exclusively, who alone were the first to believe Jesus of Nazareth to be Israel's Messiah.

All of the earlier believers in Jesus were themselves Jews. And as early as 15 to 20 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, Gentiles, that is, non-Jews, were also coming to faith and believing in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

[47 : 27] And as more Gentiles did so, fewer Jews did so, until Gentile believers greatly outnumbered the Jewish believers. And these Gentiles, or non-Jews, would constitute a whole new entity eventually morphing into the Roman Catholic Church.

And it is this that we now begin undertaking on Christianity Clarified with a lot of eye-opening content lying just ahead. Christianity Clarified Volume 62, Track 14, Judeo-Christian Origins, Part 2.

As referenced earlier, CD Volumes Number 36 through 61, consisting of 500 separate tracks of content, were devoted not only to the origin and rise of Jews and Judaism, but to the demise of Judaism as well.

Whereas Judaism as a religion and status before God is indeed defunct, there is nothing defunct about the Jewish people. And despite Israel being set aside in their unbelief described in Romans chapters 9 through 11 by the Apostle Paul, himself a Jew, yet God has glorious things promised for His covenant people, the Jews, in the future.

Christianity Clarified attempted to reveal and explain a multitude of Jewish faulty assumptions that, when acted upon, ultimately led to their demise and temporary disfavor with God.

[48 : 58] And no one doubts that the Jewish faulty assumptions were all made in good faith by Jewish authorities who were simply in error regarding the meaning of several passages in their own scriptures.

Faulty assumptions of the Jewish people began with their exodus from Egypt under Moses. There and thereafter, Israel is described by God Himself as being a stiff-necked and stubborn people that led to their faulty assumptions.

But that will not always be the case because a new covenant is promised Israel as revealed in the prophet Jeremiah chapter 31 and Ezekiel chapter 37.

So, as we've said, Israel's best days are clearly ahead. Still, faulty assumptions were made by Jewish leaders that led their followers astray in disastrous ways.

Defeat by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and later the Greeks and the Romans, leading to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and the Bar Kokhba rebellion in the first century A.D., the result of which was the massacre of tens of thousands of Jews and their worldwide scattering and subjection to persecution through the centuries, which culminated in the Holocaust of World War II.

[50 : 21] No people on earth have been subjected to such persecution and discrimination as the Jewish people. And, while speaking of faulty assumptions, it is noteworthy that faulty assumptions on the part of Gentiles, particularly European Gentiles, were responsible for the anti-Semitism that continues to persist even today.

It should be quite obvious there are plenty of faulty assumptions to go around among all peoples of the world on all the continents. We undertook the faulty assumptions made by the Jews first simply because they were first on the scene chronologically.

And, having revealed many of those faulty assumptions as recorded in history, we now turn to the faulty assumptions of the Roman Catholic Church, which then will be followed by the faulty assumptions of the Protestants.

You see, nobody escapes these faulty assumptions, not in history, nor today, and we shall see as they develop.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 15, The Judeo-Christian Origins, Part 3. In using the hyphenated term Judeo-Christian, the idea conveyed is that the usage denotes their inescapable connection.

[51 : 45] It does mean that what would become Christianity had its origin in Judaism. Had there been no Judaism, there would have been no Christianity, for it was born out of Judaism.

It can also be said that Christianity is, in reality, Judaism having come to full flower. When one engages the whole of the Bible, that is, the Old and New Testaments, it can readily be seen how what became Christianity in the New Testament, truly was rooted in the historic faith and religious system of Judaism, spelled out in the Old Testament.

It is an axiom that the two are forever connected. The book of Acts constitutes, more than anything else, the bridge between the two. Jews today, as well as Jews back then, in the first century, do not at all see this as Christians do.

They see their Judaism as merely continuing on to the present, and Christianity as an illegitimate and wrongful conclusion of Judaism claimed by Christians.

Consequently, Jews reject the authority of the New Testament, believing it to be an historical concoction of Christians, and not at all the Word of God as is their Old Testament.

[53 : 08] In fact, Jews do not refer to the Old Testament as such at all because they see what Christians call the Old Testament as the entire revelation from God, and to Jews, their whole Bible consisting of the Old Testament only is called the Tanakh.

Included in it are the three segments of Holy Writ labeled the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets. Christians, on the other hand, fully embrace the Old Testament, but insist it tells only part of the whole story.

The rest of the story continues from the Old Testament, adding the New Testament to it, thus completing the picture, the theme of which the whole is, that is, both Testaments spell out the totality of the picture, which is redemption.

The redemption of all creation that was ruined in Genesis 3 with the fall of humanity. With the arrival of the New that centers on the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, Christians see him as the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

This, then, means the earlier Judaism that permeates the Old Testament has given way to its intended fulfillment provided through Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and Savior of the world.

[54 : 29] This, to Christians, makes Judaism outdated and actually passé. The term employed is defunct.

Judaism is viewed as legitimate historically, but not so currently. Judaism has developed into what is currently called Christianity, and precisely when that occurred and why is addressed upcoming, and I promise it will be eye-opening.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 16, Judeo-Christian Origins, Part 4. An attempt is underway to explain how the Christian faith has its origin and roots in Judaism.

It is the religion of Jews worldwide from the time of Moses and the giving of the law in Exodus chapter 20 to the present. Christians fully accept the Old Testament the Jews call the Tanakh, but insist it is the New Testament added to it that completes the story.

Jews are equally convinced this is not so, and their Tanakh, or Old Testament alone, is the entire revelation of God so far as Jews are concerned.

[55 : 48] In believing the practice and legitimacy of Judaism actually came to an end by being updated or fulfilled by the contents of the New Testament, the search is on to determine when this became a reality.

When did that update, that fulfillment as Christians call it, actually occur? Can it be pinpointed? Is there a specific date Christians would claim this really happened?

While we do not have a chapter and verse that specifically says that's what took place and when it took place, yet we do see a time we believe to have signaled it.

When Jesus was on the cross, as his life ebbed from him, he uttered the word Tetelestai, recorded in John's Gospel chapter 19, verse 30.

Tetelestai, in the New Testament, translated in the King James, means, it is finished. The 20th century New Testament translates it as, all is finished, and the rendering by C.H.

[56 : 55] Rue translates it, the task is done. The question, of course, is, what was finished? What was the task that was done? Christians insist it was the very thing Jesus came into the world to accomplish, the redemption, the rescuing, the salvation of the fallen human race that occurred with the human rebellion of our first parents in Genesis chapter 3.

It was then that God promised the seed or descendant of Eve would one day arrive and deliver a mortal blow to the enemy that had deceived Eve, tempting her to eat of the forbidden tree.

That promised seed would be the Messiah, which means the anointed one, the chosen one. But it was not until 4,000 years that that Messiah in the person of Jesus of Nazareth showed up.

Numerous prophets we considered earlier predicted his coming. John the Baptist was raised up to introduce Jesus as Israel's long-sought Messiah, calling him the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.

Later in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, the Jewish apostle Paul would say years after the crucifixion that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

[58 : 14] Christians believe that occurred precisely when Jesus died spiritually by being separated from God as a member of the triune Godhead for the space of three hours, 12 noon to 3 p.m.

That was when the veil in the Jewish temple was torn from top to bottom. It, the redemption transaction, was finished. And so was the religion of Judaism.

How and why Christians believe this follows. Christianity Clarified, volume 62, track 17, Judeo-Christian Origins, part 5.

The account of Christ's crucifixion is recorded in all of the Gospels in the New Testament, Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19. Between them, there were three phenomenal things that occurred while Jesus was on the cross.

An eerie darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, 12 noon to 3 p.m., plus an enormous earthquake occurred, said to have split rocks in two, and specific mention was also made in three of the four Gospels that the veil in the temple was torn in two, ripped from the top to the bottom.

[59 : 31] The veil was not a thin, flimsy curtain. It was a heavy woven material stretched across the width of the area that separated the holy place from the most holy place.

The ladder was where the Ark of the Covenant was placed. It was there that God's presence would be manifested. There he would meet and dwell among his people.

Only once each year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, could the High Priest and only the High Priest enter. He was to take the blood of an animal, sprinkle it upon the mercy seat that was actually the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, and this act atoned for the sins of the nation of Israel for one year.

Then again, on the prescribed day, the entire event was to be repeated, and atonement was secured for one more year. But when Jesus died, we are specifically told that that veil that separated the holy place from the most holy place where the Ark was located was torn in two.

Skeptics dismissed it as coincidental, claiming it was torn by the earthquake. Seismologists, the people who study earthquakes and their effect, tell us that had the earthquake done it, the veil would have been torn from the bottom to the top.

[60 : 52] But both Matthew and Mark are very specific, saying the veil was torn from top to bottom. The most detailed and best commentary on this is found in the New Testament account of the letter to the Hebrews, chapters 7-10, and 10 in particular.

The night before his death, Jesus told his apostles at the Last Supper that the cup of wine he held up and told each of them to drink from represented the new covenant for which he would give his blood.

The Hebrews passage in chapter 9 reveals, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with his own blood, Christ entered the most holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Christians believe Jesus finalized all sacrifices by becoming the ultimate sacrifice of which all the previous animal sacrifices were merely a type.

death. It would be his death, John prophesied three years earlier, when he introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.

[62 : 01] But this is all found in the New Testament, which sadly, the Jews do not accept as part of the Word of God. This difference continues to separate Jews from Christians, and more detail regarding this lies just ahead.

Christianity Clarified, volume 62, track 18, The Judeo-Christian Origin, part 6. The resurrection of Christ that occurred three days following his crucifixion was not readily believed.

In fact, the first ones to disavow it were the very ones who would have wanted to believe it, his own twelve apostles. Not until Jesus appeared to them personally could they truly believe he actually had risen from the dead.

Forty days later, they would then witness his bodily return to heaven as recorded in Acts chapter 1 and in the Gospels. Now the apostles had the resurrection to add to their message about Jesus being Israel's Messiah, sent by God, and now returned to God.

But rather than embrace that glad message, as Peter implored them to do in Acts 2 and 3, the deep state religion of Israel continued in their rejection mode and even began the physical persecution of their fellow Jews, those who were preaching that message.

[63 : 30] And it was Jews persecuting Jews exclusively. There is no record of non-Jews even entering the picture until several years later, perhaps as many as eight or even ten.

And then, of all people, the first non-Jew we know of to embrace Jesus was a Roman army officer named Cornelius. His wonderful story is in Acts chapter 10 and deserves your reading it along with chapter 11 for a fuller picture.

In addition, the infamous Saul of Tarsus, who could be likened to the original Gestapo, came to faith in the amazing Damascus Road conversion, and he was called by the ascended Christ to become the apostle to the Gentiles.

Still, it was nearly fifteen years before he would take that first of his three missionary journeys. Thankfully, the world has never been the same since.

Paul will have more success with the Gentiles to whom he was their apostle than he will with his fellow Jewish brethren. They just couldn't accept the idea that Saul of Tarsus, who had become Paul the apostle, was now preaching the faith he earlier sought to destroy.

[64 : 47] Following his mission trip and the writing of many letters to the congregations he founded that are in the New Testament, Paul will be executed by the Romans as the fires of persecution burn brightly.

And this was in the late 60s, about 35 years after the crucifixion of Jesus, and just a few years before 70 A.D. when the Roman general Titus would destroy Jerusalem, massacre tens of thousands of Jews, and enslave many more.

And in about another 60 years, Rome again besieges Jerusalem to put down the Bar Kokhba rebellion. This was around 135 A.D., and this time the Jews would not even be allowed in Jerusalem under penalty of death.

Romans would destroy every semblance of anything Jewish. Even the name Jerusalem was changed to Capilatina, a Latin name, and this would displace Jews from their original land not to return as a nation until 1948, 2,000 years later.

Meanwhile, what were those who were then Christians making of all of this? That's critical, and that's next. Christianity Clarified Volume 62, Track 19, Jewish Christian Origins, Part 7.

[66 : 12] The year 70 A.D. is historically monumental. It was then that Jerusalem, along with its sacred temple, was destroyed by the Romans.

Scripture and history attest to all this destruction following the disobedience and corruption of Israel and its leaders, and following repeated warnings from their own prophets, godly Jews, that such destruction was certain if they did not repent of their sin and return to the God who had called them and established them as his people.

For their rebellion, they paid a heavy but predicted price. The ten tribes in the north were invaded and enslaved by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

Then the two remaining tribes in the south, Judah and Benjamin, were invaded and carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. as they were enslaved for the 70-year period that, again, the Jews' own prophets had warned them about.

Treatment from the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes during the 400 silent years between the Testaments were further evidence of the protective hand of their God having been removed.

[67 : 32] And why was it? Because, as they were warned repeatedly, judgment was coming if they did not repent and return to God. They didn't, and it did.

Meanwhile, great numbers of Gentiles, that is, non-Jews, had come to faith in Christ as their Savior and readily witnessed what had been happening to the Jews as they were constantly being brutalized and destroyed by pagan, idolatrous Romans, Greeks, and others.

Well, what was to be made of all of this? Were not the Jews God's chosen people? How or why could God allow such to befall the people He supposedly loved and chose as His own?

The answer seemed obvious. It seemed God no longer loved them. It seemed they no longer were His special chosen people.

They once were, but they send away their favored status, and God was now finished with the Jews permanently. Or so it seemed. Here was the earliest beginnings of what previous volumes of Christianity Clarified have identified as replacement theology.

[68 : 52] In a nutshell, it is the popular but unscriptural idea that the Jewish people, who were the original chosen people of God, have since been replaced by another people.

Whereas the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah, God has also rejected them and replaced them with the new chosen people who did accept Jesus as Messiah, Savior, and Lord.

And who are these new people? They are the Christian church. Well, this is an erroneous position that is not supported at all by the Bible, but we can see how faulty assumptions considered it to be true.

And it's so much so, this remains to be the majority position among Christians to this very day, Roman Catholics and Protestants included.

More coming. Christianity Clarified, Volume 62, Track 20, The Judeo-Christian Origins, Part 8.

[69 : 52] Although it is little understood, it is still widely believed. In fact, replacement theology, at times called supersessionism, is to this day remaining the majority position among Christians, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant.

Believing there can only be one people who are rightly related to God requires the original people, the Jews, to be replaced by the new people called Christians.

Christianity Clarified soundly rejects that premise, believing it to be one more faulty assumption that has led to an inaccurate conclusion. There is no question that the Jews have been replaced as God's primary focus in His present plan and program.

And there is no question that their replacement is true, but it is merely a temporary situation. And because of the integrity of God in His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and because of Scripture prophesying the temporary displacement of Israel, we can confidently assert that Israel's best days, in fact, do lie ahead in her future, not in her past.

Previous volumes of Christianity Clarified, particularly those volumes 40 through 50, contain about 200 segments, and they were devoted to clarifying this aspect and this grievous error of replacement theology.

[71 : 26] Unfortunately, it was easy for early Christians to assume, and this is why we call it a faulty assumption to believe that God had permanently written off the Jew.

It isn't hard to see how they arrived at that. The assumption was, understandably, based on Israel's perpetual idolatry and later corruption that caused God to part company with them.

Well, God did part company with them, but not permanently, only temporarily. This is because the unconditional and irrevocable promises of God that were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must be fulfilled.

The integrity of God is on the line as regarding His making good on His promises. Still, with all the retribution visited upon Israel by her enemies and the horrendous holocaust of World War II, it's quite easy to assume God has not only written Israel off permanently, but He is causing all this punishment and persecution to come upon them to prove it.

And honesty compels us to admit that not only can we see how the early Christian church in the first and second centuries, even to the present day, could make that faulty assumption, we must admit, had we been there in their place, observing what they observed.

[72 : 55] We very likely would have reached the same erroneous conclusions as they. After all, none of us at any time are exempt from faulty assumptions of our own.

So let's not be too hard on those who made them, merely being aware that things are not always as they seem. And yes, we too are susceptible to making faulty assumptions, and we have to guard against it every day of our lives.

Christianity, Volume 62, Track 21, Preview of Upcoming Volume 63. Faulty Assumptions Galore.

What are they all about? Well, just as the terms say, they are conclusions made by those who hear or see certain events, and then draw conclusions based on what they heard or saw.

But, as has been said, things are not always as they appear. And misunderstanding what one thinks was heard or seen allows us to reach an erroneous conclusion about it.

[74 : 10] And our conclusion was based upon assuming our interpretation about the events in question were right. But as we all know, that is not always the case.

If we recognize our mistake in time, we can correct it, sometimes even reversing ourself from what we assumed was true, but in fact was not true at all.

However, if we do not learn the truth about what we thought was true, but was not, then it stands. And it not only stands, but becomes established as fact.

Please put quotation marks around that word, fact, because the faulty assumptions regarding the Jews and God's inviolate promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that led to nearly 2,000 years ago to the position of replacement theology was not and is not fact at all.

But that does not keep it from surviving as true even to this day. Any generation that arrives at a position about nearly anything that isn't true, but is nonetheless believed to be true, it takes on a life of its own.

[75 : 34] It becomes, as it were, etched in stone and is passed on to each succeeding generation, perhaps through hundreds or even thousands of years.

Of these, and there are too many to enumerate, it is often said, well, everybody knows, except they don't know.

They only think they know. But they were recipients of a faulty assumption that was made, no doubt, in good faith by those who made it. Well, everybody knows.

Replacement theology, or as it is sometimes called, supersessionism, is one of those more major and serious of the faulty assumptions.

In many respects, it has been a major contributor to anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jewish people through the centuries. And the irony of it all is that the faulty assumptions whereby people believe God had permanently written off the Jew and replaced them with Christians as the new people of God was and is held by all in good faith.

[76 : 51] But as we have learned repeatedly, believing something in good faith that is not actually true, doesn't make it true, no matter how sincere the belief of those who hold it.

In volumes past, we recounted several examples of the Jews having made faulty assumptions, and so serious were they, and unfounded in reality, they spelled disaster for those who made them.

That is the extreme danger of faulty assumptions. People tend to act on what they falsely assume to be true. But if it isn't true, the results can be, and often are, disastrous.

And probably in no instances is this so serious and so threatening as in times of conflict and war. Having pointed out several faulty assumptions of the Jews that led to their terribly painful past, we next will turn our investigation to the Roman Catholic Church that has itself made numerous faulty assumptions that they then built upon and continue to carry out to the present.

And because we have no limit of faulty assumptions, there are plenty to go around, Protestantism has made a passel of its own, not to be outdone by the Jew or the Roman Catholics, all of which forces me to recall an oft-heard phrase that you have no doubt heard me utter in the past, and it is this.

[78 : 24] We all have wrinkles in our theology and doctrine, and when we get to heaven, we will all get ironed out, and some of us need more ironing than others.

So, thank you for your participation with us. You will find the upcoming faulty assumptions of our Roman Catholic friends to be closely associated to the Judaism from which it was birthed.

This is Pastor Marv Wiseman, thanking you for listening. God bless you. Join us, if you can, in the future.