

Immortalization 2

The Four Educational Stages in the Divine Plan

Our continuing educational theme is immortalization. This particular commentary is the 2nd presentation in this series, subtitled: The Four Educational Stages in the Divine Plan. We have determined this subject immortalization is the historical beginning point for the progressive apostasies within the community of believers, from the Garden of Eden to our current body of believers. We have established 3 ground rules with the intention of avoiding unspoken, commonly held presumptions that prevent our progressive enlightenment. These three foundational precedents are

1. That our Creator communicates His truths and principles with an intentional complexity. He distances Himself and creates a mental obstacle course. Understanding truth demands a circumcision of the heart. The heart is the engine and the throne of the beast philosophy in our cursed human nature. This intentional complexity demands interpretation. An uncircumcised heart will always interpret divine communications in self-validating and self-promoting directions. A circumcised heart enables eyes to see and ears to hear.
2. Our second foundational issue was an extension of this feature of divine communication. Not only is all divine communication intentionally complex, it is all inter-related and inter-dependent. Any divine truth will be validated in countless ways... in laws and rituals and parables and prophecies and miracles and especially in the features of creation... what we have come to understand as the 'spoken' word of our Creator. Any errors in our understandings of divine expressions will create inconsistencies in many other areas of the interdependent nature of divine truths.
3. The 3rd precedent was that the focus of divine communication is to recognize and appreciate the right-ness of our Creator... that He is always right. Contradictions to His right-ness is what we call 'sin'.

Extending from this foundational precedent... that we have to understand and appreciate the right-ness... the righteousness... of our Heavenly Father is our next understanding platform. This is the observation that there are two rules that apply to all false doctrine... and these rules are true in every single case.

1. All false doctrine is divinely degrading. False doctrine insults our Heavenly Father.
2. Secondly, false doctrine is also flesh exalting. There are absolutely no exceptions to these two universal rules concerning incorrect understandings of divine truths and principles. They are always God-degrading and flesh exalting.

Let's demonstrate this. The false doctrine that corrupted a previously very good creation was the acceptance of the serpent lie that sin doesn't really demand death and that disobeying the Creator is actually the avenue for becoming just like Him. The serpent directly contradicted God by saying: Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (Gen 3:4-5). Believing the serpent required the presumption that God was a liar. Today almost the entire community of the children of men believe our Creator to be a liar... that we don't really die, that we have an immortal soul or our lives are reincarnated again and again... but that we don't really die. This false doctrine assumes our Creator to be a liar and that we possess the divine nature of immortality already... that there is no conditional gift of eternal life. There is also the God despising, universal concept of a god of evil... the Greek's Hades, the Roman's Pluto, the Egyptian's Anubis, the Indian's Kali, the Christian's Lucifer... these delusions all degrade the Creator by presuming that sin is just as eternal as righteousness... that sin doesn't have to end, that it doesn't result in death. This false doctrine also declares our Creator to be a liar when he told Adam and Eve that disobeying him would mean death, that sin requires death, the cessation of life. The false doctrine of an evil immortal god is divinely insulting, declaring the divine nature -immortality- to be just as unclean and vile as cursed mortal nature. This doctrine also displaces blame away from ourselves, presuming that temptation is an exterior influence and not generated from within ourselves, which in turn leads to the foolishness that human life is somehow sacred... instead of cursed as divine testimony presents. The false doctrine of an immortal god of wickedness is divinely insulting and inappropriately exalts our flesh nature.

The false doctrine prophesied by John to be the signature doctrine of the antichrist system would be the denial of the flesh of Christ... the denial of his flesh nature. Christianity declares that God degraded himself and reversed the original plan... by disguising Himself as a human being called Jesus... cloaking himself deceptively in human form, then lying repeatedly about being a human being, lying about having the capacity to sin, lying about dying (which an immortal cannot do by the very definition of the term) and then lying about coming back from the dead. This procedure reverses the original plan to make man in the Creator's image and likeness. In this blasphemous distortion ...the Creator is required to remake Himself into man's image and likeness in order to save his supposedly wrecked creation. Man becomes the standard to which the Heavenly Father must adjust himself. This false doctrine reverses the emphasis from God to man. This false doctrine highly degrades our God into a liar and deceiver and petty, while exalting the flesh to become the standard for divine recalibration. We could go on and on. This is true of all false doctrine. Aren't we offended when those we love are publicly insulted? When our wife or husband or parents or children or friends are openly or subtly insulted, don't we get offended and defensive? Shouldn't we be offended when our beloved Heavenly Father is degraded and insulted by false doctrine? Don't we love Him?

This is why the only path to true and progressive enlightenment is heart circumcision, cutting away all the commonly held instinctive presumptions that are simply self worshipping. This is why Yahweh only communicates with intentional complexity. If we aren't willing to accept His processing... the crushing of our spirit, the burning outworking of our sacrificial lifestyle commitment... to develop that broken spirit, that emptied vessel condition so that we might be filled with spiritual truths... then our enlightenment ascent is prevented. This understanding also emphasizes the significance of spiritual knowledge. However, simple academic knowledge is self-defeating. It is the partnership of knowledge with love that is the path to divine acceptance. Knowledge without love is useless and meaningless, as Paul emphasizes in 1 Cor. 13. But, this is equally true of love without knowledge. Good intentions alone are as meaningless as taking an aspirin to cure cancer. It is the two edged sword of divine truth that can circumcise the human heart, that throne of self-worship which - when circumcised - redirects that corrected heart into the standard of love sought by our Heavenly Father. We need both truth and love or we have absolutely nothing at all.

Our next step in our path to greater spiritual understanding concerning immortalization is to witness the progressive nature of divine education. We are the final generation before enlightenment is no longer optional. Jesus, David & Jeremiah prophesied that the generation that witnesses the re-flourishing of the national fig tree... the favoring of the nation of Israel... the building up of Zion... the resurrection of the national first born son of God... that this generation would witness the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. Our generation has witnessed the political reconstruction of the nation of Israel, the first of the two stages in the resurrection of God's national firstborn son. We are currently at the end of the third stage in a four stage divine education plan for the ultimate maturity of all creation. Each of these four progressive stages is very clearly defined by changes in divine laws and rituals, as well as a change in the priesthood and an accompanying outpouring of the Holy Spirit in powerful public manifestations that are progressively more powerful and glorious with each transition into a new age. It is highly significant that we recognize this maturing progression, that we understand its value and purpose.

These four stages are the 1) Patriarchal Age, 2) the First Kingdom Age (sometimes referred to as the Mosaic Age), then 3) the Ecclesial Age and then 4) the Restored Kingdom Age, also known as the Millennial Kingdom Age. Each new divinely appointed age is defined by a change in the priesthood, a change in divine laws and a temporary outpouring of divine power serving to validate those significant changes. The transition from the Patriarchal Age into the First Kingdom Age began at Sinai with the appointment of a dramatically limited priesthood and many new laws and rituals. There was an immediate rebellion based on the refusal to respect a change in the Patriarchal priesthood where the family heads had previously served as priests, building altars, offering sacrifices, judging and educating their

families in spiritual matters. Korah, Dathan & Abiram... highly respected brethren among the children of God... accused Moses and Aaron of lying about God's intentions. This was the equality rebellion. The inappropriateness of equality is a major problem in the community of God today as well... the delusion of equality and the absolute evil of democracy are actually being respected today as somehow having some spiritual value. Even the signature doctrine of Christian apostasy is based on the delusion of equality between the presumed 3 equal but separate gods... god the father, god the son and god the holy spirit. Korah, Dathan and Abiram along with 250 leaders in the brotherhood arrogantly objected to this imposed change in the priesthood. They barked to Moses and Aaron: *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?* (Num 16:3). Now we might think they had good cause for this rebellion. After all, if God was going to choose some man to be the High Priest and only his sons and direct descendants could ever qualify as priests... then why would God choose the brother of Moses, the man that had cast the golden calf for the idolaters while Moses was on the mount for 40 days? They presumed to know that God wouldn't elevate Moses older brother above them. Additionally God had already promised to make them an entire nation of priests, therefore why would He limit the priesthood to one family.

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation (Ex 19:5-6).

The rebels didn't expect to wait 3,500 years for that national priesthood status. They presumed God wouldn't promise them a national priesthood status and then limit the priesthood to just the brother and the nephews of Moses, especially a man that had made the golden calf.

God executed them the next day. He buried them alive with their wives and children, with the notable exception of the family of Korah... who had rejected their father's self-worshipping reasoning.

That new divinely appointed age... with its new laws and new rituals and new priesthood was validated by miracle after miracle, including the earthquakes, volcanic and or storm activity resulting in the fire from heaven selectively executing those refusing to accept the new priesthood limitations. The Kingdom Age had begun. It ran until the Ecclesial Age began following the death and resurrection of our Messiah... the new and permanent High Priest from an entirely different order... that of Melchizedek... to whom Aaron's priesthood paid tithes from within the loins of Abram at Jerusalem after rescuing Lot (Heb 7). This transition into the Ecclesial Age was defined by new laws, new rituals and a new priesthood and was validated by an even greater outpouring of divine power. There was the first of the three immortalization events in the divine plan, the immortalization of Jesus. The diseased

were healed. The dead were brought back to life. The Holy Spirit powers were actually awarded to mortal men and women to exercise in whatever ways they chose... for good or for evil, as the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets, as Paul explained to the Corinthians. Continuing the same pattern from the previous two divinely appointed ages, it is the children of the priest that become priests during the Ecclesial Age. In the Patriarchal age the sons of the family patriarch became the next priests. In the Kingdom Age the sons and grandsons, and so-on, of the original High Priest qualified as priests at age 30. In the Ecclesial Age it is again the children of the High Priest that qualify as the priests of this age. The children of Jesus Christ are those who are born-again through him. One of the titles of the Messiah is the everlasting Father (Is. 9:6). This is the same thought expressed by Isaiah in the 53rd chapter when we read of our Messiah in verse 10:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

When the Messiah would make his life an offering for sin he would see his seed, his descendants... and his life would be prolonged, indicating his resurrection to immortality. Jesus would rise to fatherhood status on the basis of his sacrificial death and resurrection. It is his children in the Ecclesial Age that qualify as the priests of this age... just like the two previous divinely appointed stages in the maturing of the bride of the son of God. This is why Peter tells us: *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:5)*. Peter adds in verse 9: *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*. This is the exact same language used when Yahweh offered the covenant priesthood to the nation of Israel at Sinai, promising to – eventually – make them a nation of priests... from Exodus 19.

The Ecclesial Age will come to an end with yet another priesthood change along with dramatic changes in divine laws and rituals. This transition will be accompanied by an even greater outpouring of divine power. The family of the High priest will be immortalized and serve as priests with political authority during the Millennial Kingdom. The long period of divine silence prophesied by Micah and Amos will end dramatically. God tells us through Isaiah:

The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. ¹⁴ I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once (Is 42:23-14).

This is when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords judges and makes war, with the sharp sword issuing from his mouth to smite the nations and rule them with a rod of iron and tread the winepress of the wrath of his Almighty Father. The transition from the Ecclesial Age into the Millennial Kingdom Age with its new laws and new priesthood will be validated by the greatest of all outpouring of divine power, a powerful unveiling of the Creator of

heaven and earth. Over the course of a single generation the entire earth will be educated through the application of the divinely appointed teacher... the fear of God. It is fear that will facilitate the amazing global paradigm shift from self-worshipping delusions to respecting and fearing the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jeremiah prophesies of this time and this tremendous global educational procedure that will conclude with this new world-wide frame of reference:

*O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will **cause** them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is YAHWEH (Jer 16:19-21).*

We have established there is a definite four stage divine plan for the progressive maturing of creation and creation's caretaker: mankind. This four stage progressive frame for a finality, a completeness is an image that is repeated frequently in divine communication. Four is the scriptural number indicating the principle of God manifestation... the revealing, the projecting of God. This is why there are four faces on the four Cherubim shadowing the immortalized saints... and four living creatures in John's vision of the redeemed in Rev. 4-5. This is why there will be four temples: the tabernacle - which is scripturally defined as a temple, Solomon's Temple destroyed by the Babylonians, the post captivity temple destroyed by the Romans and soon the Millennial Kingdom temple. The number four being assigned to represent the principle of God manifestation is why the wilderness construction of the children of God was foursquare. That is actually a doubled foursquare configuration with the political outer foursquare design with three tribes camped in each of the four quadrants and the inner spiritual foursquare configuration with the three Levite divisions of the Gershonites, Merarites and Kohathites and then the priests camped on the east. This doubled foursquare, physical/spiritual configuration is a projection of the multitudinous Christ body. The very name of Jesus with its six Greek letters adding up to 888. We will be examining this consistent double four pattern related to our salvation later in our considerations. Creationally we see how this same basis of four projects and manifests our Creator in the basic design of the universe. Our High School and College Physics teacher taught us there are four basic elements to our universe from which all components are derived. There are no more and there are no less. These are time, space, matter and energy. Just as creation is intelligently designed to project the Creator so wilderness configuration was designed to project the Creator. Just as the wilderness configuration had a foursquare design made up of three sub-segments (the three tribes stationed at each quadrant) we find exactly the same pattern in the design of the universe. Each of the four basic components of our created universe are broken down into exactly three sub-segments... allowing no more and no less. Time subdivides into past, present and future. Space subdivides into height, width and depth. Matter subdivides into solid, liquid and gas. Energy is the tricky category. Science only sees two categories... energy at rest and energy in motion... passive and

kinetic. Energy at rest would be a barrel of oil. Energy in motion would be a barrel of burning oil. The other category of energy, that understandably completely escapes the attention of scientific observation is the Holy Spirit. This energy cannot be limited to either passive or active and cannot be bottled or experimented with or measured. It is the creative and sustaining power of the Creator. It is the third leg of the fourth quadrant for the construction of our universe--- perfectly mirroring the foursquare construction of the body of believers at the initiating of the Kingdom of God at Sinai. Four is the number of God manifestation. This is simply the barest beginning of the very extensive confirmation of this understanding, which will continue from one divine age to another offering exactly the same lesson.

This four-stage progressive educational plan is a very significant understanding that has a powerful application for our growing enlightenment and appreciation for divine communication. Mankind is the only animal species requiring 20 years to fully mature physically, mentally and emotionally. There is no animal species requiring this dramatically long a timeframe for parental support, nurturing and guidance. The only species in creation capable of displaying the image and likeness of the Creator has this unique creational feature for the maturing process. This observation alone should open our spiritual eyes to the hidden significance, the great divine truths that are veiled from those with eyes that don't see and ears that don't hear. Our creator has a 7,000 year plan for the full maturing of all creation.

Just like our Heavenly Father, we don't teach our children in exactly the same way at every stage of their development. That would be ludicrous. We teach our babies to walk by holding their hands and setting them on their feet and moving their bodies to give them a sense of walking. We teach them to talk by slowly and repetitively expressing the same words with exaggerated lips and tongue movements. We train them physically. Then we begin to train them with social skills using reward and discipline ... pleasure and pain... just like our Heavenly Father has done with His children for almost 6,000 years. We teach them differently as teenagers than we did as toddlers. We teach them differently as toddlers than we did as babies. We mimic the pattern of our Heavenly Father in his training procedures for the maturing of the bride of His son. Yahweh taught us differently during the Patriarchal Age than He did in the 1st Kingdom Age. He teaches us differently now in the Ecclesial Age than he did during the 1st Kingdom Age. He will teach all mankind differently during the Millennial Age than He is doing now. These changes do not mean that the previous educational procedures and lessons were wrong.. which is what is sometimes suggested. What would have been wrong would be to refuse to grow up...to refuse the divine invitation to learn the lessons of the Ecclesial Age, refusing to let go of the lessons of our youth... the Sabbath observance, circumcision, the feast weeks, the dietary laws, Passover, etc. This was the first great apostasy in the brotherhood at the beginning of the Ecclesial Age, promoted

by the Judaisers... demanding that Gentiles be circumcised as well as baptized and maintain the Jewish dietary laws and laws of uncleanness as well as memorial service. Some people just refused to grow up. We can't make the same mistake. The laws and rituals of the Ecclesial Age are not eternal. They are designed to teach us specific truths, lessons and principles to mature us... to help us to grow. They are not an end in themselves. There is no mention anywhere in scripture of baptism or memorial service during the Millennial Kingdom. However, there are prophecies of the renewal of Sabbath Law, circumcision, Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, of altar offerings and temple worship. The great lessons of the laws and rituals of the 1st Kingdom Age have great significance in correctly understanding the laws and rituals of the Ecclesial Age. If we forget the lessons of our youth then our adult lives will be greatly disadvantaged. In the same way, if the bride of Christ – the Ecclesia –refuses or is incapable of drawing lessons from the previous stage in her development (such as the Kingdom Laws and rituals from Sinai) then she is greatly disadvantaged. This is why the Apostle Paul makes so many references to the laws and rituals of the previous age in his writings. This is why Jesus chose a Hebrew law scholar to serve as the Apostle to the Gentiles. Peter was the chosen apostle for opening that door to the kingdom of heaven for the gentiles when he was summoned to the home of Cornelius. But Peter was not Christ's choice as the apostle to the Gentiles. Jesus needed a law scholar. He wanted that Pharisee of Pharisees, Saul of Tarsus. When Saul would not respond to the subtle goading, the repeated pricking by Jesus then Jesus openly called him on the road to Damascus. The fact that Jesus appointed a trained expert on the laws and rituals of the previous divinely appointed age to preach and to shepherd the Gentiles into the community of the sons of God is a declaration of the great significance for ourselves –as Gentile believers – to understand how the laws and rituals of the previous maturity stage in the divine plan blend perfectly into the truths and principles being demonstrated by the laws and rituals of the Ecclesial Age.

Let's further validate this significance of this divine policy of a progressive educational pattern by referencing the features of creation. Shadows are created when the path of traveling light – like the sun – hits a solid object. That object absorbs the light that hits it. A shadow is formed by the light passing by the frame of that object. However the dimensions of that shadow will change along with the movement of that light source. As the earth rotates throughout a single day the shadow of a single object will adjust according to the relative position of that light source. Despite that various shadow patterns throughout the day it is still a single object being projected onto the dust of the earth by the light, whether it is a rock, a mountain, a bird, a tree or a child. Without actually seeing the object we are frequently able to discern that object by its shadow. However that can be more difficult at different times of the day when a shadow is quite long or very squat. This is a creational lesson in how God teaches, how He offers enlightenment.

The features of creation project the truths and principles of the Intelligent Designer. Shadows were created by our Creator to serve as a parallel to how he would offer two dimensional light and darkness frames for His truths and principles in laws, rituals, architecture and features of creation. That is why Paul was divinely inspired to refer to the design of the Tabernacle as a shadow of heavenly things. He also says: *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect* (Heb 10:1). Since our Heavenly Father has defined the educational patterns of the 1st Kingdom Age as shadows we are licensed to meditate on the operation of shadows in creational design in the context of progressive divine revelations and education. Shadows change as time progresses. So do divine laws and rituals. However the light source creating the shadow remains the same throughout the day, despite the changing shapes of the shadows from the unchanging shapes of the objects being shadowed. Our Creator, the source of all enlightenment, never changes, just like our immobile sun. His divine truths and principles never, ever change. They are eternal. It is only the divine laws and rituals that change, just like the shadows throughout the day. It isn't the shadows that are significant. It is the object being shadowed that needs to be identified. It isn't baptism or circumcision or Sabbath observance that are the significant issues. It is what they shadow. Our God communicates with intentional complexity. He shadows His truths and principles so that those with circumcised hearts and seeing eyes and hearing ears can understand but those who listen to their hearts, interpreting the shadows through the filter of a self-worshipping perspective will have what little understanding they do have – taken from them. As Jesus said when asked by his disciples why he insisted on teaching through parables... so that those who have will get more and those who have not will have what little they possess taken from them.

We will be referencing these foundational issues throughout our progressive considerations on the subject of immortalization. We will be blending and interdependently balancing the lessons of each subsequent divinely appointed age to offer a three dimensional understanding of divine truths and principles in reference to immortalization. For example: We see a significant progression through these ages for covenant binding rituals. A physical act of circumcision is initiated in the Patriarchal Age and continues into the 1st Kingdom Age. However, in the Ecclesial Age it is replaced by the covenant binding ritual of baptism and we are commanded to be **spiritually** circumcised, in the heart. Yet in the Millennial Kingdom Age baptism is replaced by a combination of both physical and spiritual circumcision. *Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel* (Ezek 44:9). Since these are covenant binding rituals during different ages with different laws and priesthoods we should understand how these are shadows of the same truths. Additionally circumcision was a covenant ritual limited to men but baptism is a non-gender covenant ritual. Each shadow has to be blended with related shadows to truly understand the eternal truths they

are shadowing. Examining the progressive education features of each divinely appointed age that are related directly or indirectly to immortalization is how we can come to understand the full length and breadth and height of the subject. This is how we can ascend the heights of enlightenment to witness a greater and greater vision of the unimaginable glory of our Creator.

Our greatest barrier in our pursuit of the glory of our Heavenly Father is the stumbling stone of oversimplification, concentrating on only part of an issue and presuming it to be the entire issue. While this practice often does not necessarily qualify as a God despising false doctrine status, the practice of oversimplifying divine principles does have a leavening effect, a polluting effect that will eventually **lead** to a God despising level of false doctrine... if not corrected.

There are many examples of this unfortunate practice among Christadelphian commentators but a simple example would be the subject of the fear of God. There are two applications of the fear of God but frequently one is very inappropriately eliminated as having no application for the Christadelphian brotherhood today. We are told that the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge and the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10; Prov 1:7; 9:10). Therefore this is a highly significant subject as we cannot even begin to understand eternal truths and properly or wisely apply that knowledge unless we understand and submit to this fear of God, whatever it may be. There are two applications to the fear of God. One is actually being afraid of the potential highly unpleasant disfavor of our Heavenly Father. The other aspect is the respectful reverence of our Heavenly Father that does not require being afraid, but simply extreme respect. Error surfaces when some of us try to eclipse the application of being afraid of our Heavenly Father by focusing exclusively on the reverential aspect of the fear of God. The scriptural references applying to reverence are promoted while the balancing references concerning the need to be afraid of divine judgments are completely ignored and discounted. This oversimplification focus has a blinding effect that incapacitates recognizing any contradictory evidence to that exclusive focus of reverential fear. The exhortation to work out our salvation with fear and trembling is completely ignored as meaningless. The exhortation of our Messiah is also ignored where he advises us to have no fear for those who can only kill us but definitely be afraid of the one who can not only kill us but keep us dead forever. Jesus says: *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell* (Matt 10:28). This is how we define and balance John's comforting statement: *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love* (1 John 4:18). The fear that is cast out by the Love of God is the fear of what men can do to us. It cannot possibly be **all** fear... as that would mean that Jesus was wrong and didn't know what he was talking about in reference to being afraid of the only one who can keep us dead forever... his Father. That all inclusive understanding of any possible aspect of fear

being eliminated by the love of God would invalidate Paul's exhortation to work out our salvation with fear and trembling and would also completely eliminate the need for even reverential fear... if the love of God eliminates every category of fear. Jesus defines what fear is eliminated by a genuine and deep love for our Creator. We should not be afraid of what men or society can do to us... because the worst they can do is kill us. They can't keep us dead and those who love Yahweh Elohim with all their heart and mind and strength and life... will be vindicated before their persecutors.... Just as God will be vindicated and Jesus will be vindicated. We have nothing to fear from men. But we do have a great deal to fear from the consuming fire who is our Heavenly Father. The only time we have anything to fear from our heavenly Father is when we are contemplating or actually behaving in a manner that disrespects Him. Sadly there are some incredibly self-righteous among us who think that is almost never. This imbalancing of the principle of the fear of God is generated by an uncircumcised heart, a heart that sees no reason to be afraid due to how they perceive their substantial personal righteousness and elevated status in the eyes of God. There is a great deal more that could be said on the two necessary aspects of the fear of God and how some inappropriately focus exclusively on the more pleasant and self-affirming feature of reverential fear as if it we are the only generation in all the body of believers down through time that has nothing to be afraid of from our Heavenly Father... but all we were trying to do here is to demonstrate a point. The point is that we have to be very careful we do not imbalance divine principles. In fact, we have to greatly fear misrepresenting our God... as He will hold us accountable for promoting false understandings about Him to His children, to His little ones. Jesus warns us it would be better for us to strap a heavy grain grinding stone to our neck and be thrown into deep waters than to cause one of his little ones to offend, in other words ... being afraid of leading others astray.

Let's offer another more powerful example of this danger of only looking at part of the story, of focusing exclusively on the partial image of an issue and how this leads to divinely insulting doctrinal error. The basis of salvation is a frequent topic throughout the New Testament. However, when we ignore certain conditions of salvation to exclusively focus on the conditions of salvation that are easier and then presume they are the only conditions for salvation... we eventually slide into the Christian apostate understanding of instant guaranteed salvation. Romans 10 makes it perfectly clear that believe and confession save us. Paul tells us *if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved* (Rom 10:9). This verse is read with a presumption of exclusivity... as if the word 'only' appeared somewhere in the text.... That if we only believe in our heart and confess with our lips we are instantly awarded a salvation that is no longer conditional. It is now guaranteed. This unconscious insertion of the this understanding of 'only' blinds these self-professed Bible believers to all the other New Testament references that tell us we are saved by baptism... saved by the only true gospel and never varying from that gospel... saved by hope that eliminates any sense of taking

salvation for granted... saved by working out our salvation with fear and trembling. When Bible students minimize important divine principles there is a domino effect in our minds, powered by our deceitful hearts that has an incredible blinding effect. It is a leavening influence. Once leaven is introduced its polluting effect only grows... unless it is eliminated... unless that leavening effect is corrected.

This minimalizing effect, this focusing on a single dimension of a divine principle, is extremely dangerous. It starts out innocently.... Highly promoting one aspect of an issue, until it becomes an exclusive focus that blinds us to contradictions to our presumptions. This is definitely the case in relation to the subject of immortalization. There are those who will minimize the subject of immortalization, atonement and sin... exclusively focusing on one aspect and pretending there is no wider or broader application. They become blinded to the many contradictions to their exclusive focus... relying on the twisting of words with lexicon manipulations and incapable of seeing the immense depth of the contradicting evidence our Creator has veiled for those who will actually circumcise their hearts, rejecting self-glorifying distortions of divine principles. This is why there are those among our community that will diminish the principle of atonement as exclusively representing just one of the two aspects of atonement... forgiveness. The principle of sin is minimized into simply a moral failure for which we bear guilt. Immortalization is distanced from the principle and promise of atonement.. thereby darkening the brightness and glory and beauty of the perfect harmony of all divine expressions, laws and rituals of each progressive educational age... that all teach the exact same truths and principles, but from different perspectives. This minimalization of sin... leading to the minimalization of atonement... creates a domino effect, a leavening effect in the community of God... that left uncorrected will eventually result in divinely insulting false doctrines... just as this process did almost 2000 years ago.

In our next commentary we will consider the terms in which immortalization is described throughout the New Testament. These expressions will blend perfectly with the laws and rituals of the other 3 educational stages in the divine plan for all of creation. These expressions will also be validated in the spoken word of God... the features of creation.

Bro Jim Dillingham