

Christianity Clarified Volume 71

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[0 : 00] Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 1, The Good Book. With every available opportunity, the urge to revisit the issue of hermeneutics compels our doing so.

It is the science and art of interpreting the Bible. Christianity Clarified engaged that truly enlightening subject, previous Volumes 26 through 40, covering 280 very brief segments. And early on, we learned the critical difference between merely reading the Bible and understanding the Bible. Because if one does not understand what is read, then there is no way an intelligent response can be given to what is read.

This is because the Bible was given to mankind by God for the sole purpose of communication between Creator and creature. It is the treasure trove of the universe.

And that, in itself, makes it the very top priority for human engagement. It alone remains the only record of the origins of everything.

[1 : 14] Animal, vegetable, mineral. It alone reveals why there is something rather than nothing. Intent, purpose, value, meaning, destiny are all found exclusively in its pages, all of which should command the position of top priority for investigation.

But, despite all that, sad to say, the good book remains the least read and even more the least understood, despite its being the most available in the greatest number of languages.

Too many regard the Bible like a religious fetish or good luck charm displayed on the living room coffee table enhancing the decor.

But seriously reading and benefiting from it is too often neglected. Among excuses given for that neglect include, Well, it's a, you know, it's an old book.

It's quite out of date and it's too far removed from our present living and problems and troubles. I'd rather just watch TV.

[2 : 30] Besides, the Bible is so big. Have you noticed how many pages are in that thing? Besides that, there are so many words I can't even pronounce.

And, it's even got a lot of preachers often disagreeing among themselves as to what it means. So, how in the world is an ordinary person like me supposed to understand it?

Now, don't get me wrong, I do admire the old book, yes siree. And I'm sure it contains good stories and morals. But to seriously read it and try to actually grasp it?

Well, that's just not my thing. And I think most people probably feel that way too. Well, who were those preceding words coming from?

Regrettably, they were coming from John Q. Public. But if John Q. Public had any idea what they are missing, they would dust off that Bible and begin regarding it as the most wonderful asset in the entire world that a human being could ever have.

[3 : 41] Because it is. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 2, The God-Satan-Human Interaction, Part 1.

Of necessity, our previously planned projectory of Christianity Clarified is being preempted.

Preempted for what, you may ask? Preempted to examine the dynamics of what is being called God-Satan-Human Interaction.

So, why is this being engaged and why now? Because it is essential for grasping all that is going to follow on Christianity Clarified from this point forward.

Not only that, but it will shed an abundance of more light on the 70 previous volumes already produced and aired on several radio stations and accumulated in print.

This massive and revealing subject of the God-Satan-Human Interaction has been considered on occasion on previous sessions of Christianity Clarified, but only superficially.

[4 : 49] So, why now are we pursuing it in more detail? Again, it is because we of Christianity Clarified have ourselves benefited from the very principles we've endeavored to convey to you.

And that is, everything in the Bible is connected to everything in the Bible. And, the Bible is its own best interpreter. In short, we ourselves have learned much from what we've already delivered to you.

So much, in fact, it allows us to connect many of the dots previously left unconnected, or at least little appreciated in their connection. Simply put, this enables us to have benefited in new ways some of the issues that were lacking in connection.

At least, some of those new connections we have learned are now being passed on to you. And there is every reason to believe, as this content goes forward, there will be the proverbial light bulbs popping on in the minds of listeners, just as they have been popping to light in my own mind.

So, as the upcoming content unfolds, you will soon understand what is meant. If you're not grasping it now, you will then. What is anticipated is the working of the biblical promise in principle from Psalm 119, 130, The entrance of thy word gives light.

[6 : 20] And soon thereafter, having used one or two volumes of twenty segments each, we will return and be much better equipped to reveal the faulty assumptions of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in a way that will make the conclusions rather obvious.

Quite a journey lies ahead. Join us if you can. And by all means, bring your best brain and prepare yourself for the God-Satan-human interaction, beginning with the explanation of it.

It will clearly reveal why so very much is as it is. And, in addition, it will also bring to light and give explanation as to why the world has been as it has been, why it is right now, and where it is going. It is all wrapped up in the same singular package. And that package is called the Word of God.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 3, The God-Satan-Human Interaction, Part 2.

[7 : 36] A devout Christian woman was deeply concerned about her next-door neighbor, an unbeliever, who was friendly but made it clear she had no interest at all in spiritual matters.

Repeated attempts to gently share the gospel of God's good news while sharing coffee and talking with her about their kids were always met with an awkward dismissal and efforts to change the subject.

And as for attending church with her, well, you could forget about that. Continued invitations would only be interpreted as nagging and might even result in her neighbor avoiding her altogether.

At last she concluded she would not bring up the unwelcome subject again, but that did not mean she couldn't at least continue praying for her, and pray she did, while also enlisting other Christian friends as well.

Sometime later, the neighborhood was alerted to the siren of the local emergency squad as it sped past their houses, stopping down at the corner.

[8 : 41] A crowd of concerned neighbors soon gathered knowing that someone was in trouble, especially since an abundance of children were in the neighborhood.

Arriving at the corner as the ER van pulled away with its siren blaring and headed for the hospital, one of the moms told her, the son of the neighbor to whom she had been witnessing, had been struck by a car while riding his bike.

She ran to her house, jumped in her car, and rushed off to the hospital, and there she found her distraught neighbor in the ER waiting room. Her 11-year-old son was already in surgery, and the agonizing waiting had begun.

She put her arms around her weeping neighbor in an effort to console her, and tears were flowing from both of them as they shared a box of tissues. An hour later, a nurse appeared and said they were doing all they could, but the injury was serious.

Another hour passed, and in walked a grim-looking doctor. His countenance alone revealed the outcome as he told the mom, We're so sorry.

[9 : 58] We did everything possible. But the injury was beyond our ability to save him. Hysterically, the distraught mom began sobbing loudly as she paced back and forth in the small waiting room.

The Christian neighbor was weeping along with her as well as she embraced her, and then suddenly her neighbor pulled away from her and began screaming, You always wanted to tell me about your God.

Well, where was your God while my son lay dying? Where was your God while my son was dying? Stunned by her question, she silently prayed, Oh, God, please give me the words to say.

And then she held her neighbor and looked directly into her eyes and said, While your son was dying, God was where he was when his son was dying.

This true story was an introduction to the coming God-Satan-Human interaction, all of which describes the meaning of this fallen world in which we live. And we will be connecting a lot of dots if you wish to join us.

[11 : 19] Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 4, The God-Satan-Human Interaction, Part 3. The previous story of the boy killed by accident while riding his bicycle was true.

It's hard to think of a ten-year-old boy's life snuffed out simply from riding his bike and an unintentional motorist being an unwilling part of it.

Why do these things happen? And like the distraught mother expressed it, Where was God while my son was dying? The answer given her by her neighbor friend was a good answer, maybe even the only answer that was actually true.

Still, we may be sure that dear grieving mother never processed the God-Satan-Human Interaction, that is the title for these segments, even though she was a player, if we can use that term, because in the makeup of the God-Satan-Human Interaction, her son represented the third human part of the equation, and she, the grief-stricken mother, partook of it with her son.

We all try to make sense of it as to why the world has to be this way. In essence, it's because of the first two parties in the three-part title of God, Satan, Human, and the Interaction Thereof.

[12 : 49] The Bible contains not merely the explanation of it all, but the only explanation to be had that is consistent. It's all about the fallenness of everything.

Even the one who created everything voluntarily took our fallenness upon himself when he who knew no sin was made to be sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

A completely contrary explanation is offered by the rabbi in his best-selling book, When Bad Things Happen to Good People.

The origin of the book was due to the agonizing death of his son at the age of 14. Aaron had been diagnosed with progeria, the technical name for extreme early aging, and at the tender age of 14 he would be as an old man, all due to a genetic glitch for which there is no cure.

That prompted the rabbi to write the book, and it is a very well-written book and contains numerous observations and conclusions that most of us can embrace.

[14 : 08] But its downside is in the rabbi's adoption of the non-literal interpretation of creation and his dismissal of the subsequent fall by our first parents, who were a very literal Adam and Eve.

Rabbi Kushner does avow God's existence, but asserts that he used the evolutionary process for creation that spanned ages of time rather than the six literal 24-hour days called for in Genesis 1. The rabbi's bottom line is summed up in the statement on page 84. I'm quoting now, God, having given man freedom to choose, including the freedom to choose to hurt his neighbor, there was nothing God could do to prevent it.

End quote. We give a qualified agreement to that statement, and upcoming is the qualification. So very much hinges on this, so please join us just ahead.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 5, The God-Satan-Human Interaction, Part 4 The previous segment concluded with the statement by Rabbi Harold Kushner that, quote, We gave a qualified agreement to that statement.

[15 : 44] Our agreement with the rabbi is in the realization that there was nothing God could do about it so long as he insisted the freedom he gave man was real and not merely a facade.

But it was real, and so are all the painful consequences issuing from it, including the biggest of them all called death.

But God be praised, while he could not and did not countermand human freedom by canceling or overriding it, he did address the consequences issued therefrom by the way of remediation or redemption.

That is the rest of the story, and it truly is the everything of it all. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

God did not remove man's freedom of the will. He addressed it head on by overcoming its consequences of a justly imposed death.

[16 : 49] This he would do by himself becoming one of us, yet without our moral contamination of sin. In this new human named Jesus, conceived and born for the purpose of becoming the divine remedy for human sin, he paid the price that was due and imposed upon the entirety of humanity.

Such, and this alone, allowed God to be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, because Jesus paid it all.

Thus, any human laden with sin, as we all are, can in admission of their sin and their inability to rectify it, appeal to God for the personal application of Christ's sacrificial death to be placed to their account, thus canceling their personal sin debt.

It was only by Jesus being who he was that he could do that. And only by Jesus and his Father possessing unimaginable love and mercy for sinful humans were they willing to do that.

Little wonder that a 2,000-year-old cross called Calvary has become God's great centerpiece for all the universe for all time.

[18:16] So, no, God did not override human volition, nor did he look the other way. Father and Son, through the Spirit operating on a plane utterly foreign to us humans, canceled the human sin debt, and flung wide open the gateway to God so that whosoever will may come.

This and nothing else is the miracle of miracles. This is why the Bible repeatedly calls it good news. There is no better news with greater consequences than this good news.

Have you acted on this?

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 6, The God-Satan-Human Interaction, Part 5 The brightest human minds ever to draw a breath have not bridged the great gulf fixed between the reality of God's sovereignty and the reality of human volition.

We recall the foregoing accounts of the 10-year-old neighbor's son killed while riding his bicycle and the rabbi's son at the tender age of 14, born with the incurable genetic defect of progeria, the technical name describing extreme early aging.

[19:54] And at the tender age of 14, he had already arrived at the rapid advanced age of an old man when it took his life. Would either of those realities have occurred in an ideal world?

Certainly not. But we do not live in an ideal world. Far from it. We live in a fallen world. It became such when it changed from what God called very good in Genesis chapter 1 to what it became upon the temptation succumbed to by our first parents described in Genesis chapter 3.

It then became compromised, damaged, and taken over by a new master. Originally, dominion was entrusted to Adam due to his defiance toward the God who gave life and was deceived.

Adam became subservient to a new God. That's God with a little g. The Apostle Paul calls him Satan, the God of this world, in contrast to the Creator God, that is, God with a capital C.

The Creator God was all about life and beauty. The new little g. God was and is all about death and destruction.

[21:23] Adam and Eve and all of their progeny, including us, will taste of that reality called death. death. But that shall not stand.

The cosmic chess-like game between good and evil that began in the garden goes on throughout human history in a contest of evil moves and divine counter-moves with the future of planet Earth being at stake for the victor, that is, the dominion reality that hangs in the balance.

The damage en route to ultimate victory includes world wars that deliberately took millions of lives, plus the untold numbers of children dying from passed-on genetic oddities like progeria with the rabbi's son and the 12-year-old neighbor's son killed riding his bike.

What did they do to deserve those ends? They were merely tender, fallen creatures living in a fallen world like untold millions of others over the past several thousands of years.

Despite all of this ongoing pain and losses, we are guaranteed there will be a checkmate at the end of this cosmic contest when the original creator and owner arrives and takes back in his second coming that which he purchased in his first coming.

[23:01] Jesus is coming again and this time not as a harmless lamb but as the lion of the tribe of Judah. Christianity Clarified Volume 71 Track 7 The God Satan Human Interacting Part 6 Apart from the three parties mentioned, God, Satan, and humans, no others are involved in the events taking place on earth, whether good or bad.

Also, it must be admitted, there are times and occasions when things occur among us without the explanation of precisely who was involved. From our vantage point as humans, we certainly know we are involved whether the thing that comes upon us is good or bad.

But what we usually do not know is to what extent God is behind it if it is good or Satan if it is bad. Or it may have to do with no one else having input but we ourselves quite apart from both God and Satan.

and it can all be a very mysterious mixture even when we pray and no clear answer is forthcoming. This was one of ancient Job's agonies.

His not knowing who or what was responsible for all his calamities and he certainly had them. All of this puzzle is part and parcel from living as fallen creatures in a fallen world.

[24 : 43] Satan the adversary is the principal culprit. Humans were his target that he successfully deceived and God was well aware of the whole affair yet he did not step in and short circuit it.

But God was not altogether uninvolved because he immediately provided a remedy for the evil that he was allowing to occur. In doing so God promised he would provide a rescue for the fall of humanity that would be able to reconnect deceived and fallen humans with himself.

In fulfilling that promise God would be respecting the volitional powers he gave to both Satan and humans. Had he simply overruled Satan's volition by not letting him deceive Adam and Eve or had he stepped in and prevented their falling for the adversary's deception and surely the free will he gave both to Satan and to Adam would have been a sham.

Not a free will at all but only the facade of one. God would have none of that. Satan's volition was real.

Adam's volition was equally real. And thanks be to God his promised remedy would be very real also. His name was Jesus.

[26 : 18] Still he would be a long time in coming. How long would it be before the babe of Bethlehem would arrive on the scene? Four thousand years?

Seriously? Four thousand years? Why so long? Well it was long according to us mortals but the Almighty has a timetable of his own and ours is almost never the same as his.

Which timetable would you prefer to go by? Yours or his? Be honest now. This is such a huge issue.

We will do our best to chip away at it and you are invited to chip along with us. Christianity Clarified Volume 71 Track 8 The Issue of Human Perspective Part 1 We often dislike it so much we would change it if we could but we can't.

It's called the human perspective and simply means the way we see things. Our perception, our vantage point with which our very humanity is really quite limited.

[27 : 36] But that doesn't keep us from knowing what should be done and the right timetable for it. And in our humanity most of us have prayed at one time or another Oh God grant me patience and please hurry.

remember the Jewish rabbi a couple of segments ago whose son died from that rare genetic disease called progeria? In his 14 tender years he had physically aged to that of an old man when he passed.

Or the 12 year old boy killed by a car while riding his bike. Can you tell the rabbi or the grieving mother that what they really need in regard to their loss is just the right perspective of it all?

They care nothing about perspective in the midst of their loss. Only one issue surfaces from the very real anguish that they suffer and that is why?

Why God did this have to happen? Couldn't you have prevented the terrible death of the child I believed you gave me? Why didn't you?

[28 : 58] Popular author Phil Yancey wrote a book titled The Question That Won't Go Away. And you probably guessed it.

The question is, why? And though as we said, no one going through the heartaches like those just mentioned, want to hear anything about perspective?

Yet, that unwelcome term alone provides the only answer to why the world is as it is. Our world is, remember, a fallen world, fallen from its original state that was called very good at the end of the creation week in Genesis chapter 1.

But that all changed by chapter 3 when that very good came crashing down. Satan, the tempter, along with Adam and Eve, had been created in states of moral innocence, but given wills or volition that did not require them to maintain their innocence.

The ability to obey or disobey their creator was an option they clearly possessed. They exercised that option and set in motion a series of negative consequences that issued therefrom.

[30 : 25] And the greatest of those consequences was the forfeiting of life itself called death. And from that fateful day forward, all lives will be lived on the edge, no matter the parentage, status, or position in life, such as expressed in Romans chapter 5 where the inspired apostle said, Therefore,

just as through one man's sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all because all sinned.

But God be praised, the sad tale doesn't end there, and it is upcoming. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 9, The Issue of Human Perspective, Part 2.

We humans do have a perspective on nearly everything. And by perspective, we mean the way we see and interpret things, our viewpoint or worldview.

Most, or at least those who believe there is a God who is over all and thus in charge of all that happens, never sleeps or slumber. He is fully aware of all that takes place on our planet called Earth.

And that requires Him to be busily engaged everywhere, putting out the many fires and harmful ideas and agendas that threaten humans. But, such is far from reality.

[31 : 57] God is not at all operating in such a way. ever since that fateful day in Genesis 3, when the first humans were deceived that they could be like God if they would partake of this particular tree, then they would be as God themselves, well, the temptation was just too much.

Fascinated by the possibilities, they took the bait. Right then, everything changed, and everyone, even though everyone consisted only of two people.

Yet, from those two, you and I would eventually emerge thousands of years later, along with billions more cast from the same mold as the originals.

And all of these operate from a self-centered fallen nature just like the originals, because we are indeed a chip off the old block, all of us.

And, like the originals, we can die two deaths, one physical and one spiritual. In fact, if a human has been born only once, he will die twice.

[33 : 17] But if he has been born twice, he will die only once. The earlier faulty assumptions we spoke of about God the Creator being so involved, and what we might call being on the job, is a huge, huge, faulty assumption.

First of all, if that were true, we could surely accuse the Almighty of being a lousy caretaker. Don't you see the absolute mess this world is in?

Do you think God is responsible for this? Is this any way for the Creator of life to run the world? Absolutely not.

But it is an ideal, predictable way for the destroyer of life to run it. His train is right on time.

This is why the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4 called him the God of this age. He, said Paul, blinds the minds of the unbelieving to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel or the good news that's available.

[34 : 29] Do you not see this ever-present dynamic of volition in full operation, both as expressed by Satan and humans? This is the cosmic conflict playing out every day, century by century and millennia by millennia.

Miss this and you will never understand why the world is as it is, where it's going, and what is the only remedy for its fallenness. And to compound it even more, the vast majority of earth's population doesn't even have a clue that they do not have a clue.

So great is the deception. Next up is the one bright spot of it all and it is enough. Or better, he is enough. Christianity Clarified Volume 71, Track 10, The Issue of Human Perspective, Part 3.

The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that he might destroy the works of the devil. So wrote the aged apostle John in his first letter located near the end of the New Testament called 1 John Chapter 3.

Most scholars are of the opinion that John was the last remaining of the twelve Jesus originally chose. In his maturity and in his position, we may be sure John had a very clear perspective of the great cosmic conflict engulfing the entire world that began in Genesis 3.

[35 : 57] John will provide an even fuller and updated perspective when inspired to write the final book of the Revelation. In 1 John, he said Jesus appeared to destroy the works of the devil.

That was job 1. And when he writes the last book, the Revelation, he declares job accomplished.

The need for the works of the devil to be destroyed surfaced in Genesis 3 with the corporate fall of humanity in the lives of the original mother and father of us all.

The remedy for that fall was promised immediately thereafter, but God delayed until the fullness of time arrived for the one who would destroy the works of the devil.

But it would be 4,000 years until the babe of Bethlehem would make his first appearance. Now let's admit it.

That certainly doesn't look very timely, does it? 4,000 years? Satan deceived millions? Killed millions in wars?

[37 : 09] 50 million in World War II alone? And untold more millions in conflicts before and since? Jews alone suffered the loss of 6 million in Hitler's Holocaust, wiping out one-third of the Jewish population worldwide.

nor will he be satisfied with that because two-thirds of Jews living will be eliminated during the Great Tribulation upcoming.

You do see a pattern of death and destruction worldwide, do you not? It's all about the cosmic conflict, ultimate contest between good and evil.

people. The greatest satisfaction Satan can experience comes from a high body count. Unable to injure God himself, he must content himself by destroying all he can of what God has created and what and who comes from it.

This is what is meant by having a true, accurate perspective. And while it is true, the vast majority of the world does not even have a clue that they do not have a clue.

[38 : 24] And those who don't are a pushover with their blinded minds that Paul spoke of in 2 Corinthians chapter 4. But for believers, we have a biblical perspective that informs us of what is really happening, where it's going, and how it will all end.

and Jesus wins and we will win with him. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 11, The Issue of Human Perspective, Part 4.

Earlier, we noted that from the time God promised there would be a Redeemer who would crush the head of the adversary, that is, the one who brought death and destruction upon the entire globe. And from the promise given till the Redeemer arrived, decades would pass, then centuries, then millennia, four of them.

Got that? 4,000 years from the time the promise of a Messiah was given until the time he showed up? 4,000 years?

[39 : 42] How does that stack up alongside our definition of timely? Not at all. And why not? Well, it's all about perspective, the human versus the divine.

The way God views things versus the way we view things, and they almost never coincide. So we ask, why isn't God more reasonable to see things from our perspective?

I speak as a fool. Galatians reminds us in chapter 4 that when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law.

Fullness of time? Yep. It means when the time was just right. Jesus wasn't late, and he wasn't early.

God sent forth his son, just at the right time. And he did then what he came to do, and now another 2,000 years have already passed, and he still hasn't collected on what he paid for when he came the first time.

[40 : 52] Well, as he wasn't late for his first coming, neither will he be late for his second. Jesus is coming again, and as one was heard to say, this time, he will not be in a good mood.

This whole affair from the fall of Lucifer, who became Satan, to the creation and fall of our original parents, is the cosmic conflict, the contest, between good and evil and the ultimate resolution of the angelic conflict with Lucifer and the humans he has deceived.

It is what this world, its fallenness and its redemption is all about. This is the whole of the matter.

This is the big picture.

It's God's perspective, and he has been gracious enough to let us in on it so we can have the same perspective he has. It does require us to scrap ours for his, because ours is so small, so deficient, so incorrect, so full of faulty assumptions, but God's is full and comprehensive.

We tend to be so preoccupied with our little picture. Many are not even aware there is a big picture. And it's true we have to live out our little picture, but we live for the big picture.

[42 : 23] Our little picture is visited with disappointment, defeat, heartache, pain, and debilitation, and we have to live it out until we check out of this old sin-cursed fallen world as believers unless Christ comes first.

And by the way, do you realize that a wrong perspective caused by faulty assumptions is the only perspective of the larger part of what is called Christianity? It is.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 12, Historic and Current Human Perspective, Part 1 All have appreciated over the years past that hindsight is 20-20.

History has shown multiple times that what was once deemed obvious sometimes turned out to be quite the opposite. As is almost always the case, faulty assumptions were involved.

And they are called faulty rather than false due to their false truths. Though faulty. False assumptions are regarded as more than merely faulty because they contain no truth at all.

[43 : 38] If you examine the hundreds of false cults and isms, you will quickly discover that almost all of them contain some truths, perhaps even some valuable truths.

But also present in their doctrinal statements are items that are not true at all and may even lead to deadly consequences if believed true and acted upon.

Truth and untruth are very important concepts. Actually, the most important concepts of all. Because truth is simply what is.

Untruth is what is not. Truth corresponds corresponds to reality. Untruth does not. How important is that? Well, it's so important that Jesus said in John chapter 8 that truth is that which sets you free.

If truth sets us free, what then is it that puts us under bondage? It is the lie, the untruth. Do you realize that many more people are living in bondage as opposed to living in freedom?

[44 : 52] Such is a major consequence of living as fallen beings in a fallen world. Lies are everywhere, while truth can be a scarce commodity.

But just realizing that gives us a heads up the world knows not of. John chapter 5 also tells us in his first letter near the back of the New Testament that the whole world lies in wickedness.

The New American Standard translates it, the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. Now this ought not to surprise us because a fallen world and a fallen angel, Lucifer, Satan, are compatible.

One commentator is recalled as saying, the whole world system in its fallenness is quite comfortable and right at home, cozy if you will, lying in the lap of the evil one.

And, we might add, the world is not even aware of it. You got that? The world doesn't even have a clue that it doesn't have a clue.

[46 : 09] It's what Paul meant when he said in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

And, what is the reaction to most people of the world to all of this? Huh, I can hear them now. Ah, religious hogwash! I don't believe that for a moment.

Well, all we can say is, point proved. We rest our case. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 13, Historic and Current Human Perspective, Part 2.

An effort is being made to reveal how critical this most important concept called truth really is. It isn't adequate to say a lot is writing on it.

Everything is writing on it, for time and eternity. How's that for importance? And the truth is, that is not an exaggeration.

[47 : 23] Truth has often proved to be elusive, largely because of faulty assumptions getting in the way. Current and ancient history cannot begin to count the times that such has been the case.

It has been true of medicine, chemistry, mechanics, engineering, architecture and building, government in all forms, militarism, and every aspect of education.

And, let's not omit religion and its multiple expressions. perhaps the only discipline untouched by the passing of time is mathematics as the only true constant.

And, about that, we can still say 2 plus 2 is still 4, which remains the right answer. So, how many wrong answers are there to 2 plus 2?

All of the others. So, you see then how and why truth is important, and I believe you do. Upcoming, focus will be on the area of spirituality, which the world generally categorizes as religion.

[48 : 41] How many religious systems and expressions of faith were once adopted by adherents as rock-solid truths, only to be disproved after the passing of time?

Oh, my. Let me count the ways. Many doctrines, beliefs, and practices, once accepted as iron-clad certainties, have succumbed to the light of passing time and cold, hard reality, revealed not only error in statements of faith, but at times the need for a rewrite or even an exclusion of some items once held dear.

And, is Christianity clarified, exempt from doctrinal wrinkles of our own? As we've admitted before, by no means.

All mortals have wrinkles in our theological construct, and as such, our interpretations simply do not always match the flawless nature of God's written revelation.

Oh, yes, we hold them in good faith, and if that were all that is necessary to guarantee an accurate interpretation, then we would all be spot on.

[50 : 00] And while there are some religious factions that do believe they hold doctrinal truths to be 100% accurate and devoid of all error, that claim has been upended again by the passing of time.

Upcoming will be several examples of how time has revealed previously held doctrinal issues espoused by both Roman Catholics and Protestants to simply be untenable, no longer worthy of being accepted simply because time has revealed that to be the case.

That in itself presents some very thorny predicaments. The ramifications are stunning. We shall see them as history has refuted them. Neither Catholics nor Protestants have escaped them.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 14, Employing the Word Ubiquitous. Time and again, over many segments of Christianity Clarified, you have heard the term faulty assumptions.

History, both sacred and secular, has revealed many things once believed to be true that were eventually found out to be untrue. They seem so true at the time.

[51 : 18] But, as it has often been said, things are not always as they seem. We have all experienced that reality merely from day-to-day living.

The word our English dictionary uses to describe this is ubiquitous, u-b-i-q-u-i-t-o-u-s.

ubiquitous means pervasive or found to be present everywhere. Why is that? Why are people making so many ubiquitous or faulty assumptions?

Why can't we just get it right? Well, often we do eventually get it right, but only after the previously assumed position is proved wrong.

But, it was so sincerely believed. Never mind that. Truth is true and error is not, no matter who believes it or their station in life.

[52 : 24] And it's sometimes painful and embarrassing when discovering we were wrong in assuming something to be true. Now, there's no need to begin trying to illustrate this with examples that inundate past events of history as well as modern examples of faulty assumptions because they are everywhere.

The word is ubiquitous. They're everywhere, pervasive. So, while we don't mean to get things wrong, we don't make faulty assumptions intentionally, we do it innocently, sometimes foolishly, and sometimes we call it jumping to conclusions about something or the interpretation of something that seems so right but turned out to be so wrong.

And then, if we act on that wrong conclusion by going forward with it, sometimes it comes with disastrous results, such as, I wonder how many times a statement like this or similar to this has been made by people over the years.

quote, I really, honestly, truly, thought the gun was not loaded. Hmm.

That has been painfully stated how many times. Some of the faulty assumptions or ubiquitous conclusions can be made by Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhists, Yep, ubiquitous, that's what those faulty assumptions are.

[54 : 05] They are just lurking everywhere. And nobody is exempt from them. Nobody has some kind of a mystical protection from them just by living in a fallen world as fallen individuals.

We are confronted with ubiquity almost every day. So, we've only just begun. Hang on to your hat. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 15, Ever-Present Faulty Assumptions, Part 1.

Repeated emphasis has been made regarding the prevalence and negative consequences of making the dreaded faulty assumption. assumption. So important and pervasive are they, these faulty assumptions, that Christianity Clarified is listing what may be considered as the top ten. Leading the pack in number one is the assumption that prophetic portions of Scripture should be interpreted in a different manner than all of the other portions.

The negative consequences issuing forth from this practice are incalculable with the entire understanding of the future of humanity upended.

[55 : 26] The adoption of a non-literal interpretation of prophecy, rather than maintaining the standard of the literal, normal, usual interpretation thereof, has produced great confusion and division among those comprising the Christian community, including both Catholics and

Protestants.

It is all spelled out in our oft-explained replacement theology. Israel, previously mentioned innumerable times in the Bible when it did mean Israel.

Now, according to replacement theology, when Israel is referenced in prophecy, it suddenly, mysteriously changes in meaning from Israel to the Christian church.

Oh, it's still spelled I-S-R-A-E-L, but it no longer means Israel the nation. It now prophetically means the Christian church.

Israel's rejection of Jesus came to be interpreted to also mean that God responded in like fashion in His rejecting Israel as being His chosen people.

[56 : 49] Whereas in the past, Israel was such, but now, due to their rejection of Jesus, in the future, Israel will not reap the blessings that were originally planned for them.

All of the future blessings originally promised to Israel have been canceled, withdrawn from Israel, and transferred to those comprising the Christian church.

to reveal the impact and importance of that maneuver, we repeatedly emphasize how this remains to the present day to be the majority theological position of Christendom in the approach and interpretation of prophecy.

The ongoing contention of Christianity clarified is that this quantum leap from the normal, literal interpretation to that of adopting the non-literal, figurative, or spiritual interpretation is totally unjustified and poses grave problems for both Israel and the Christian church.

In fact, we don't know how else to characterize it other than by saying it is changing hermeneutical horses in the middle of the stream. Folks, this is stunning stuff, generally unappreciated even by many in the Christian community.

[58 : 14] So upcoming is where it began and who has come on board with it. Stunning stuff. Christianity Clarified Volume 71 Track 16 Ever-Present Faulty Assumptions Part 2 In reassigning biblical prophecy that relates to the nation of Israel, the non-literal interpretation of Israel has come to mean instead the Christian church.

Such is insisted to be the true meaning of the prophecies that use the name Israel. So whereas it earlier meant Israel, yet, due to their rejection of their Messiah Jesus, the real meaning has morphed into those who did accept Jesus, and that is the Christian church.

For the minority, including those of Christianity clarified, to insist Israel means Israel, it is considered to be the pursuit of a wooden or literal meaning that history and Israel's rejection cannot sustain.

So what eventually, perhaps 15 or 1600 years ago, became known as the Catholic Church centered in Rome, Italy, took that position, calling themselves the new people of God.

The demise of the nation of Israel in their great defeats with the Jewish temple in Jerusalem destroyed in 70 A.D., plus the unmerciful put-down of the Jews in the Bar Kokhba Rebellion in 134 A.D., seemed to constitute proof positive to many Christians that God had utterly and totally abandoned the Jew, and permanently so.

[60 : 07] So in the early years of Christendom, such became standard fare, and from all appearances, that undeniably appeared to be the case.

Embellished with this new identity, and few to disagree with it, this new entity called Christian grew in acceptance, influence, and numbers.

Eventually, it would become what was and still is the Roman Catholic Church. It will undergo many advances and setbacks over succeeding centuries.

centuries. It will suffer a large cleavage in 1054 A.D. when Christians in the East that were also Roman Catholic under the current Pope broke away from Rome's authority by establishing their own, while still maintaining most of the doctrines and the beliefs of the parent group in Rome.

That breakaway was in Eastern Europe and would become known as the Eastern Orthodox Church, headquartered in Constantinople, Turkey, as it remains to this day.

[61 : 19] The schism remains to the present day also, even though they retained much Catholic theology that was headquartered in Rome, including, you guessed it, replacement theology, the position regarding the nation of Israel.

So, that cleavage in the Catholic Church remains in place today nearly one thousand years later, and each refers to the other as separated brethren.

Now, how that separation will be followed by another of great significance nearly five hundred years later, with repercussions continuing to our present day, will be up next.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 17, The Ever-Present Faulty Assumptions, Part 3. A brief account is being made to reveal how the early Roman Catholic Church espoused the concept of replacement theology.

Even though the Church was split in 1054 between Catholics of the West, located at Rome, with the Pope as the head, and those of the East at Constantinople in Turkey, it both retained the concept of replacement theology in regard to Israel.

[62 : 42] Nearly 500 years later, the break would occur called the Reformation that was led by Martin Luther. And despite that break, Luther still carried over several theological concepts from Rome, not the least of which was replacement theology, as regards Israel.

At the first, Luther actually made an attempt to win over the Jews by inviting them to join in the new positions taken in the Reformation that separated him from Rome.

Still, the Jews were unyielding in their negative position regarding Jesus of Nazareth. And when Luther became convinced that he had not and could not convince the Jews to retract their position regarding Christ, Luther then produced a series of written diatribes against the Jews that were terribly invective.

In fact, Luther's behemence against the Jews was so vitriolic, it actually prompted the official international body of Lutherans as late as 1983 to publicly issue an apology to the Jewish people for the language and attitude of Luther, their founder, nearly 500 years earlier.

But that had no bearing upon the Lutheran view of replacement theology. Later, also in the 1500s, King Henry VIII of Great Britain, which at the time was officially Roman Catholic, was denied an annulment from his wife, Catherine of Aragon, so that he could marry another woman and Berlin.

[64 : 35] In 1533, King Henry broke from Rome and was also excommunicated by Rome from the Roman Catholic Eastern Church, headquartered, of course, in Rome.

That then led King Henry to found the Anglican Church of England, also called the Episcopal Church, and King Henry declared himself to be the head thereof.

A year later, in 1534, Henry established a document called the Treason Acts. In it, stipulated that anyone who questioned the king's power over the Church of England was subject to punishment by death.

Though having left the Catholic Church, he, like Martin Luther before him, brought and retained elements of Roman Catholic doctrine with him, including, of course, replacement theology.

But later, the religious tide would change yet once again when England would return to Catholicism, and Queen Mary, a Catholic, would come to the throne of England and eventually would be known as Bloody Mary.

[65 : 51] Under her reign, Bible translator William Tyndale will be executed for smuggling English-printed Bibles into England.

And through all of this, replacement theology will remain alive and well in England as it does to this present day. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 19, The Ever-Present Faulty Assumption, Part 6.

This ongoing examination of the ever-present faulty assumption is here being interrupted for a brief but very important reminder.

We of the Christian community are constantly in the targeted crosshairs of the adversary, Satan himself. Although there is much about him we do not know, we do know he traffics in untruth of every kind.

Satan never heard a lie he didn't love. Jesus, in John's Gospel, chapter 8, describes Satan as the father of the lie.

[66 : 58] He doesn't care what the lie is about so long as it is a lie. In our fallenness, we can mimic Satan with a lie of our own. And no doubt the Spirit of God had this in mind when he inspired the Apostle Paul to write in Romans, chapter 3, quote, Let God be true, though every man be found a liar.

End quote. Since Satan is the father of the lie, and we humans are all liars to one degree or another, there is a sad compatibility between us and his infernal majesty, the devil.

And among us, is there anyone out there right now thinking, Hey, speak for yourself, mister. You may be a liar, but don't try to make me out a liar because I am not a liar, nor have I ever lied about anything.

Well, your objection just made my case. Seriously, folks, we need to realize that since our greatest friend, the Lord Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, then the opposite of the way is the wrong way.

The opposite of the truth is the lie, and the opposite of the life is the death. Let's never forget that ever since that catastrophic fall of our first parents, the great divide between truth and untruth was created, a divide that remains intact, alive and well on planet earth.

[68 : 37] Satan, who deceived our first parents with a lie, is described by Christ as the father of lies. He is the complete opposite of Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

This conflict, labeled as the cosmic conflict, rages on 24-7, seven days a week, all over the creation occupied by angels and humans.

In almost every case, a lie is told in order to gain something or avoid something. It all comes down to that volition thing that we humans are endowed with and through which we will all one day be held accountable.

The Bible is the singular corrective God has provided to give us access to truth, His truth. Actually, the Bible and its authority has provided the rationale for people taking an official oath that obligates them in a court of law to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

So help me God. By the way, are you aware that many legal venues throughout the country have dropped the words at the end of that, So help me God.

[69 : 57] Is that implying anything? Just asking. Christianity Clarified, Volume 71, Track 20.

The Ever-Present Faulty Assumption, Part 7. These brief segments of Christianity Clarified are devoted to causing the listener to what we call connect the dots and gain a better understanding that truly matters.

We are persuaded that many in the world are functioning under a host of concepts and ideas that are simply not true. And what is the evidence this is the case?

Well, would you please just look around you? You can see what's happening from one part of the globe to another. People develop misinterpretations, misperceptions, embrace things they believe to be true, but aren't.

And they act upon those beliefs, sometimes with disastrous results. So, what's the remedy? Truth. Truth. Jesus said, Knowing it will make you free, and free indeed.

[71 : 06] Not knowing it means you are not free. If you're not free, you're in bondage. And part of the bondage that makes bondage truly bondage is that people who are in it don't even know they are in it.

That translates into, Most people do not even have a clue that they don't have a clue. The Bible says, The entrance of thy word gives light.

The counterpart of that is, Where the Bible has no place, neither does light. Why is Jesus called the light of the world?

It's because he is. He is. And he said, He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Jesus said that in John 8. And this is precisely why there is a program called Christianity Clarified, along with so many other Christ-honoring programs heard daily on radio.

The current light we are exploring is what the Bible says is in store for this world. Already, brief consideration has been given to the describing the faulty assumptions of replacement theology, sometimes identified by another term called supersessionism.

[72 : 19] And it is gigantic in its implications and has succeeded in seriously dividing Christianity, something in which the adversary Satan takes great delight.

Next up in our list of faulty assumptions is the church Jesus said he would build in Matthew 16. Now, we've already given a brief treatment of that in previous volumes of Christianity Clarified, but since we are focusing on the subject of faulty assumptions and already touched on replacement theology, we turn now to another issue of enormous significance, namely that of which Jesus spoke when saying he would build his church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

Roman Catholics say that Jesus was speaking of the Catholic Church that he would begin, as is described in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost. And from that original body 1,500 years later, the Protestant Church would emerge.

Such is the long-held official interpretation of both. But the Apostle Peter interprets Acts 2 and Pentecost to be something entirely different.

So who are you going to believe? Was this Acts 2 thing the Catholic Church? Nope. Was it what would become the Protestant Church?

[73 : 42] Nope. There is another answer that trumps both of those, and it starts with the next volume of Christianity Clarified, volume number 72.