

Christianity Clarified Volume 48

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[0 : 00] What is Christianity really all about? Here, in an ongoing effort to try and dispel some of the confusion, is Marv Wiseman with another session of Christianity Clarified.

Previous sessions of Christianity Clarified have already established and emphasized the strategic and divine necessity of the Jewish people to the carrying out of the plan and program of God.

One can understand the refusal of many Christians to believe this, especially on the part of those who hold to replacement theology, sometimes called supersessionism.

This is the position held by the majority of Christendom, consisting of Roman Catholics and Protestants. These insist that, while the nation of Israel originally enjoyed the status of being God's chosen people, they forfeited that coveted position due to their sin and disobedience toward the God who had chosen them, particularly in their crucifixion and rejection of Christ.

Then, say they, God in His displeasure and righteous anger over their disobedience, has in turn removed Israel from their position of chosenness and has replaced them with the Christian Church, which is now the new chosen people.

[1 : 22] Thus, Israel is out and the Church is in, permanently. This means that all of the future blessings and benefits that God originally promised to Israel have been withdrawn and are replaced with the Church.

Hence the name, Replacement Theology. And while those holding this position, already identified as the majority of Catholics and Protestants, interpret Scripture in the same way as those who disagree with Replacement Theology, that is, they interpret Scripture quite literally as we do, taking the Bible for what it says at face value, that is, it says what it means, and it means what it says.

Yet, they are forced to change their hermeneutical horses in midstream. They cannot, in reading prophetic portions of Scripture, allow Israel to mean Israel, but are forced to make Israel now mean the Church, that is, the Christian Church.

Oh, the word in the Bible is still spelled Israel, I-S-R-A-E-L, but now it doesn't mean Israel, now it means the Church. Is this called spiritualizing the Scripture text?

Now, from a purely human standpoint, it's hard to argue with the argument and the apparent logic of the replacers of Israel with the Church, because after all, bad behavior does result in negative consequences and punishment of the guilty.

[2 : 44] And no one can question Israel's guilt. By their own admission, they have earned the title of a disobedient and gainsaying people. Israel's repeated idolatries and disobedience to the revelation God gave them certainly has earned the status of rejection by God.

No argument there. If Israel's behavior were the sole determining factor, the replacement theologians win the argument hands down. But then they are also required to make God's promises and covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as the covenant with David, purely conditioned upon Israel's behavior.

And those denying their conditionality, as do we of Christianity Clarified, see God's promises to be clearly unconditional, linked to God's integrity and faithfulness rather than the faithfulness of Israel. More about this very critical issue is forthcoming. The Jewish Past, Present, and Future, Part 2 The scriptures speak quite clearly regarding the past, present, and future of the Jewish people and the state of Israel.

Their past is peppered with periods of blessing and glory, but undeniably contains great periods of darkness, moral, and spiritual lapses into idolatry.

[4 : 06] The Babylonian captivity was divine retribution for their sin. The prophets made it quite clear it was precisely because they were God's chosen people that he was chastening them.

And as Jeremiah predicted, God would use pagan Babylonians to take Israel to the divine woodshed. When they returned after the captivity under Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, Jerusalem and the walls were rebuilt and the nation began an extensive period of recovery. More defeats, however, would be coming for Israel, and they too would result in succumbing to heathen and pagan powers that worshipped multiple gods. It appears that God's woodshed this time would result in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD and their enslavement by the Romans, plus being scattered throughout the Mediterranean basin and eventually the rest of the world.

That, in brief, is Israel's past. Their present is described by a fellow Jew named Paul the Apostle, who tells us in Romans chapter 11 that God has consigned Israel to a moral and spiritual blindness, at least in part.

And this condition will continue with the Jews until the fullness or the power of the Gentiles comes to an end. This is present Israel's status.

[5 : 31] Persecuted and hounded throughout the centuries, their greatest loss was sustained in the Holocaust of the 1930s and 40s, in which six million Jews were brutally murdered just because they were Jews.

Following World War II, the Jews reestablished their God-given homeland in the renewed nation of Israel. But they still have that ever-present bullseye on their back, struggling to maintain their survival against overwhelming opposition from all over the globe.

This is part of Israel's present. Today, the Jews do not struggle with the concept of idolatry, that is, the worship of multiple gods, quite the opposite, as many now embrace a full-blown atheism.

Can you not see how even this is a fulfillment of the passage speaking of Israel's blindness? It is a moral and spiritual blindness. Yet, it is apparent that, at least to some degree, the blindness appears lessening, because more and more Jews are coming to faith in Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus as their Messiah, and they are now calling themselves completed Jews.

What the future holds for the Jewish people is incredibly blessed and bathed with the fulfillment of the promises of God vouchsafed to Israel thousands of years ago.

[6 : 58] So, as the scriptures say, there has not failed one good word of all God hath spoken, and it will not fail for Israel either.

More is just ahead. The Jewish Past, Present, and Future, Part 3 Israel's future full restoration, blessing, and prominence is the stuff of virtually all the prophets, major and minor.

Israel's past and her present are identified in the Old and New Testaments and answer only to a literal description and fulfillment. And such is even now in progress, and again, literally so.

One can only surmise that the numerous promises of God given are and will be literally fulfilled in days to come as well. And as stated before, while Christianity Clarified does not agree with the interpretations offered by the Replacement Theology faction, which is formidable in number, we can see how and why they reached that position, and that they reached it in good faith.

But aside from that, what is found to be of greatest irony is that of the Jewish position itself. The Jews of today, at least in the main, of course give no credence at all to the Replacement Theology idea, nor do they embrace the position held by Christianity Clarified.

[8 : 32] Both of these positions at least claim to be founded upon the scriptures, even though each interprets the scriptures differently. But the current Jewish position, especially the atheistic component of Jews, reject it all, scriptures and everyone's conclusion about the scriptures.

Thus, the whole of the Bible by them is jettisoned as an authoritative document altogether. This means even the several portions of scripture that promise ultimate Jewish blessing and even worldwide supremacy of Judaism are denied as well, at least by these Jews.

And what in reality really is the Jewish problem that has led to their unbelief and even their arrival at atheism by so many of their number?

It is precisely that with which Jesus chided the travelers on the Emmaus road shortly after his resurrection in Luke chapter 24, and this was 2,000 years ago.

The Savior then revealed the blind spot in the thinking of his own countrymen when he exclaimed, O foolish ones and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

[9 : 46] Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? The Jews of Jesus' day rejected the full authority of God's word then, and they still do today.

On an earlier segment of Christianity Clarified, three possible sources were identified as sources of authority, and only three. Number one is the mind of humans, number two the mind of Satan, and number three the mind and word of God.

Jews, as well as most Gentiles, remain stuck on number one, the authority of the mind of man, while rejecting, number three, the mind of God.

So, we would ask both Jews and Gentiles, how is that working out? Let's look at the mind of God revealed in the scriptures to which Jesus referred the disciples on the Emmaus road, and it's up next.

All that the prophets have spoken, part one. The principal fault of the Jews is identical to the principal fault of the Gentiles.

[10:52] Neither have taken the revelation God has given in his word as seriously as it deserves, and in the way it deserves. By that, what is meant is that, while Gentiles as a whole reject the Bible as authoritative altogether, factions of the Jews in Jesus' day reduced the study of scripture to minutiae and petty detail.

Christ addressed this fallacy of pettiness and nitpicking detail that the Jews applied to scripture in Matthew 23. In fact, he stated in verse 23, Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees!

For you pay the tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith. These you ought to have done.

His words of censure continue as he reads out the ruling establishment for their hypocrisy. They focused on hair-splitting, pettiness, giving themselves credit for being so detailed and meticulous that they completely ignored the plainer and greater truths of the word, namely the justice, mercy, and faith of which Jesus spoke.

So while the Jews sliced and diced the word of God into smothering thinness and detail, the Gentiles simply disregarded altogether. The net effect was, and is, the value and truths of the word of God have been lost on both Jews and Gentiles in the past and most assuredly in the present.

[12:30] Whether through majoring on the minors of scripture as the Jews or ignoring scripture altogether as the Gentiles, Jesus said the net result was, they make the word of God of none effect.

The word does not get a factual hearing for Jews or Gentiles. And without a hearing of the word, there will surely be no doing of the word.

This is the plight of both Jew and Gentile. In the Emmaus encounter between Jesus and the disciples in Luke 24, we are told that after he rebuked them for not believing all that the prophets had spoken, he began at Moses and the prophets and expounded to them and all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

And that would have been one incredible Bible class. Jesus corrected their problem of the selectivity of scripture. This is caused by people then and now content to focus on just their favorite portions of the Bible.

You know what is meant. Those portions that comfort you, that inspire you, that speak to you while ignoring the portions we consider of lesser importance. And aren't we all somewhat guilty of that?

[13:44] The disciples were. They merely focused on the portions that spoke of the triumphant glory and majesty of the Messiah when he should come. Let's ignore that part. Speaking of suffering, that's too negative.

Not at all uplifting. Just skip that part. It doesn't speak to me. Well, if the shoe fits, are we willing to wear it? Jesus slipped those shoes right onto those disciples' feet.

Let's look at the fit upcoming. All that the prophets have written, part two.

Shortly after his resurrection, Jesus confronted two downcast disciples on the road to Emmaus, but they were unaware it was Jesus. After all, he had been crucified three days earlier and was assumed to be still dead, very dead.

But he had risen. And he chided the disciples for their not giving attention to the whole of scripture. Not only the parts about the glory of the Messiah, but also the parts about the suffering of the Messiah.

[14:50] Slow of heart, as Jesus called them, means stubbornness of mind and intellect that involves the will. Graciously, the Lord then began revealing himself as portrayed by Moses and the prophets, while the two disciples listened with rapt attention.

From the Old Testament alone, because the new never existed at that time, Jesus would have identified himself as the seed of the woman that would crush the head of the serpent described by

Moses in Genesis 3.

As Messiah, he is Shiloh of Genesis 49. He is Isaiah's virgin of chapter 7, and the child to be born and the son to be given of chapter 9.

Psalm 2, he is the one who is to be the king set on the holy hill in Zion, the one who came to do the Father's will of Psalm 40.

He's the one declared to be deity, as his throne is to be established forever, and anointed with oil above thy fellows. Psalm 45, it was Jesus, said he, of whom the psalmist spoke in 110, calling him Lord by his Father, that he was to sit at the Father's right hand until his enemies are made his footstool.

[16:21] He is the suffering crucified one, revealed in Psalm 22, the same who would be forsaken by his Father as he bore the sins of the world in his own body. He it is, spoken of in Psalm 16, whose body would not be left in Sheol or sea corruption, because he would be risen from the dead.

And now, unbeknownst to the Emmaus disciples, this resurrected Lord was the very one revealing to them those things concerning himself from Moses and the prophets.

Jesus gave them the full picture he accused them of ignoring, and that was that the Messiah should suffer as well as enter into his glory.

We are told he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. He gave them more references than we have, for he spoke from all of the scriptures, that is, the entirety of the Old Testament.

And hours later, after this extraordinary Bible class, Jesus broke bread and gave thanks, and it was only then the disciples recognized who their Bible teacher really was.

[17:30] Little wonder, they exclaimed, did not our hearts burn within us as he opened the scriptures unto us? Then and there, those two Jewish brethren understood what it meant to believe all that the prophets had written.

Yes-oree, some Bible class it must have been. All that the prophets have written, part three. From the first century and time of Christ on earth, the Jewish people have limited themselves to the Old Testament.

They believe it alone is the word of God, and that the New Testament, accepted by Christians, is not authoritative. Even though Christians believe the Jews to be wrong about their rejecting the New Testament, we can easily see why they do.

Because were they to accept the New as such, it would effectively mean the end of historic Judaism, since the New clearly sets forth Jesus of Nazareth to have been sent by God as Israel's Messiah and Savior of the world.

It, the New Testament, effectively provides the rest of the story left untold by the Old Testament.

And such rejection of the New, on their part, appears to be part of the spiritual blindness the Apostle Paul referred to when describing Israel in Romans chapter 11.

[18:55] The Jews, of course, consider Christians to be the blind ones for accepting the New Testament and Jesus as the Messiah that goes with it. Well, one thing is crystal clear.

Both cannot be right, since the positions are clearly contradictory. So, while we as Christians do understand the Jews rejecting the New Testament, though we don't agree with that, we do fail to understand why and how so many Jews now reject their own Old Testament.

And it is a sad fact that but for the minority of Jews who do accept the Old, most are in a mode of rejection insofar as its authority is concerned.

So, as always, whether Christians or Jews, or what other group is in question, the issue is always one of authority. Whatever it is that one accepts as an authoritative source, that becomes the determining factor as to what is believed.

Sad to say, for most, the only authority recognized is the mind of man. But then, which man? Do we not readily see how the minds of humans differ so very much, especially on weightier issues?

[20:16] Jews, as well as Gentiles, need an authority that transcends the minds of mere humans. And the Christian position is that that is precisely what we have in both the Old and New Testaments.

And while all Jews disregard the New Testament as being the Word of God, there are less and less Jews who accept even the Old as authoritative.

And this truly is the nub of the matter. Authority and what is recognized as such. From Genesis 3 to the present, the issue remains one of authority.

In restating the possible sources for authority, be reminded there are only three, the mind of man, the mind of Satan, and the mind of God. Men's minds are so diverse we cannot settle on anyone. Satan's mind is owned by a consummate deceiver, surely not to be believed, and all that is left is the mind of God as revealed in His Word. Nothing else is fit to embrace for faith and practice.

[21 : 19] And this is precisely the reason God has given us His Word. The Three Sources of Information, Part 1 It was previously insisted that there are but three sources from which anyone may derive information or data about anything to process.

Number one, and by far the most called upon for information, is the human mind. Information from the human mind consists of all that mankind has had to offer from history and from the latest up-to-date present.

It's the conclusions of the greatest thinkers, philosophers, inventors, and other recognized geniuses of past and present. These constitute the source most humans consistently draw upon, plus, of course, their own mind and its conclusions.

And we all benefit from so many of these brilliant individuals from the past and present, particularly from the fields of medicine and all phases of literature and engineering.

It is the collective contribution of these that have enabled us to live with progress and enlightenment never imagined in earlier centuries.

[22 : 34] We are and should be grateful for this contribution of information spanning so many areas. But what about their contributions regarding what are called ultimate issues?

Ultimate issues means questions about the origin, meaning, purpose, and destiny of human life. Why, how, and when did this world begin, and to what end?

Does physical death end one's human existence? Or is there a continuation of being after this present life? Or is there complete nothingness and no sensation of being, feeling, or awareness? Which of all the past and present geniuses who have even addressed these issues are we to believe? While they all have the mind of men, the conclusions they reached and passed on to humanity are often at complete opposites with one another.

So, from which of these acknowledged geniuses are we to receive information about those greatest of all questions posed by our inquiring minds? The various schools of thought regarding origins, purpose, meaning, and destiny are so diverse, we despair of finding any reliable, humanly provided information that is satisfying.

[23 : 56] Is this the best that our looking to human thinking can produce? Nothing but diverse opinions and large disagreements from the minds of those collective geniuses, both past and present?

No doubt many do select from certain ones what they believe to be the most satisfying, but even then it must be admitted that there are other great minds that have reached contradictory conclusions to those favorites that they have chosen, and it is a cold uncertainty.

That is all that can be gained, no matter which of the great minds one favors to follow. Can any comfort or confidence be realized from relying upon the minds of humans, however much celebrated and admired they may be?

Honestly now! There are no conclusions or answers to be found from the human mind, only more questions. The best that mere minds of men can provide.

The Three Sources of Information, Part 2 Though dealt with in previous sessions of Christianity Clarified, no apology is offered for repeating the subject of the three sources of information.

[25 : 15] Part of the issue also identified how very critical is the subject of information, And by information, what is meant is information about anything.

Included would be information or data about things important and unimportant, whichever it is. One can only process then and reach conclusions about anything based solely on the information made available to you.

Then, after receiving information, the logical question is whether the information is true or not. Does it correspond to reality? How that is answered determines whether the source of your information is reliable and authoritative or not.

Is the information safely to be believed and then acted upon? The issue repeatedly is authority.

Already discovered was the principal source of information to which we all tend to appeal the most, and that is the mind of man.

Human thinking, reasoning, and logic. Not only that of great minds from past and present, but our own, perhaps average minds as well.

[26 : 26] And it was noted that, as great as so many human thinkers have come and gone, leaving us their theories and writings, they often disagreed with other great minds regarding the greater issues they weighed.

Those included the origin, purpose, meaning, and destiny of the world in general, and our own life in particular. Great intellects of past and present that we all admire have serious disagreements among themselves.

So, which genius should we embrace? We are left with a plethora of more questions rather than any satisfying answers. Our very being, our psyche, longs for some kind of answer that gives meaning to our very existence.

But the most our collective geniuses can come up with is disagreement among their fellow geniuses. Well, mind number two, that must be injected simply because it is a source, is the mind, the thinking, of the adversary himself, Satan.

He is a source of information, despite the fact that he has no truth to impart. He still qualifies as a source. And those few dubbed as satanic followers or devil worshipers go to him for information, which he gladly dispenses, even as he did to Judas, who betrayed our Lord.

[27 : 55] And it was our Lord who described Satan as a murderer and a liar from the beginning in whom there is no truth. So, such would hardly qualify him as an authoritative source for information of any kind.

And that leaves us only with the third and final source of those three available. And that's up next. You probably can guess where we are going with this.

Well, it is the only place to go. So, come with us. We have already noted the three possible sources of information anyone can access.

They are the mind of humans, mainly our own mind, but also the human mind of others, the mind of Satan, the adversary, and lastly, the mind of God, our creator.

More time will not be spent on the first two. The source of information provided by God includes information directly or indirectly revealed by him via the created order he has established.

[29 : 02] The entire universe reveals information to man for processing and reaching conclusions. According to Romans chapter 1, the things made by God are clearly seen by man.

Creation itself is information that tells man of the existence and power of God. By virtue of God being the creator, the originator who brought all things into being, all authority must be assigned to him, and authority that is absolute.

One who alone possesses the power, the ability, to create matter and intelligent beings is the one to whom all authority must be assigned.

Ownership and disposition that is entire and decisive belongs to such an one. As our human minds see and process the information revealed throughout the created order, the utter vastness, variety, and complexity of it all points to one who is not subject to limitations.

Such an one must be a mind beyond any human comprehension. This creator beyond genius is the third possible source of information provided for our processing.

[30 : 28] Do you perceive such a mind to be authoritative, knowledgeable, factual? What kind of mind, morally speaking, does that creator God have?

And, speaking of morality, who is the judge of what is or is not moral? Morally good or morally evil? Who or what makes good, good?

Or evil, evil? From whom does the standard come? Do you believe such a thing as evil exists?

Well, of course you say, and you are right.

But the only way we can know evil exists is if there is goodness with which to compare it. It is the existence of good that enables us to identify evil.

We need a point of comparison, and we have it. Evil exists because good exists, and good exists because there is a good God who identifies evil, transcends evil, withstands evil, and has made provision for the ultimate defeat and elimination of evil.

[31 : 38] So, as there was not evil in the beginning, as in Genesis 1-1, so there will be no evil in the culmination, as in Revelation 22-21. Now, in the interim, there is a contest between good and evil, a contest in which the good and the creator of it will vanquish the evil, to which we say, even so, come Lord Jesus.

The Three Sources of Information, Part 4 Of the three, and only three, possible sources we humans can appeal to for information, it is the mind of man that wins, hands down.

Neither the mind of God, the creator, and surely not the mind of Satan, the adversary, are looked to for authoritative information nearly as much as the mind of man.

Among these minds of men, we include the great intellects of days gone by, and our own personal thinking capacity at the present.

And while we admire the genius minds of the past, it simply can't be determined which we should trust as our authority. And this is because these genius minds often were in complete disagreement with the great minds of their equally genius colleagues.

[32 : 59] So, to which do we appeal for our authority? And to be sure, the issue is authority. Always has been, always will be. Whomever it is we accept to be our authority determines what it is we will believe and follow.

And as stated earlier, human authority is the source upon which most humans rely, particularly our own mind. Having already noted the serious differences held by past intellects, logic tells us we've no way of knowing which among those soaring intellects we should follow.

And if we concur with that, then we are left with only our own mind. And, while most of us would not care to equate our mind with the genius intellects of the past or present, we are then left with our perhaps ordinary intellect.

intellects of the world. So, to what extent our minds and conclusions are worthy of following?

Because, have you ever been wrong about anything?

How about anything important? Well, of course, we all have. A limited perspective with limited information to process guarantees some wrong, regrettable decisions.

[34 : 17] It's systemic to humanity. Many things we may have been wrong about did not have lasting consequences and we recovered from those bad decisions we still wish we could do over.

But the greater concern should be over those wrong decisions from which we cannot recover. If we are wrong about issues regarding a life after this present life, it won't make any difference what else we had right.

That great irreversible one-way destination receives less attention from most people than they give to planning a two-week vacation. So, does the mind of God as opposed to the mind of man and the mind of Satan have anything at all to say about that destination?

Is that information available? Not only is it available, it is so in multitudes of languages throughout the world. And it contains the most sublime information called good news that ever was heard by humans.

and the issue is authority. Always has been, always will be. The mind of man, the mind of Satan, or the mind of God. And as to minds, let's make up ours.

[35 : 32] our ultimate information source. Without equivocation, apology, or fear of contradiction, the absolute authority of the Bible as the very word of God is again set forth.

On earlier volumes of Christianity Clarified, evidence was given as to why we believe this assertion to be valid. That content will not be repeated here, but merely reaffirmed.

And any not having had that material are advised it's available on Christianity Clarified, volumes 1 through 3. Since this present volume is number 48, it was some time ago that the content regarding the authority of the Bible was set forth.

Those wishing it may obtain it online by going to our webpage at gracebiblespringfield.com and download it. Also, audio CDs are available upon request at no charge, no strings attached.

Since such great emphasis is placed on the Bible, again, without apology, it only seemed logical that reasons for our doing so should be made clear. And that's what volumes 1 through 3 attempted to do.

[36 : 51] As referenced frequently, the issue is authority, always has been, always will be. And there is but one who is ultimate in authority, the Creator God Himself.

He has chosen to express His will in writing to His creatures, and it is called the Word, or the communication of God. Considered briefly in those first three volumes are the subjects related to why the Bible is our only authoritative source book.

The Bible's finality, the Bible in modern science, current objections to the Bible, translations and languages of the Bible, its circulation and preservation, the accuracy of biblical history, the purpose of the Bible, its progressive revelation, its self-validation, its inexhaustibility, its influence upon

humanity, its being written by man but authored by God, its diversity and continuity, the scope of biblical revelation, the necessity of verbal inspiration, its inerrancy and infallibility, its plenary inspiration, its main divisions, the structure of the Old Testament, the structure of the new, biblical illumination, the interpretation of the Bible, and the fulfilled prophecies of the Bible.

None of the above is treated in any manner considered thorough, yet each segment contains in a nutshell a rationale and we trust an easily understood explanation of the subject at hand.

Volumes of written material produced by competent scholars over the past 200 years have dealt masterfully with these subjects in far more detail than has been set forth here.

[38 : 35] And they are available online and in physical volumes at bookstores and libraries throughout the land. Now, just upcoming, once again, is set forth the ultimate purpose of God, the ultimate authority as to just what he is about in this world and the one to come.

Call it, if you will, what everything is all about. And that's precisely what it is and just who it involves. Utterly magnificent.

What everything is all about, part one. Being fully aware of the ambitious nature of this title, there is still no shrinking back from it.

Far from being sensationalistic, which admittedly is the way it sounds, it is nonetheless a very accurate title that in no way overstates the case. It is what everything is all about.

Of necessity, the major players comprise the triune God. And why God designed to create anything, angels and humans, time and space and matter, we are not told other than it pleased him to do so, as referenced in Revelation chapter 4, verse 11.

[39 : 54] He was also pleased to redeem and restore the original creation via the redemptive substitutionary sacrifice of his son, as referenced in Revelation chapter 5, verses 8 through 13.

There it is. There is what everything is all about. Creation, redemption, restoration. Built into the very meaning of the words creation, redemption and restoration is a drama, a story begging to be told, and the Bible tells that story.

God the Creator, being absolute in goodness, created the heavens and the earth he subsequently pronounced to be very good in keeping with himself.

And despite his having also created angels and humans that were part of that very good, both were endowed with an independent will or volition. This enabled the angelic and the human to reduce the original very good status of it all to a new, lower level called fallenness.

Thus the original creation underwent a moral ruination, utterly unlike that of the original that was very good. It was now in a state of brokenness.

[41 : 12] The self-centeredness with which all humans have been immersed soon began to take its toll with the murder of the second man by the first man born. Cain slew his brother Abel.

The original very good creation soon became inundated with violence, conflict, brutality, and rebellion, even against the authority of the creator.

The very word sin means missing the mark or falling short of the mark. Picture a target with a bullseye. The archer draws his bow and looses the arrow toward the target.

Sadly, the best that the best archer can do is to see his arrow fall short, far short of the mark. Not only does the archer fail to hit the required bullseye, he falls far short of even hitting the target.

That is what sin is. God's requirement for hitting the mark consistently, woefully, falls short of the bullseye, the established standard. Sin has so engulfed humanity globally that most do not merely shoot arrows that miss the mark more and more of humanity chooses not to even pick up the bow.

[42 : 29] But if humanity is to be rescued, someone must. Someone must not only pick up the bow, but release the arrow that will hit the mark. And someone did.

And that and he is what everything is all about coming up. What everything is all about, part two.

The word sin is described using a metaphor. Picture a person of authority establishing a target, complete with the bullseye center.

Then every person who launches an arrow finds it to fall far short of that target. Some arrows get further than others, but all fall woefully short of what is required.

That's a picture of human sin. Romans 3.23 capitalizes on the very picture by declaring, All have sinned and fall short of the glory or the standard God has set.

[43 : 34] Bows and arrows were common in the days of the Apostle Paul, and he could be sure everyone who read that verse would get the picture. Man falls short of what God in his righteousness requires.

Man simply doesn't measure up. God's standard of required righteousness is consistent with his own nature and being, which is one of holiness and absolute righteousness, completely contrary to what man has become in Adam, as utterly unworthy, utterly falling short with no hope of ever measuring up by hitting the target.

Failing to do so places man under a sentence of separation or alienation from God. Man's sin and God's absolute holiness just do not mix.

These are opposite extremes. Man in his sin, his falling short, is justly doomed to be isolated from this absolutely holy God.

Even those who come closer to the target still miss the mark and fall short. What is needed is a champion for humanity, one who can represent humanity and hit the mark for mankind.

[44 : 58] But if sin means falling short of the mark, it would have to be a man who did not fall short, but hit the mark or measure up. But a fallen humanity doesn't have any men like that.

Ours are all contaminated with that moral terminal disease called sin, remember? Missing the mark? Say, are you getting the picture? Are you able to pick up on this scene?

We have a champion, better known as a savior. He is without spot or blemish. He has a bow and arrow, and when he released it, it flew right dead center to the bullseye, strong and clear.

Jesus did not morally miss the mark. He measured up. But really now, the metaphor aids only in helping to define sin as missing the mark.

Jesus didn't release any arrows to become our sportsman. He died on the cross to become our savior. He and what he did 2,000 years ago became that very critical component of what everything is all about.

[46 : 12] For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. What everything is all about, part 3.

Even though it was 2,000 years ago, Jesus is spoken of as the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world. On the surface, that statement doesn't seem to make any sense.

To us mere humans, it appears that way, but to the one who views the future as if it were the past, it makes perfect sense. 1 Peter 1 and Revelation 13 are both speaking from God's vantage point when they declare Christ to have been slain from the foundation of the world.

Man has his limited perspective, and God has his full perspective. Ours is severely limited with a plethora of unknowns. But of God, Acts 15 tells us, known to God from eternity are all his works. Such assuredly includes his Son as the Lamb or sacrifice of God slain before the foundation of the world. Everything we view as yet future, God in his perspective sees it as already past.

[47 : 29] Our future is God's history. Such gives us the realization that this great truth was planned before Genesis 1-1 ever occurred. In the sovereign and omniscient mind of God, there would be heavens and earth created.

There would be the creation of volitional humans. There would be human rebellion against himself. There would be the moral fall of the very ones created in his own image. There would be necessitated the Creator's lavish grace and mercy, prompting the Father to send his Son in order to redeem fallen, rebellious man.

In a transaction so utterly divine, it was geared to the restoration and reconciliation of all creation. This is aptly called what everything is all about.

Never would or could man have devised such an incredible arrangement as this. Christ who knew no sin was made to become sin so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In doing so, 2 Corinthians 5 tells us God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Did you get that? The war is over.

[48 : 47] Jesus became our sacrificial substitute when he made that incomparable payment for our sin. And in this, God swung the gates of heaven wide open for sinners to enter as forgiven, justified ones, because our sinless Savior took our sins upon him and paid fully the debt that was due.

Death. And death is not a cessation of existence, but a separation. Jesus died spiritually before he died physically. He died two deaths.

His spiritual death was realized when he cried out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? This was his separation from his father in a way never having occurred before.

The father forsook the son, turned away from him, abandoned him during that severe earthquake and the three hours of darkness. That was when Jesus died his spiritual death.

And all this he did for you and for me because of the great love with which he loved us. What everything is all about, part four.

[50 : 01] No, it is not an exaggeration. Not at all. What we are engaging at the present really is what everything is ultimately all about.

It's all about restoration, reconciliation, renewal, restitution, recapture, and yes, redemption. Notice the prefix to all those words, re.

An emphatic reference to something that is done again or done over. The re specifically refers to planet earth and its original status being declared very good by the creator in Genesis 1.

It was all delivered to Adam and Eve and placed under their authority by the creator. God instructed them to take dominion over the earth. The word dominion infers to dominate, to take charge, to control, or to order.

All of creation was placed in their charge by the creator God. Then the consummate con artist arrived on the scene and effectively swindled Adam and Eve with the series of lies.

[51 : 11] He is, you know, as Jesus said of Satan, a liar from the beginning who abode not in the truth. Our first parents were conned by Satan into forfeiting their dominion by disobeying the creator who had given it to them.

As a result, the powers of dominion were hijacked by Satan, who now continues to be the dominator to this day. 2 Corinthians 4 calls Satan the god of this world.

Jesus called him the prince of this world in John chapters 12, 14, and 16. But the king is coming, and when he comes, he will not recapture the dominion by lies and deceit, as did Satan.

The king will wrest the planet from Satan by force of arms and the spoken word that will proceed from his mouth. Revelation chapter 19 describes his coming as a smiting of the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron.

This is the future appearance of the king in his second coming. This is the king coming to establish the kingdom of God on earth. This is what everything is all about.

[52 : 25] It's the king and his kingdom. This is he who will recapture the dominion as the last Adam, that which was forfeited by the first Adam. This will be the restoration, the reconciliation, and redemption realized.

Yes, the renewal, restitution of the broken, fallen earth. And what will give Christ the right and authority to do this, to recapture the fallen planet?

He paid for it. He bought it by paying the ultimate price for it when he uttered, It is finished from that cross. This voluntary payment was made by the only one eligible to make it.

This is what everything is all about. And what happened on planet earth prior to this is incidental compared to this, the death and resurrection of the creator, savior of the world, and his timely return to take back the dominion loss.

This is where everything is going. This is what everything is about. The king is coming, and he will bring his kingdom with him. What everything is all about, part five.

[53 : 35] For as long as history records, man has had an inkling, a premonition, an anticipation of what is usually referred to as the end of the world.

It is systemic to humanity that we creatures anticipate this. It's a concept that has filled the thoughts and minds of every generation that someday, somehow, this is all going to end.

Why? When? And just how would that come about? You will find answers nowhere else but in this blessed book, our Bible. It not only records the history of creation and humanity, but also reveals where it is all going and where and what it will be when we get there.

It will be the kingdom of God established on earth. This is what everything is all about, where it is going and what it will be when the transition is concluded.

And transition rather than ending is the proper word because the world that is this orb or sphere we commonly refer to as planet earth is not going to go out of existence.

[54 : 46] What will go out of existence is that which we call this present age, this order, this present constitution of the planet. It's makeup as we know it.

At his ascension in Matthew 28, Jesus assured his disciples of his presence with them even to the end of the world in the King James Version. And the word aeon in the Greek is more accurately translated age and is rendered such in the New King James Version as well as the New American Standard and others.

So while our earth as such will not come to an end, it will undergo a thorough purging, referenced by 2 Peter chapter 3, wherein the heavens, that is the atmosphere, will pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with fervent heat.

Both the earth and the works in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons we ought to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the elements will be dissolved, being on fire and the elements will melt with fervent heat.

Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Clearly, in contrast to the original earth being destroyed by water, this present earth will undergo a cleansing from the opposite cause, not water, but fire.

[56 : 15] And why so? Same reason as the first. It was then and is now horribly contaminated by corruption and moral failure of every kind, all for which Christ died.

At his return, the earth will be reclaimed from sin and Satan who commandeered it from our first parents. Christ, the last Adam, will restore it, following the purging.

And when he does, the righteous kingdom of God will come to this earth. This is where everything is headed. And this is what everything is all about.

What everything is all about, part six. Admittedly, of course it is hard for us to imagine this world order coming to an end, and an entirely new one established that the Bible calls the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God come to earth.

Our limited perspective confines us to very limited knowledge. And this is the major reason God has given us His word. What He is saying in it is giving us His perspective, which is all-encompassing.

[57 : 36] And He has done it, Peter reminds us, in his second epistle, chapter 3, so that believers might order their lives accordingly. Because there is an end game to it all, despite what the naysayers deny.

And these two, these naysayers, are addressed by Peter in the same chapter 3 of his second letter, stating that we are to be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior.

Knowing this first, scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?

For since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. Peter reminds us, No, they do not.

And those carping for sustained uniformitarianism choose to forget that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.

[58 : 49] But the heavens and the earth, which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

And God, Peter tells us, is going to do it again. But this time, it will be by fire, not water. And He will do it for the same reason, an evil and fallen world in need of purging.

No doubt there were scoffers in Noah's day as well, calling him probably a crazy old coot talking about the earth going to be destroyed. And people will be of the same attitude and mindset as were those in Noah's day, making the same faulty assumptions.

Sadly, they will come to the same end as did Noah's hecklers. And what really is their problem? They will refuse to believe all that the prophets have written.

And they too will pay the ultimate price for their rejection of the ultimate authority. It is a curious and sad thing. But men have always been more impressed by what their fellow humans have to say than by what God says.

[60 : 06] So, once again, let's all be reminded that the issue is authority. Always has been. Always will be. Is our ultimate authority vested in our fellow creatures, so-called human experts, or in the Creator, who in reality is the only true expert?

Kingdom Meaning and Usage Part 1 The word kingdom presupposes both a realm or geographical territory, as well as a king, a monarch-like individual to rule over it.

Biblical usage of the word adheres to that definition, but presents the concept in three different settings. Dr. Alva McLean, in his extraordinary volume titled *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, refers to these usages as the universal kingdom and the spiritual kingdom, then the mediatorial kingdom.

He further elaborates other aspects of the term kingdom in more detail, which actually go beyond our present need of a broader classification. So, our focus, then, seeks to clarify the more general usages of the word kingdom, and the first is labeled the universal kingdom.

This is the most expansive of all the uses of the term, and it incorporates all of the created universe over which God rules, has always ruled, and will always rule.

[61 : 39] Psalm 145 says of God, Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, as well as 1 Chronicles 29, saying, Thou reignest over all.

So, unmistakably, the universal kingdom concept views God as king and absolute ruler over all that exists for all time. Then add to that concept the reference of Colossians 1 that reminds all believers that we have been delivered by God from the dominion of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His dear Son.

This is a present reality, and it is enjoyed by each person upon their receiving Christ as their Savior. It is a kingdom, and it is ruled by Christ, but it is a kingdom not physically seen.

Hence, it is called the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and all believers belong to it. The third biblical usage of kingdom will garner the greater amount of our consideration here on Christianity Clarified. This is because it occupies the greater time and space all throughout Scripture. This third usage of the word kingdom is called the mediatorial.

[62 : 50] It represents the great majority of usages in both Testaments, and as its title implies, mediatorial, it involves a mediator. That mediator is, to no surprise, the person of Jesus the Messiah.

And that kingdom over which he will rule is located here on earth with its regal throne established in Jerusalem. Further, it will be the same throne established by David the king who began the Davidic dynasty a thousand years before Jesus was born.

The genealogy of Joseph is found in Matthew 1, and that of Mary is found in Luke 3. Both reveal Jesus as a direct descendant of King David. Joseph's line descended from David through Solomon, while Mary's line descended from David through Nathan.

The crowds that gathered on Palm Sunday when Jesus came into Jerusalem knew full well what they were shouting and exclaiming, Hosanna to the Son of David! There before their very eyes was the legitimate King of Israel.

But where was the kingdom over which he was to rule? More clarification is upcoming right here on the next segment of Christianity Clarified. Kingdom Meaning and Usage Part 2 There was no question about it.

[64 : 11] Pilate may have been mocking when he had written at the crucifixion of Jesus over our Lord's head, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. If so, he had no idea whatever of the accuracy of his words.

But where was the kingdom of the Jews over which Jesus was to reign? It was defunct. Gone. The last king of the Jews that was legitimate and out of the tribe of Judah was King Zedekiah, depicted in Jeremiah chapter 31.

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians invaded Israel, destroyed Jerusalem, and broke down their walls. King Zedekiah was captured and forced to watch the execution of his sons before his eyes were put out. That event in 586 B.C. was when the Davidic dynasty came to an abrupt halt. None of David's descendants sat on the throne of Israel since that time.

After the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar ruled Israel, starting with the captivity, they were then under the dominion of the Persians when Queen Esther saved the Jews from destruction. The Jewish nation would continue to be dominated by pagan rulers, including Rome.

[65 : 24] When Christ began his public ministry, undergoing the baptism by John, Tiberius Caesar was emperor of Rome. Among his appointments, Pontius Pilate was assigned to the jurisdiction of Jerusalem.

Rome garrisoned troops as an occupational force assigned to collect taxes and protect Rome's interests in Israel. In 70 AD, nearly 40 years after Christ's ascension, the Romans leveled the Jewish temple and Jerusalem due to the rebellion and uprising of the Jews, resulting in the massive scattering of Jews all throughout the Mediterranean.

So, the kingdom of Israel and the throne of David has remained unoccupied to this present day. What began in 586 B.C. and continues to the present was predicted by the prophet Hosea in chapter 3 with an utterly stunning prophecy that continues to this day in its fulfillment.

Now, Israel is back in the land miraculously since 1948. They have a government, a prime minister and a Knesset, the equivalent of our Congress, but no king, no throne, and no monarchy. It's the precise situation written by Hosea long before the Jews went into Babylonian captivity. Although a large regathering has occurred in Israel, yet many Jews continue residing in remote parts of the earth.

[67 : 01] Listen to what Hosea predicted in chapter 3. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king and without prince and without sacrifice and without pillar and without ephod or teraphim.

Afterwards, shall the children of Israel return and seek Jehovah their God and David their king shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days.

Kingdom Meaning and Usage Part 3 When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, just as Zechariah prophesied in chapter 9, the Jews who welcomed him thought he would enter the temple and announce his Messiahship.

Certainly, that also was the expectation of the twelve apostles who accompanied him. But instead of occupying the throne of Israel, Jesus occupied a Roman cross.

And no thought whatever was then given to a resurrection. But it occurred three days later, also as prophesied in Psalm 16. Then, after spending forty days on earth following his resurrection, Jesus is prepared to ascend back to heaven as recorded in Acts chapter 1.

[68 : 16] Having no idea the ascension was to take place, the apostles asked Jesus, Are you now, at this time, going to restore the kingdom to Israel?

It was clear as stated in Luke 19 that the apostles thought Jesus would establish the kingdom upon arrival in Jerusalem. But that dream ended abruptly with the crucifixion.

Now that that was passed, and the resurrection was passed, and the forty days with the apostles was passed, they then asked a very logical question while standing there on the mount with Jesus. Lord, is it at this time that you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel? And it was a very logical question, particularly after a triumphal resurrection and having spent nearly the last six weeks among them.

But did you catch their question, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel? Restore? Restore? What happened to it that it needed to be restored?

[69 : 19] Well, remember what Hosea prophesied. Israel had no king and no kingdom since 586 B.C. Israel had been bereft of a king, a throne, and a kingdom for the past 400 years, and even to this day such is the case.

But this shall not continue to be the case. Israel will be restored, the kingdom will be restored, and Israel will have their king, descendant of David, Jesus the Messiah.

And when he comes, he will fulfill the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. He, his coming, and the worldwide kingdom he will establish in Jerusalem will be the capital of the entire earth.

This kingdom is precisely what everything is all about. This is God's endgame. It is the restitution, the refining, the remaking, the recapture, the restoring of planet earth forfeited to Satan via his deceiving Adam and Eve.

Jesus the Messiah paid the penalty for earth's sins by his voluntary substitutionary sacrifice on that cross. And when he returns, he will dispatch those who oppose God and establish that long-promised, long-awaited kingdom on earth.

[70 : 48] But until he returns, the Jew has suffered and will yet suffer immeasurably by way of persecution called the Great Tribulation Period, all part of the price for realizing the fulfillment of what everything is all about.

More just ahead, and it is glorious. You've just heard another session of Christianity Clarified with Marv Wiseman. Preview of upcoming Volume 49.

Having previously emphasized the theme of what everything is all about, the case continues to be made. It has been described as God's endgame, and so it is.

It is the end of an historic cosmic conflict between the forces of good and evil, and we all know the representative of each force.

It is not at all difficult for this great conflict to be understood for two simple reasons, human history and divine prophecy. Because of these two elements, we know where the world has been, undeniably so, and we know where it is going, also undeniably so, and how, when, and where it will

end.

[72 : 19] And yes, this too is undeniable. What is generally lost on the world at large is the fact that the Jewish people who will constitute the believing remnant of Israel are key players and principal beneficiaries of this culmination of the ages, this monumental objective labeled what everything is all about.

Ironically, this is not only lost on the world at large, but it is lost on most of Israel as well. The Jew has been so intensely persecuted, vilified, and rejected internationally, many Jews have long since scrapped any idea of a true and peaceful kingdom to come.

But, come it shall, whether most of Israel believes it or not. And why is this? Because it all began with God's promise, His unconditional promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their progeny, the Jewish people.

Like it or not, believe it or not, Israel is at the core of what everything is all about. In history, the world has already been blessed because of the seed of Abraham, and much of the world has shown its gratitude through wickedness perpetrated on the Jewish people, intensified in the Holocaust.

Yet, another Holocaust is coming that will outstrip that of the 1940s. And, yes, despite that, the Jew will survive again due simply to the gracious plan and program of God, which is what everything is all about.

[74 : 10] Jesus shall reign where'er the earth doth its successive journey run. His kingdom spread from shore to shore till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Ha ha! The songwriter had it right. King David, who began the House of David dynasty, will reign over Israel under the authority of his greater son Jesus, who will rule the entire earth with a rod of iron, as promised by several of the prophets and of Revelation chapter 20.

The twelve apostles will be resurrected just as Jesus promised them in Matthew 19, and they also shall sit upon thrones of authority, judging the twelve tribes of Israel under David the king.

And then, all the world will flow into Israel, the capital of the earth, Jerusalem. Then, Israel will be the head and not the tail, as prophesied by Moses in Deuteronomy 28.

This is where everything is going. This is the ultimate goal. All that has occurred in history, and all that is yet to take place, is but one element or ingredient after another, culminating in the master plan of the universe.

[75 : 38] It is what everything is all about. So, upcoming are more telltale revelations recorded in Scripture that detail the oncoming events that contribute in key ways to the finalization of what everything is all about.

And added to the upcoming mix is emphasis upon another very key player in this entire drama of what everything is all about, and it is none other than the adversary himself, Satan.

As surely as God is determined to restore mankind and earth through the redemption of Christ applied to mankind and the earth, the adversary has, and will fight against that to the bitter end, and that will result in his end.

The upcoming volume 49 promises to be a connector of more and more dots that will enable us to make better sense of what everything is all about.

This is Pastor Marv Wiseman thanking you for being a part of our study group. You are welcome to view our webpage and download any of the subjects you wish to pursue.

[77 : 00] We are located at www.gracebiblespringfield.com May the Lord richly bless you.

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