

# THE PRODIGAL SON

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R. B. THIEME, JR., BIBLE MINISTRIES  
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## *Preface*

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Before you begin your Bible study, if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, be sure you have named your sins privately to God the Father.

If we confess our [known] sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our [known] sins and to cleanse us from all [unknown, or forgotten sins] unrighteousness.  
(1 John 1:9)

You will then be in fellowship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to learn Bible doctrine from the Word of God.

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in [the filling of the] spirit and [biblical] truth.” (John 4:24)

If you have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, the issue is not naming your sins. The issue is faith alone in Christ alone.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [the command to believe in] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)

**T**HE WORD OF GOD is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)

All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God might be mature, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)

## WHAT IS A PARABLE?

BEFORE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND one of the most familiar parables in the Scriptures, it is necessary to know something of the literary nature of a parable. The parable is a short, fictitious narrative which illustrates a principle of doctrine. Parable is derived from the compound Greek word παραβολή (*parabole*): παρά (*para*), meaning “beside,” and βολή (*bole*), meaning “throw.” Together they denote “setting alongside” or a “comparison.” In other words, in order to understand the spiritual aspect of a parable, one must match up the story with the principle of doctrine. For example, in the parable of the prodigal son, the father represents God the Father and the two sons are analogous to carnal and spiritual believers.<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of the parable requires deduction compatible with known doctrine.

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1. Carnality is the absolute status of being out of fellowship with God because of unconfessed sin in the life. In carnality the believer loses the filling of the Holy Spirit and the sin nature controls the life.

Spirituality is the absolute status of fellowship with God through the use of rebound and the resulting filling of the Holy Spirit. See R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Rebound and Keep Moving!* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1993). Hereafter, cross-references to my books will cite only author, title, date of publication (in the first reference), and page(s).

All parables are derived from the mode of life as it was at the time the parable was written. The characters and incidents are figurative or typical, and proper names or specific geographic locations are never used. In contrast, the story of Lazarus and the rich man is not a parable because specific names and location are given. In this way you can distinguish between an actual historic event and a parable.

The narrative of a parable has an outward literal meaning which both the unbeliever and believer can understand, but parables are directed primarily toward the believer with Bible doctrine in his soul. Only the believer with the filling of the Holy Spirit and doctrine is able to understand the spiritual significance of the story.<sup>2</sup> When Jesus was speaking before large crowds, He often used this form of communication to teach doctrine to the believers who were present.

## THE NEW BIRTH

In Luke 15:1, Jesus Christ addressed Himself to publicans and sinners who had gathered to hear Him. Noting His compassion for these sinners, the Pharisees and scribes came to criticize (Luke 15:2). They complained that not only did He receive publicans, tax collectors, and sinners, prostitutes, He even dined with them. The publicans and sinners were the lowest social order in Jewish society. No self-respecting Jew would ever be seen in the company of these people, much less fraternize with them. However, here was One who claimed to be the Messiah, but who flagrantly ignored all their traditions and customs. He would not comply with their legalism, preferring instead the companionship of the 'untouchables.'<sup>3</sup>

Blinded by their own spiritual condition, the self-righteous, religious leaders refused to recognize that Jesus was the Christ, "the Son of man . . . come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Nor had He come to rule as king or liberate the Jews from the yoke of Rome, as they had expected. They did not understand that

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2. The filling of the Holy Spirit puts the soul of the believer under control of the Holy Spirit. His control is the power of God for executing the spiritual life (Eph. 5:18). See Thieme, *Old Sin Nature vs. Holy Spirit* (2000).

3. Legalism is man's futile attempt to gain salvation, spirituality, or the approbation of God through human good.

Jesus Christ would go to any length possible, compatible with His own character, to persuade those who were without salvation to come to Him by faith alone. He would do anything to draw them to himself through the Gospel, for He was the only solution to the sin problem, the only hope for eternal life (Acts 4:12).

The religious leaders knew well this passage in their Old Testament Scriptures:

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes [bruise] we are healed [drawn together]. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD [God the Father] hath laid on him [God the Son] the iniquity of us all. (Isa. 53:5-6)<sup>4</sup>

Yet, how little they cared for God's plan for a lost and dying world!<sup>5</sup> These men were sincere do-gooders who lived by the golden rule and obeyed, or thought they obeyed, every letter of the Mosaic Law. Jesus pointed out to these legalistic Pharisees and scribes that all their morality and human good were not sufficient.<sup>6</sup> They needed regeneration, to be born again (John 3:7).<sup>7</sup> Even the rich young ruler, a very moral and upright man, who was confident he had kept the entire Law was declared still lacking. Later, Jesus explained to His disciples that the trouble with the rich young ruler was that he had not followed Him in regeneration (Matt. 19:21, 25, 28).

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4. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture in this book is quoted from the King James Version (KJV). Bracketed commentary reflects amplification of the KJV translation taught in Bible class lectures (available on tape from R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, Houston, Texas).

5. Thieme, *The Plan of God* (1991).

6. Human good is the benevolent production or deeds of the believer who is under the control of the sin nature. The good deeds of a carnal Christian are indistinguishable from good deeds performed by an unbeliever, have no spiritual value, and are not rewardable in heaven. See Thieme, *Reversionism* (2000), 14-18.

7. Regeneration is the theological term for spiritual birth, or being "born again"; the imputation of eternal life at the moment anyone believes in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation. A regenerate person passes from spiritual death to spiritual life.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.  
(Gal. 3:26)

The only people who are the children of God are those who are born into the family of God by faith in Christ.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. (John 1:12)

This is the only way to be born again. Jesus disregarded the rejection of the religious do-gooders and continued to offer salvation to the publicans and sinners who had no illusions about their true condition before God.

In Luke 15:3–9 the first two parables relate to salvation and answer the skepticism of the scribes and Pharisees. Both parables describe someone who has not received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In the first parable the sinner is compared to an animal, a sheep; in the second, to an inanimate object, a coin. In conclusion Jesus states a principle:

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth [changes his mental attitude about Christ], more than over ninety and nine just [righteous] persons, which need no repentance. (Luke 15:7)

In the third parable a new subject is introduced. The analogy changes from salvation to rebound.<sup>8</sup>

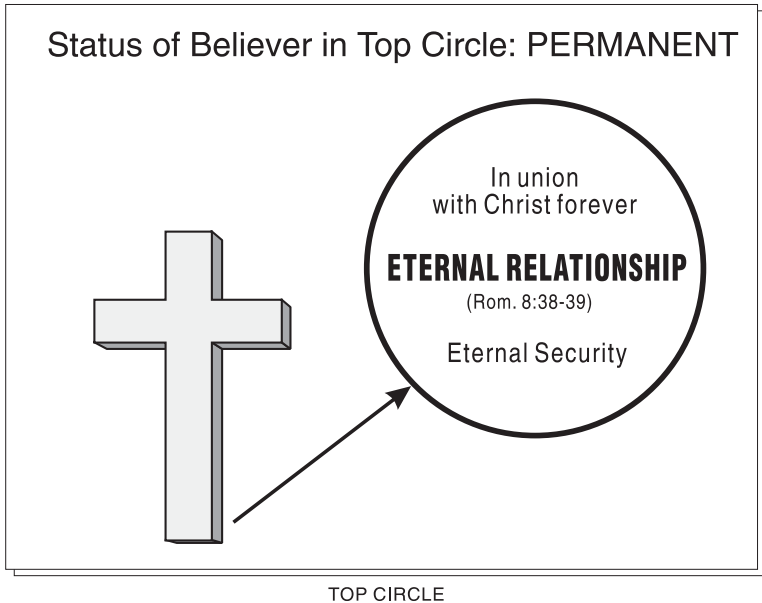
A certain man had two sons. (Luke 15:11*b*)

The “certain man,” declared to be their father, represents God the Father, the First Person of the Trinity. The two sons represent those who have already personally believed in Jesus Christ as Savior. The key to this passage is the relationship that exists between father and sons. When the passage is concluded, the same relationship still

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8. Rebound is the grace provision for the carnal believer to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit through naming personal sins to God the Father; the method of restoring the believer’s fellowship with God to resume the spiritual life (1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 11:28). See Appendix A; also Thieme, *Rebound and Keep Moving!*

exists—the father and two sons. Both remain sons in their human family and in the family of God despite their different paths. At the moment of salvation they were entered into union with the Lord Jesus Christ, which I call the “top circle.”<sup>9</sup>



9. Union with Christ takes place at the moment of salvation when every believer is identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and placed “in Christ” by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The union is eternal, delivers from the power of sin and death, and provides a spiritual life for every believer. The believer shares everything Christ is and has, including eternal life (1 John 5:11–12); righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21); election (Eph. 1:3–4); predestination (Eph. 1:5–6); adoption (Gal. 3:26); heirship (Rom. 8:16–17); priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9); sanctification (1 Cor. 1:2); royalty (2 Tim. 2:11–12). This doctrine explains the forensic status, temporal existence, and eternal future of every Church Age believer.

## ETERNAL SECURITY

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

God gives all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ eternal life.<sup>10</sup> As a believer and “son,” you also have eternal security.<sup>11</sup> You cannot get out of the top circle—your permanent relationship with God. Eternal life and eternal security are two of the thirty-nine irrevocable absolutes you receive at salvation.<sup>12</sup> God’s grace ties up the salvation package so tight you can never get out.<sup>13</sup>

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:38–39)

Once a son, always a son. Perhaps you may have desired at some time to change your family. Maybe you have been the recipient of discipline or there have been family conflicts. Yet, it is impossible to change the family into which you were born physically.

In like manner, and much more importantly, you cannot change the family into which you were born spiritually. The moment you believed in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior you were born into the family of God. For all eternity you will remain a child of God. You will always be a member of the family of God! You cannot change your spiritual birth any more than you can change your physical birth. There is nothing you or anyone else can do to change or lose your relationship with God. This is the grace of God.

God is immutable. He is unchangeable. Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, to day and for ever” (Heb. 13:8). Christ cannot cancel the work He has done for your salvation. Your nonmeritorious decision of

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10. Thieme, *A Matter of Life and Death* (1990).

11. See Appendix B.

12. See Appendix G.

13. Grace is all that God is free to do for mankind on the basis of the saving work of Christ on the cross. Mankind can never accomplish or achieve the approbation or favor of God through his own efforts, work, energy, or morality (Eph. 2:8–9).

faith alone in Christ alone is the only prerequisite for eternal salvation. Christ did all the work so that all you have to do is “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

If you have personally received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior—regardless of your conduct or behavior pattern, regardless of what a ‘stinker’ you are, or how self-righteous or religious you are—you are a child of God. You cannot change that fact.

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.  
(John 10:28)

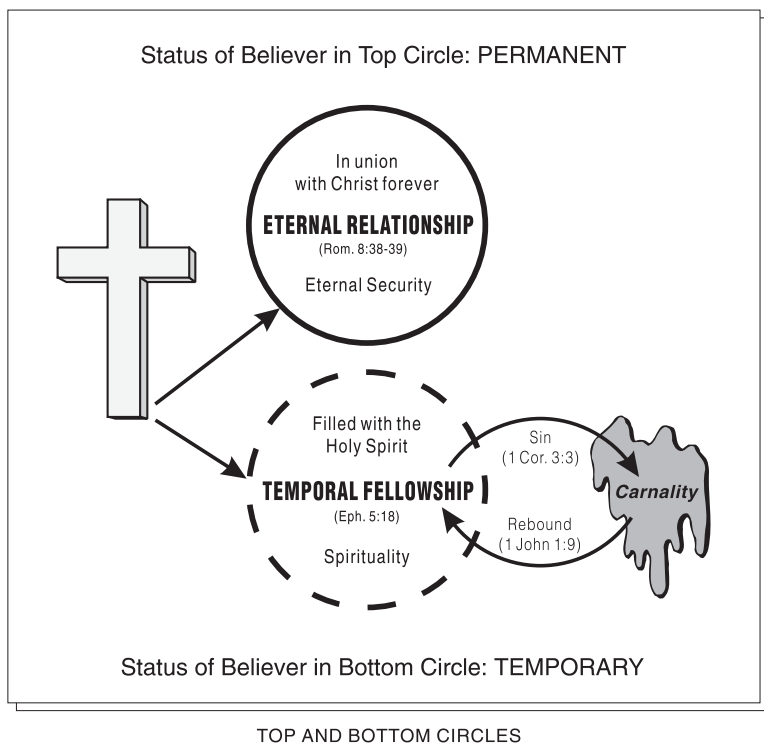
Never repeat that meaningless chant, that so-called prayer, “Oh, God, save us at last.” This is the same as saying that God goes back on His Word; that God is a liar; that God is unrighteous and unfair; that He is not immutable. In other words, you are guilty of the worst kind of blasphemy. You were saved the moment you first believed for all eternity; the matter is closed! Your salvation is settled once and for all!

## TEMPORAL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

The “bottom circle” represents fellowship with God in time. In temporal fellowship, or spirituality, the believer’s soul is filled with, or controlled by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16). Sin takes the believer out of fellowship and into carnality. In carnality the sin nature controls the soul (Rom. 7:14).<sup>14</sup> Spirituality and carnality are exactly opposite terms: spirituality describes the believer’s status in the bottom circle, while carnality depicts his status out of the bottom circle (Rom. 8:6).

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14. Except for Jesus Christ, the sin nature is an integral part of every human being, the center of man’s rebellion toward God. The sin nature was acquired originally by Adam at his fall, is subsequently passed down genetically to all mankind through procreation, and resides in the cell structure of the human body. It causes both spiritual death and total depravity for all mankind. The sin nature is the “old man” of Ephesians 4:22; the Adamic nature of “flesh” of Romans 8:3–4; the principle of “sin” of Romans 7:8–20; the genetic perpetuation of the sin nature and spiritual death “in Adam” of 1 Corinthians 15:22.



In any given instant in phase two,<sup>15</sup> every believer in Jesus Christ is either in the bottom circle or out of the bottom circle (1 Cor. 3:1); either controlled by the Holy Spirit or by the sin nature. No believer can be partially spiritual and partially carnal. They are mutually exclusive states.

When you sin and are outside the bottom circle, you are still in the top circle. The issue, then, is regaining temporal fellowship with God. God has provided rebound as the means by which you can move back into the bottom circle. You do not return to fellowship by burning

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15. Phase one is salvation; phase two is the Christian way of life, which begins immediately after salvation and continues until either death or the Rapture; phase three is eternity.

candles, rededicating, taking a vow, repenting,<sup>16</sup> feeling sorry for sin, or any other kind of emotional flagellation. You are restored by grace. And when you are restored, you are back in fellowship with the Lord. This principle is important in understanding the prodigal.

The prodigal started out as every believer does, in the bottom circle, in fellowship with God in time. But, he got out of the bottom circle through sinful activity. Although out of the bottom circle, the prodigal was still in the top circle. He could not lose his salvation.

Some believers do not understand eternal security. They think they can lose their salvation. After having been out of fellowship, perhaps for years, and then desiring to return to the Lord, they think they must believe in Christ again. They try to reaffirm their faith, rededicate, or repent.

You cannot 'redo' anything as far as your salvation is concerned; salvation was accomplished in toto the first time you believed. For you to redo salvation, is an insult to the Lord and displays a pitiful ignorance of the Word. You are rejecting the principle of eternal security and implying that God did not do a good job the first time. Even preachers, who should know better, use the rededication gimmick when people ask them, "How do I get back in fellowship?"

This emotional approach, rededication, to the problem of carnality results in confused, miserable believers. Making a promise to God that you will never do it again, sincerity and hypnotizing yourself into rededication, or trying to make a deal with God, will not get you back in fellowship. Nothing you do will ever satisfy God. Only what Jesus Christ has done on the cross satisfies God the Father. Therefore, simply rebound, forget the sin, and keep moving. If you do not execute the rebound technique, you are ignoring the grace of God and cannot move forward in the Christian life.

Believers are often shocked by the sins they commit. They may ask, "Can a Christian do this?" They may even wonder, "Maybe I am not a Christian!" Be assured that Christians can commit any sins that unbelievers commit! The proper question is, "How do I, as a Christian, get back into fellowship?" God provided the means to return to fellowship the moment you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the grace of God which operated on your behalf at salvation and

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16. See Appendix C.

continues to operate in the matter of fellowship and the Christian life. The parable of the prodigal son illustrates this grace.

## DIVINE OPERATING ASSETS

And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. (Luke 15:12)

By way of analogy, “the portion of goods” that falls to the younger son is related to the divine operating assets provided by God for your Christian life. Are you aware that you are a spiritual millionaire? Perhaps you have been living as a spiritual pauper because you are not cognizant of the fact that there are thousands of promises which belong to you as a Christian.<sup>17</sup> Each promise is based on a principle of Bible doctrine. How many promises have you claimed during the past week? How tragic when you do not claim what belongs to you. I suspect if you had a million dollars in your checking account right now, you might write one or two checks during the week. So, why not draw on the Father’s limitless account? God is ‘tapping His foot,’ waiting (Isa. 30:18) to supply you with many temporal blessings of the Christian life. But, your carnality strangles the possibility of your receiving any of these wonderful blessings.

The younger son made a very legitimate request. He wanted in advance what would soon be his anyway. Parents in the ancient world saved for their children in order to get them properly launched in life. When he asked for the portion of goods that would be his inheritance, he was asking for what was legitimately his. This is the meaning of the phrase, “that falleth to me.”

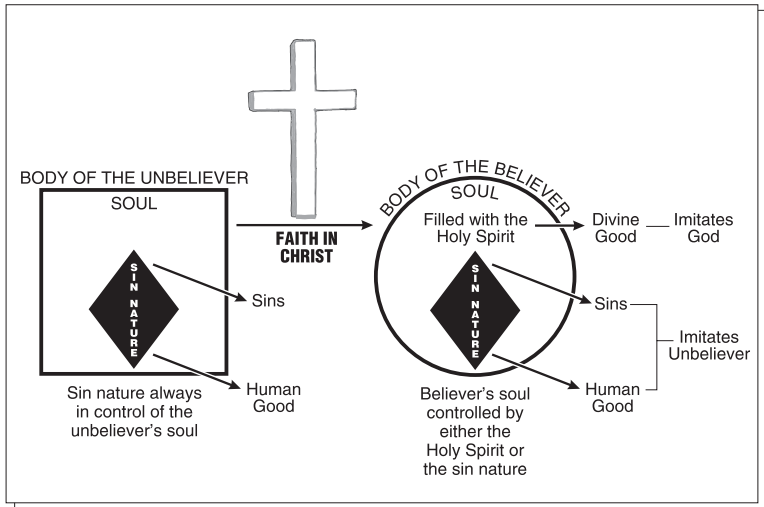
What was the father’s reaction? He divided his wealth between his sons. Both sons received their portion. Likewise, God the Father has divided His goods, or ‘divine operating capital,’ among all believers. The issue now becomes a matter of appropriation and utilization. How will you use the capital God has provided? Verse 13 begins the story of the younger son and how he used the capital his father had given him.

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17. Thieme, *The Faith-Rest Life* (1999).

## THE CARNAL CHRISTIAN

The behavior pattern of a carnal Christian cannot be distinguished from that of an unbeliever (1 Cor. 3:3).<sup>18</sup> In fact, he is sometimes



CARNALITY VERSUS SPIRITUALITY

worse as illustrated by David at one point in his life (2 Sam. 11). David was a believer, yet he behaved like an unbeliever.<sup>19</sup> Saul, too, was a believer though he acted like an unbeliever most of his life. As far as God's Word is concerned, while the believer may act like an unbeliever, he is still a believer, but in status quo carnality and out of fellowship. The "riotous living" of the younger son also represents this category of carnality.

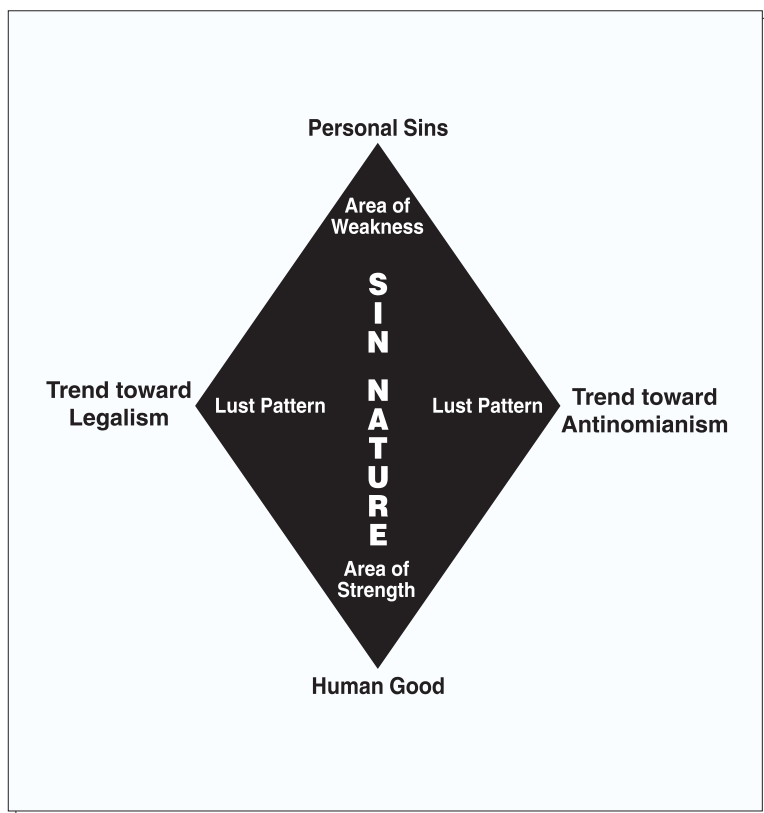
And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance [misused his capital] with riotous living. (Luke 15:13)

18. Thieme, *Reversionism*.

19. Thieme, *Rebound and Keep Moving!*, 26–39.

The prodigal began activities which were disastrous in his own life and displeasing to the Lord. I hesitate to elucidate, or to elaborate, on what his sins actually were, for I would certainly miss the sins of someone who would assume, "I do not fit the pattern of the prodigal son. I have not wasted my substance in riotous living. When you come right down to it, I am a pretty good person."

If this is your thinking, remember you still have the sin nature. Your sin nature is composed of an area of weakness, the source of temptation for personal sins (Heb. 12:1); an area of strength which generates human good (Isa. 64:6; Heb. 6:1); a trend toward legalism



SIN NATURE

which is self-righteousness (Rom. 7:7); a trend toward antinomianism which is licentiousness (Gal. 5:19–21); and a lust pattern which is the motivation toward either trend (Eph. 2:3). When under the control of the sin nature, you will generally move in the direction of your habitual trend. When under the control of the sin nature, you fit the pattern of the prodigal.

Every Christian sins even though he is eternally saved. There is no Christian who achieves sinless perfection in time.

If we [believers] say [contend] that we have no sin [sin nature], we deceive ourselves, and the truth [doctrine] is not in us. (1 John 1:8)

If you suppose you never sin, you say in effect, “I am perfect.” Just because your sins are not apparent to you, does not mean that God is blind to them. You are only deceiving yourself.

If we say that we have not sinned [personally], we make Him [God] a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:10)

Whenever you imply or suggest that you no longer sin after salvation, you are calling God a liar, and the Word of God is not in the right lobe of your soul.<sup>20</sup>

The problem is, you may run with the ‘respectable crowd.’ You keep your sins covered up and give the impression that you are a perfect person whom others should emulate. You know how to put on a long face and live by a system of taboos, but you are loaded down on the inside with vicious sins. You are proud, bitter, hypocritical, vindictive, envious, spiteful, implacable, filled with worry and fear. Legalism and self-righteousness characterize your carnality.

At this particular point you might unwittingly be carnal. You may say, “I am not out there raising hell or doing the things that people usually call sin, so how can I be carnal?” But, you could be out of fellowship right now just by what you are thinking.<sup>21</sup> In fact, this is the

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20. The right lobe is the dominant lobe of the mentality of the soul, designated by the Greek word καρδία (*kardia*), which circulates Bible doctrine through the soul’s stream of consciousness—frame of reference, memory center, vocabulary and categorical storage, the conscience, momentum and wisdom compartments—to support the spiritual life of the believer.

21. Thieme, *Mental Attitude Dynamics* (2001).

quickest and shortest route to taking the journey into the “far country” of carnality (Luke 15:13).

Christians who fail to recognize the doctrine of carnality, or who deny the existence of the sin nature, fail to deal with sin as the Word of God mandates. They only kid themselves; they do not know doctrine. They rationalize or compensate by covering sin with a hypocritical facade, a ‘spiritual’ front such as some form of penance, an increase of their offering, or a promise to do better. But, superficial deeds do not regain fellowship with the Lord.

Christian, get your head out of the sand! When you sin, face up to it—utilize what God has provided! Do not rationalize. Do not delude yourself that it was just a mistake, not a sin. Above all, whatever your lust pattern, whatever your sins, learn to recognize them so that you can rebound and be restored to fellowship.

Every time you sin, every time you get out of fellowship, you are the prodigal. Paul states the problem:

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 7:14)

Here, Paul describes his carnal experience. “Sin” in the singular refers to the sin nature. There is nothing wrong with the law, it is “holy, just and good” (Rom. 7:12), but there is something wrong with Paul. He goes on to say, “I am dominated by the sin nature.”

For that which I do I allow not. (Rom. 7:15a)

In today’s vernacular Paul is saying, “What is this? I am a Christian; I am born again; I have eternal life; God the Holy Spirit indwells me; Christ indwells me;<sup>22</sup> I am in union with the person of Christ; I am the object of positional sanctification.<sup>23</sup> All of these marvelous assets belong to me, and yet, I continue to sin! I do not under-

22. The Holy Spirit indwells the body of every Church Age believer to make the Christians’s body a temple worthy for the indwelling of Christ (1 Cor.3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16).

The indwelling of Jesus Christ is a guarantee of the believer’s security, spiritual riches, and sanctified position that makes attainable the purpose of the spiritual life (Col. 1:26–28).

23. Positional sanctification occurs the moment we are saved and is the status of being set apart to God for a special purpose (Heb. 13:12).

stand. It surprises me, it shocks me!” Paul describes himself and all carnal Christians, when he says, literally,

For I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. (Rom. 7:15b)

There are other passages in which Paul traces his carnal experiences, such as Galatians 5 where the sin nature is called “the flesh.” Colossians 3:5–9 reveals a list of sins that Christians commit which might surprise you. In 1 Corinthians 3:1–3, Christians out of fellowship are said to “walk as men,” that is, act like unbelievers. Paul did not stay this way. In fact, he gives you the secret of solving the problem of carnality and dealing with the sin nature in Romans 6 and 8. If you do not solve the problem of carnality through rebound, God’s only alternative is divine discipline.

## DIVINE DISCIPLINE

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (Luke 15:14)

In verse 14 we have a change of pace. The “famine” represents divine discipline imposed on the believer out of fellowship. Persistent carnality always brings the principle of discipline into focus.<sup>24</sup> When you step out of line, God will discipline you. Expect it! This is the doctrine of the ‘divine woodshed.’

The prodigal son was continually “in want,” in dire straits, a perfect illustration of divine discipline. No matter what he tried, everything failed. Notice what he finally did.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (Luke 15:15)

Apparently, the prodigal had gone out of the land, because there were no swine in Palestine. Pigs were forbidden by the Mosaic Law (Deut. 14:8). As a Jew, the prodigal was in a desperate situation to

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24. See Appendix D.

take a job involving pigs. The job did not pay well, and he was constantly hungry.

And he would fain [ἐπιθυμέω, *epithumeo*] have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. (Luke 15:16)

The old English word “fain” is not in use today. The Greek verb *epithumeo* should be translated, “to long for,” or “to desire.” In the imperfect tense with linear aktionsart, this verb denotes a continuous action from past time—his “desire” continued without ceasing. The next verb, “have filled,” is a change to the aorist infinitive and means that now, he desires to fill “his belly” with the same food the swine eat—the corn husks.

When a believer stays out of fellowship, his standards change. In carnality the prodigal’s standards changed radically. He once had a ‘champagne taste’ (Luke 15:13), but now he has—well, what can we say—a ‘slop taste’? Perhaps the language is not the best, but it certainly conveys the point. Although he did not go so far as to want to eat the swine, which was forbidden to him, he did want to eat the slop that the pigs ate.

Does this situation change his family status? No! He is still a son; he has been born once and for all into his family. He is still a child of his father even though he is under severe discipline having been reduced to the status of an unclean animal.

He has become what we call a ‘pig-pen’ Christian. He is still a Christian and still a child of God. God’s love will never be removed from him, but he has placed himself in the divine ‘woodshed’ for a thorough scourging. He is being disciplined for his persistent carnality.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Heb. 12:6)

His hunger continued, but “no man gave unto him” indicates refusal on the part of the foreman to even permit the prodigal to eat the slop he was feeding to the hogs. Now this is interesting: The prodigal had sunk so low that the pigs were more important than he was to his boss.

What is the point? When a believer gets out of fellowship and stays out, he often sinks lower in character, motivation, and behavior pattern than the unbeliever. As a matter of fact, unbelievers have used the carnality of Christians as an excuse to reject Christ. The unbeliever can think of fifteen unbelieving friends who are better than some carnal believer and often, he is right. Of course, this is no excuse.

You may have heard an unbeliever express his excuse this way: "I will never go to that church—they are a bunch of hypocrites." The absurd thing about this is that he does business with hypocrites, makes money from hypocrites, and associates with hypocrites in recreational activities. Yet, a church where there might be a hypocrite is off limits. This is the height of inconsistency! Hypocrisy makes an easy excuse for those who are looking for an excuse and are inclined to think superficially.

Let's face it, when a believer gets out of fellowship and stays out of fellowship, he only gets worse and worse—not better. A believer who has been out of fellowship for a long time can be unethical in his business practices, be known as a 'man about town,' and still be a deacon in the First Church of Podunk. He is still a Christian, still born again, but he is in the same situation as the prodigal. How tragic that a carnal believer should be such a stumbling block to those in need of salvation.

## REBOUND AND SPIRITUALITY

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! (Luke 15:17)

What does it mean to come to yourself? It means to look at life from the biblical perspective: to face up to the situation as it really exists; to recognize the sins in your own life; to stop rationalizing or justifying your sins; to stop blaming God or someone else (operation patsy) and to actually acknowledge your sin—to recognize that you are wrong and contrary to the Word of God. The prodigal realized that the servants in his father's house were much better off than he was at the moment.

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him,  
Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.  
(Luke 15:18)

Here is the principle of getting back into the bottom circle. Restoration to fellowship has nothing to do with emotion, or penance. There is only one way to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit and restore fellowship—not two ways, not three ways!

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us  
our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.  
(1 John 1:9)

Many Christians question God's grace by asking, "Is 1 John 1:9 the only place that states this principle? If this is the only verse that says this, why is it so important?" In answer to that, how many times does the Word of God have to say something for it to be true and important? Once, and that is all! However, this is not the only verse. This principle occurs many times in both the Old and New Testaments: Nehemiah 1:6; Psalm 32:5; 38:18; 51:3-4; Proverbs 28:13; Daniel 9:4; 1 Corinthians 11:31; 1 Peter 4:17; and others.

I like to use a word which describes the principle so aptly—rebound: "to bounce back, to recover from setback." Sin causes the believer to stumble and to sustain a setback in his spiritual life. Confession is based on the work that Christ did on the cross where He was judged for all sin. Now when we name them, God can forgive our postsalvation sins and we can bounce right back into the playing field of the bottom circle.

Whether you find the word "confess" in the Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic, it means "to name or acknowledge the sin to God." Confess does not carry any connotation of feeling sorry for what you have done. Although it is all right to feel sorry for what you have done, it is not necessary for divine forgiveness or restoration to fellowship. Nor is it a prerequisite to feel the 'rosy glow' in order to get back into fellowship.

Feeling is not the criterion for rebound any more than it is the criterion for salvation. Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone. Some get a rosy glow the minute they accept Christ as Savior and that is fine. Other people have no emotional experience whatsoever. You may not feel saved, but if you have trusted in Christ, you are saved.

Likewise, you may not feel restored, but if you have rebounded, you are restored.

Do not wait to confess until you have a certain feeling or until you work up a sorrow for your sins. By that time you may be eating husks with the swine! Do not let your emotions rule your life. I know this is hard for some of you because all of your Christian life, you have lived by your emotions. When you feel good, you think you are spiritual and when you feel terrible, you think something is wrong. When emotion or feeling becomes your criterion instead of the Word of God, you have had it!

## THE GRACE OF GOD IN REBOUND

If the carnal believer does not get back in fellowship, he cannot be controlled by the Spirit, he cannot serve the Lord. Rebound is never a license to sin, it is a license to serve, to keep on honoring the Lord in phase two. If the believer does not rebound, then the whole purpose for which he remains on this earth is negated. Whatever he produces is human good rather than divine good.<sup>25</sup>

Without this gracious provision, neither you nor I, nor any other Christian, could survive the exigencies of life or meet the demands of the Christian life. If you are one of those rebels who still think you have to feel sorry for your sins and that confess means something besides "name it," then you still do not understand the grace of God. Look again at 1 John 1:9:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The Greek word *ὁμολογέω* (*homologeō*), "confess," means "to admit, to name, to acknowledge." "If" introduces a third class conditional clause which denotes that naming your sins depends on your volition. Maybe you will or maybe you will not confess your sins. You are free to choose.

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25. Divine good is any Christian service or deed performed by a believer under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Only divine good is intrinsic and has eternal value, and is acceptable to the perfect standards of God and receives recognition and reward from Him in heaven.

Confess, like believe, excludes any human works or merit. Certainly it is no credit to you when you name your sins. "If we confess our sins" simply recognizes the fact that you commit sins. "He [God] is faithful" means He forgives your sins every time you confess. He is "just" to forgive your sins because Christ was judged on your behalf. Christ bore your sins in His own body on the cross (1 Pet 2:24). Therefore, you are judicially cleansed from all sin and He is faithful and just to forgive your sins.<sup>26</sup>

The Bible does not tell us to ask for forgiveness. The Bible says, "confess." The Bible does not say to plead, "Oh, God, forgive me!" The Bible says, "name it." We need to grow up and operate in complete accord with the mandate of the Word of God.

Since the day we accepted Christ as Savior, God deals with us in grace. We do not earn grace; we do not deserve grace; we cannot work for grace; we do not merit grace in any way. The grace of God in rebound depends entirely on who and what He is. All we need to do is appropriate His grace.

Even in discipline God always punishes you in grace. You will never get what you deserve. Did you ever stop to ponder where you might be if you, even as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, got what you deserved from God? The grace of God can never treat us according to what we deserve. It is impossible! Therefore, although He may punish you severely, it is still in grace. That is why the Bible tells you to get up and move on (Phil. 3:13).

Wherefore lift up [restored to fellowship] the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees [carnality]; And make straight paths for your feet [spiritual growth through doctrine], lest that which is lame be turned out of the way [return to carnality]; but let it rather be healed [rebound and keep moving]. (Heb. 12:12–13)

You are deluding yourself if you think you are forgiven because you worked up sorrow for sin, or because you made a vow, or went through some system of asceticism. Nothing you do will get you back into fellowship short of confession of sin. And that is it—period!

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26. Thieme, *Rebound and Keep Moving!*, 4.

When you name your known sins to God, you are forgiven and cleansed because Christ paid the penalty as your substitute. Your confession is nonmeritorious. All the merit lies in the One who died in your place.

The grace of God also “cleanses” you “from all unrighteousness.” These are the unknown sins which you commit in ignorance—sins that you do not realize are sins because you do not know doctrine.

So far, the prodigal had it right when he said to himself, “I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.” That was his confession and he needed nothing more. But the prodigal let his emotions take over and got right back out of fellowship. He quenched and grieved God the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19).<sup>27</sup> Out of fellowship, the prodigal became confused.

And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (Luke 15:19)

Truly he was not worthy, but self-reproach would not get him back in fellowship. In his confusion he became ridiculous. He assumed that his father might no longer care to consider him a son after his sinful conduct. He thought if he offered to become a hired servant, perhaps his father would be more inclined to forgive him.

Even if the father should put him in livery as a servant of his estate or put him in chains, this would not make him a servant or a slave. He was his son. He was not worthy, but sonship does not depend upon worthiness. And therein lies the prodigal’s confusion. He wanted to do penance. He wanted to compensate for his wrongdoing.

But his father set all that aside. He did not say, “This boy needs a lesson; I’ll put him in the stable for a month.” Or, “I’ll give him some nasty jobs scrubbing floors, cleaning the stalls, or plowing the fields. He deserves to pay for his offenses.” His father had no intention of making him a hired servant. Instead, all that was ignored. Likewise, God recognizes only our confession and forgives us with no other conditions.

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27. Thieme, *Isolation of Sin* (2000), 23.

## DIVINE ESSENCE IN REBOUND

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. (Luke 15:20)

I want you to see the picture of divine essence in this verse. It is so important you cannot afford to miss it.<sup>28</sup> When the prodigal was yet far away and his father saw him is an illustration of divine omniscience. His father's personal integrity and compassion is an illustration of divine love. In the prodigal's absence, the fact that his father's love had not changed is an illustration of divine immutability.

In eternity the omniscience of God always knew about your sins. Billions of years ago He knew how many times you would confess. In eternity past His love provided the solution for your sin problem.

God's personal love for all His children insures His compassion toward us when we rebound. God forgives us at the moment we rebound because on the cross, Christ satisfied the Father's divine integrity, His justice and righteousness. The omnipotence of God guarantees that He has the power to provide forgiveness. When we confess our sins, it is just as though the Father were to run to us, put His arms around us, and kiss us. This is the Father's love toward us as believers.

The Father loves you personally with an infinite amount of love. This is always His attitude for His compassion and integrity never fail (Lam. 3:22). And how does He express this love? Not by making you grovel, but by forgiving you immediately when you are willing to name your sins to Him. This is His love for you. You are His child; you belong to Him.

When my son was young and away from home, I was never too sure he was the epitome of decorum. There were many times when I was happy to say, "That's my boy!" Then there were times when I would prefer to look the other way and say, "Whose kid is he?" But I can tell you one thing, whether he was good or bad, I was always glad to see the 'little stinker' move through the door. And regardless of

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28. See Appendix E; also Thieme, *The Trinity* (1993).

what he had done, the first thing I did was to put my arms around him and welcome him. I never stopped loving him.

This is the attitude of God the Father toward you personally, but magnified many times over. The omniscience of God knows whether you are going to step out of line in five minutes, five hours, or five days. What is so tremendous is that He still loves you! You will come back and confess again and again, and each time He will forgive you again and again. That is grace!

## THE RESULTS OF REBOUND

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. (Luke 15:21)

That was true, he had sinned. But notice he also said he was not “worthy”; he wanted to be made a hired hand on his father’s estate. His father interrupted him.

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry. (Luke 15:22–23)

This verse illustrates four experiential characteristics of restored fellowship:

1. The “best robe” represents the outward manifestation of restoration to fellowship as a family member. The prodigal’s father did not make a servant out of him. Instead, he gave him the best robe signifying the availability of divine operating assets to grow in experiential righteousness.<sup>29</sup>

2. The “signet ring” relates to his father’s signature. In the ancient world the signet ring was a form of identification. With this ring the restored prodigal was again identified with his father and could draw on his father’s tremendous bank account. By way of analogy, when

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29. Experiential righteousness is growing spiritually in order to live a life in obedience to the mandates of God (2 Pet. 3:18). See Thieme, *Divine Guidance* (1999), *Faith-Rest Life*.

we rebound, we are restored to full fellowship with God and have access to the Father's unlimited divine operating assets that produce experiential righteousness. We can write a check on His account.

3. The "shoes" represent Christian service (Eph. 6:15). When you rebound, then you can "walk by means of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16) and you have the honor and privilege to serve the Lord again (Col. 1:10). The filling of the Holy Spirit produces divine good. Do not let any legalistic believer clip your wings by quoting to you the old cliché, "The bird with the broken pinion will never fly as high again." You can fly as high as before. You are back in fellowship. So keep growing; keep moving ahead in the Christian life (Phil. 3:13-14)!

4. Finally, the "fatted calf" speaks of fellowship in the Word, 'feeding' on divine truth. When you are in fellowship, it is possible to feed on the Word again and grow in experiential righteousness.

For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost [ἀπόλλυμι, *apollumi*], and is found. And they began to be merry. (Luke 15:24)

There are seven different kinds of death in the Bible.<sup>30</sup> This is a reference to temporal death as described in Romans 8:6, 13; Ephesians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:6. To be "alive again" means that the son is back in the bottom circle—back in fellowship. "Lost" is the Greek word *apollumi*, meaning "to be ruined" or "to be destroyed"; the connotation being that he was out of the sphere of the Christian life. All the time he was away, he was unwilling to live the Christian way of life. Now that he "is found," has rebounded, he is back in the sphere where he can grow spiritually.

When a believer gets back in fellowship and advances spiritually by learning the Word of God, all the wonderful by-products of Christianity are resumed. To "be merry" speaks of inner peace, joy, stability—all the blessings that can come to the believer who rebounds and keeps moving forward in the Christian life, to the one who utilizes divine grace.

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30. See Appendix F; also Thieme, *Dying Grace* (1977).

## THE LEGALISTIC BELIEVER

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. (Luke 15:25-28)

The elder brother should have been delighted to have his younger brother home. He should have thrown his arms around him and said, "Welcome brother! I sure am glad you are back!" But he did not do that.

Now, the elder brother took his own journey into a "far country"—he was the one who was out of fellowship. He was jealous and angry because his father had treated the younger brother in grace. He was sulking and would not go into the house and join the welcome-home party. Therefore, his father came out and begged him to come in, but without success.

The father had the right to treat his children as he thought best. Do not get angry because God the Father treats another Christian in grace. God the Father entreats you to have compassion on other believers. You should have the same mental attitude of love and grace which was manifested by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Forbearing one another [of the same kind—believers], and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. (Col. 3:13)

Remember that the shoe may be on your foot some day, and you will want all of the grace coming your way.

And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. (Luke 15:29)

“All these years I have been faithful,” he whined, “and yet you never threw a party for me.” Probably his father had, but in his jealousy of his brother he had forgotten. One mental attitude sin, jealousy, led to another, anger, and then to another as he began to judge and malign his father and brother.

But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (Luke 15:30)

How could he know that his brother had thrown away his inheritance on prostitutes? He could not! The passage says, “riotous living,” which could mean a lot of things. In whatever manner his brother lost his money, it was only a conjecture that it was spent on “harlots.” There is no specific indication as to how the prodigal lost his inheritance.

Furthermore, it was none of his elder brother’s business. When a believer gets out of fellowship, all of his bad qualities are brought out. Elder brother was legalistic, self-righteous, and guilty of operation ‘long proboscis.’<sup>31</sup> Whatever the younger brother’s sins were, the father had forgiven him. The principle is that we are never to penalize another believer for the sins which God has forgiven.

The legalistic believer imposes his own standards of human good on others and castigates those who do not live up to them. It is not unusual for an entire congregation in their ‘sanctified,’ legalistic, holier-than-thou attitude to stomp on one member and play ‘kick the can’ with him. No one has the right to do that to any believer.

When you begin to judge others, you not only get yourself out of fellowship, you become the recipient of divine discipline.<sup>32</sup> One of the most wonderful qualities in the Christian way of life is the ability to mind your own business, and not worry about whether another believer is stepping out of line or getting away with something. God will take care of him. If you try to help God with a little discipline of your own, you put yourself between God and the whip. You will get the discipline! So save yourself the misery, live your own life before the Lord. Relax, and rebound when necessary.

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31. Thieme, *Isolation of Sin*, 16–17.

32. Thieme, *Reversionism*, 88.

## AFTERMATH OF LEGALISM

What was the father's answer to this brother who had gotten out of fellowship through legalism?

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (Luke 15:31)

The elder brother may have whatever he desires. He had always had all of his father's operating assets. Whether he ever accepted his father's grace and returned to fellowship is unknown. But, in order to have access to the Father's unlimited operating assets, you must accept His grace in utilizing rebound.

It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again: and was lost, and is found. (Luke 15:32)

Every time you sin, you are "dead"—temporal death, out of fellowship. Every time you confess your sin, you are back in the bottom circle ready to utilize all the grace assets provided by God for you. Therefore, as long as you live, whenever you sin against the Lord you must rebound. If you do not, your life is useless and powerless. Your production is human good and does not count as far as the Lord is concerned. Only after you have been purified from sin through the principle of 1 John 1:9 are you ready to move out and serve the Lord.

As in the parable of the prodigal son, all believers are divided into two categories—spiritual or carnal. Like the prodigal son, you can choose the path of lawlessness and obvious carnality. Or like the elder brother, you can become self-righteous and legalistic. While your carnality is not quite as obvious, it is just as wrong. Regardless of your brand of carnality or its visibility, God does not approve of your sins and must sever temporal fellowship with you. However, since you are His child and a member of His family forever, He never stops loving you despite your wrongdoing. He graciously offers you rebound to restore your fellowship and spirituality. Whether you exercise the option and return to fellowship, as did the prodigal, is your choice. It is never too late to rebound and keep moving!



## *Appendix A*

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### DOCTRINE OF REBOUND

- I. Rebound is the grace provision for the carnal believer to recover spirituality, the filling of the Holy Spirit, through naming sins privately to God the Father. This is the only method of restoring the believer's fellowship with God and resuming the spiritual life (Prov. 1:23; Eph. 5:14; cf., 5:18).
- II. The basis for rebound is the efficacious death of Christ on the cross where He was judged for our sins (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 1:7).
- III. Rebound must be understood in the light of relationship with God (Jer. 3:13) or the top circle (Rom. 8:1).
- IV. The believer sins after salvation, but such sin is categorized as carnality, not loss of salvation (Rom. 8:38-39; 1 Cor. 3:1-3; 1 John 1:8, 10).
- V. The mechanics of the rebound technique: Confess the sin (1 John 1:9); forget it (Phil. 3:13-14); isolate it (Heb. 12:15).
- VI. The alternative to rebound is divine discipline (1 Cor. 11:31; Heb. 12:6).
- VII. The discouragement to rebound: legalism and other Christians (Luke 15:11-32).
- VIII. The grace provision of rebound includes:

- A. The mechanics (Gal. 6:1).
  - B. A mental attitude of grace (Matt. 18:23–35).
  - C. Grace orientation (Col. 3:13).
  - D. Reward for assisting others (James 5:19–20).
- IX. Biblical synonyms for rebound:
- A. Confess (1 John 1:9).
  - B. Judge self (1 Cor.11:31).
  - C. Yield (Rom. 6:13; 12:1).
  - D. Lay aside every weight (Heb. 12:1).
  - E. Be in subjection to the Father (Heb. 12:9).
  - F. Lift up the hands that hang down (Heb. 12:12).
  - G. Make straight paths (Matt. 3:3; Heb. 12:13).
  - H. Arise from the dead, or literally, “stand up again out from deaths” (Eph. 5:14).
  - I. Put off the old man (Eph. 4:22).
  - J. Acknowledge thine iniquity (Jer. 3:13).
- X. Old Testament rebound commands (Ps. 32:5; 38:18; 51:3–4; Prov. 28:13).

## Appendix B

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### DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL SECURITY

- I. Positional approach—Every believer is in union with Christ (Rom. 8:1; Eph. 1:3–6; Jude 1).
- II. Logical approach—If God did the most for us when we were his enemies, then it follows He will do “much more” for us as members of His royal family (Rom. 5:9–10, 15, 17, 20; 8:32).
- III. Anthropomorphic approach—The believer is held in God’s hand, and He will never let go (Ps. 37:24; John 10:28).
- IV. Experiential approach—Though we say we no longer believe, God remains faithful, for He is immutable (2 Tim. 2:12–13).
- V. Family approach—We are born into the royal family of God and can never be removed (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26).
- VI. Body approach—The Head of the body, Christ, can never say to any member of the body, a believer, that He does not need him (1 Cor. 12:21; Col. 1:18).
- VII. Greek tense approach—The aorist tense of πιστεύω (*pisteuo*) in Acts 16:31 means to believe once, for all time; the perfect tense of σώζω (*sozo*) in Eph. 2:8–9 means you are saved in the past with the result that you go on being saved forever.
- VIII. Inheritance approach—We have an inheritance which is incorruptible and unchanging waiting for us in heaven (Eph. 1:11; 1 Pet. 1:4–5).

- IX. Sovereignty approach—God’s decision to keep us (2 Pet. 3:9; Jude 24).
- X. Sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit—A guarantee that the name of every believer remains in the Book of Life forever (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 2 Tim. 2:19; cf., Rev. 20:13, 15).

## Appendix C

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### DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE

- I. The significance of the Hebrew word נָחַם (*nacham*): God is said “to change His mind” or “repent” about something in the context of the following passages: Genesis 6:6; Exodus 32:14; Judges 2:18; 1 Samuel 15:35; Psalm 90:13; Jeremiah 15:6; 42:10; Amos 7:3, 6.
- II. Since God is immutable and does not change, these expressions are anthropopathisms which are designed to explain divine acts of discipline in terms of human attitudes and expressions. Hence, anthropopathisms are used for the communication of divine attitude and policy in man’s language—the language of accommodation.
- III. The Greek verb μετανοέω (*metanoeo*), translated “repent,” means a complete change of mind and has no emotional connotation.
- IV. Since *metanoeo* and *nacham* are transitive verbs, they must have a subject and an object. Hence, the subject changes his mind about some object in the context.
- V. The salvation use of *metanoeo*: In each case, the unbeliever is the subject, while the Lord Jesus Christ is the object. In a few cases, God the Father is the object of repentance (change of mind) because He is the author of the divine plan, Operation

Grace (Matt. 12:41; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; 16:30–31; Acts 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Heb. 12:17; 2 Pet. 3:9). Note: The unbeliever does not repent toward sin, but toward the Savior.

VI. Salvation repentance is defined as a change of attitude toward Jesus Christ prior to or coterminous with salvation.

A. The unbeliever cannot understand spiritual phenomena (1 Cor. 2:14), so the Holy Spirit acts as a human spirit in the perception of the Gospel (John 16:8–11; 2 Tim. 2:25).

B. The Holy Spirit makes the Gospel both *γνώσις* (*gnosis*) and *ἐπίγνωσις* (*epignosis*)<sup>33</sup> in the soul of the unbeliever thereby facilitating his change of attitude.

VII. The verb, *metanoëo*, is also used for believers in phase two in the following manner:

A. Change of attitude toward human good (Heb. 6:1).

B. Change of attitude in reversionism<sup>34</sup> toward doctrine (2 Cor. 12:21; Rev. 2:5, 16, 22; 3:19).

VIII. The Greek verb, *μεταμέλομαι* (*metamelomai*),<sup>35</sup> is also translated “repent,” which is incorrect. This verb has an emotional connotation, indicating “regret” or “feeling sorry for something one has done.”

IX. Four uses of *metamelomai*:

A. Regret of a previous action (Matt. 21:29).

B. Regret of Judas Iscariot (Matt. 27:3). Such regret occurred under emotional revolt; regret has no spiritual connotation or advantage.

C. No regrets on God’s part regarding salvation and spiritual gifts (Rom. 11:29).

D. No regrets on the Father’s part regarding the appointment of Christ as High Priest (Heb. 7:21).

X. The noun, *μετάνοια* (*metanoia*), meaning “change of mind” is used in the following passages: Acts 20:21, Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:9–10; Hebrews 6:1, 6; 2 Peter 3:9.

33. Thieme, *Reversionism*, 3–7; *Witnessing* (1992), 19–21.

34. Reversionism is the way of life the believer chooses when he turns away from God’s plan, will, and purpose for his life and returns to a former belief, a former viewpoint, a former modus operandi. The reversionist has not lost his salvation but he is under the influence of Satan’s cosmic system (1 Tim. 4:1).

35. Thieme, *Rebound Revisited* (1995).

## *Appendix D*

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### DOCTRINE OF DIVINE DISCIPLINE

- I. Divine discipline is punitive action from God for the believer only (Heb. 12:5). The unbeliever receives divine judgment (John 3:18).
- II. God the Father is perfect; therefore, His discipline is perfect. Discipline is the sovereign right of God.
- III. Divine discipline is based on God's love for the believer (Heb. 12:6; Rev. 3:19).
- IV. Divine discipline, no matter how severe, does not entail loss of salvation (Gal. 3:26; 2 Tim. 2:12–13).
- V. Discipline can be removed or its severity diminished by rebound (1 Cor. 11:31).
  - A. Stages of discipline for reversionism:
    1. Warning stage (James 5:9; Rev. 3:20).
    2. Intensive stage (Ps. 38:1–14). Includes “strong delusion” (2 Thess. 2:11).
    3. Dying stage (1 John 5:16). Persistence in reversionism results in the sin unto death (Rev. 3:16).
  - B. The reversionistic believer manufactures his own discipline (Ps. 7:14–16). Since this is accomplished by his own negative volition, only his own positive volition toward doctrine can reverse the trend of intensive or dying discipline.

- VI. Discipline is related to the grace principle of turning cursing into blessing. If suffering continues after the believer rebounds, the purpose of that suffering is no longer punitive, but for blessing (Job 5:17–18; 2 Cor. 12:9–10).
- VII. All divine discipline is confined to time; there is no discipline for the believer in eternity (Rev. 21:4).
- VIII. Triple-compound discipline combines self-induced misery with divine discipline.
  - A. Mental attitude sins are subject to discipline.
  - B. Motivated by mental attitude sins, the sins of the tongue become the basis for further punitive action from God (Matt. 7:1).
  - C. God transfers to the maligner, gossip, or judge, whatever discipline, if any, that He would have given to the one accused of sinning—the judgmental believer gets a portion of his quarries punishment (Matt. 7:2).
  - D. Therefore the believer must never assume the divine prerogative of judging others.

## *Appendix E*

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# DOCTRINE OF DIVINE ESSENCE

- I. Principles.
  - A. God is One in essence: the Oneness of God or the glory of God refers to His essence (John 10:30).
  - B. The Trinity is One in essence, but three separate personalities.
  - C. All of the characteristics of divine essence are eternally resident in God, but not all are manifest at one time.
- II. Examples of how divine essence is manifest.
  - A. In salvation: love
  - B. In God's plan: omniscience and sovereignty
  - C. In God's will: sovereignty
  - D. In faithfulness: immutability and veracity
  - D. In God's revelation: veracity and omniscience
  - E. In judgment: righteousness and justice.
  - F. In resurrection: eternal life.
- III. The characteristics of the essence of God.
  - A. Love: the most important overall concept in the essence of God.
    - 1. God is eternal and unchangeable love. God's love never diminishes or increases (1 John 4:8b; 4:16).

2. God's love exists with or without a created object because God loves his own perfect character (Ps. 33:5).
  3. God's love needs no response, no reassurance, no demonstrations of faithfulness from its object.
  4. God's love can never be compromised because it operates on His righteousness, His absolute perfection, and His justice, His absolute fairness.
  5. The love of God is expressed in three categories:
    - a. Divine self-love: Each member of the Trinity loves His own righteousness and loves the other two members of the Godhead, who possess equivalent righteousness.
    - b. Divine personal love: God personally loves every believer because we possess the perfect, imputed righteousness of God (Rom. 8:39; cf., 2 Cor. 5:21).
    - c. Divine impersonal love: God loves every unbeliever with impersonal love (John 3:16) because His love depends on His own righteousness and justice, not the merit or attractiveness of the object.
- B. Sovereignty.
1. God is the Supreme Being of the universe (Deut. 4:39; 1 Sam. 2:6–8; 1 Chron. 29:11; 2 Chron. 20:6; Ps. 83:18; Isa. 45:5–6; Acts 17:24).
  2. King of heaven and earth (Ps. 47:2; 93:1a; Matt. 6:13; Heb. 8:1; Rev. 4:2–3).
  3. Eternal (Ps. 93:2), infinite (Ps. 8:1; Acts 5:39; Heb. 6:13), and self-determining (Job 9:12; Ps. 115:3; 135:6; Prov. 21:1; Dan. 4:35).
  4. Expression of divine volition (Isa. 46:10b; Eph. 1:5) resulting in the plan for humanity (Ps. 24; Heb. 6:17).
    - a. Salvation (John 1:13; Rom. 9:15–23).
    - b. Post-salvation life and provision (Eph. 4:4–13).
- C. Righteousness.
1. Absolute holiness and righteousness (Lev. 19:2b; 1 Sam. 2:2; Ps. 22:3; 47:8; 111:9; Isa. 6:3; John 17:11; Rev. 3:7; 4:8; 6:10).
  2. Goodness (Ps. 25:8; 34:8; 86:5; 119:68; Luke 18:19).
  3. Free from sin (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 1:5).

4. Perfect in His character and person (Deut. 32:4*b*; Ps. 7:9; 11:7; 97:6; 111:3; 119:137*a*; Jer. 23:6; John 17:25*a*; Rom. 1:17; 10:3; 1 John 2:29).
5. Righteous in all His attitudes, actions, and standards (Deut. 32:4*a*; 2 Sam. 22:31*a*; Ps. 119:137*b*; 145:17; Dan. 9:14; Rev. 19:2, 11).

#### D. Justice.

1. It is impossible for God to do anything unfair. God's judgments are perfect. Justice administers the penalty which righteousness demands (Deut. 32:4; 2 Chron. 19:7; Job 37:23; Ps. 19:9; 50:6; 58:11; 89:14; Isa. 45:21; Jer. 50:7; Rom. 3:26; Heb. 10:30–31; 12:23).
2. Divine justice is best exemplified in the plan of redemption:
  - a. The Lord Jesus Christ, through His vicarious, efficacious spiritual death (1 Pet. 2:24), transferred the guilt of all sinners (Rom. 5:12; 6:23) upon himself, and this satisfied the perfect justice of the Father.
  - b. God is now free to pardon and justify the sinner who accepts His saving grace (Rom. 3:21–28; 4:5; 8:1)
  - c. God is equally free to justly condemn all who reject Christ as Savior (John 3:18, 36; 5:28–30).
  - d. The basis of the unbeliever's indictment is his works, never his sins (Rev. 20:11–15).
3. Judgment belongs to Him who was judged on the cross for us (John 5:22; Heb. 9:27–28).
4. When the believer judges himself in rebound, there is no judgment from God (1 Cor. 11:31).

#### E. Eternal Life.

1. God is absolute existence, *Yahweh*, "the self-existent One who reveals Himself" (Ex. 3:14; John 8:58).
2. God has neither beginning (Gen. 1:1*a*; Isa. 43:13*a*; Col. 1:17), nor end (Deut. 32:40; 33:27; Job 36:26; Ps. 9:7; 90:2; 102:27; 135:13; Lam. 5:19; Hab. 3:6; John 1:1–4; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 5:11; Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13).
3. The believer who expresses faith alone in Christ alone receives eternal life (John 3:16; 10:28–29; 1 John 5:11) and eternal assurance (John 8:51; 14:1–3).

4. The unbeliever who rejects Christ receives eternal judgment (Matt. 25:46*a*; John 8:24).

#### F. Omniscience.

1. God knows all the knowable. His infinite knowledge is not subject or confined to time (1 Sam. 2:3; Job 26:6; 31:4; 34:21; 37:16; 42:2*b*; Ps. 139:1–6, 12; 147:4; Jer. 16:17; Ezek. 11:5; Matt. 10:29–30; Heb. 4:13).
2. He is infinite in wisdom and understanding (1 Sam. 16:7; Ps. 44:21; 147:5*b*; Prov. 3:19; 5:21; 17:3; Isa. 40:13–14; Jer. 17:10; 51:15; Nah. 1:7; Matt. 6:8; Rom. 8:27; 11:33; 1 John 3:20).
3. He knows the end from the beginning (foreknowledge) (Isa. 41:26; 42:9; 43:9; 46:10; Acts 2:23; 15:18; 1 Pet. 1:2*a*).
4. As God, the Lord Jesus Christ knew all things and all men (Matt. 9:4; John 2:24; 19:28; 21:17).
5. God has always known about every believer: (Job 23:10; Matt. 6:31–32; John 13:7; Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:10; James 1:5; 3:17).

#### G. Omnipresence.

1. God is ever-present, neither limited by time nor space—immanent and transcendent (Jer. 23:24; Acts 17:27).
2. The heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kings 8:27; Acts 17:24*b*).
3. Heaven is His throne, the earth His footstool (Deut. 4:39; Isa. 66:1*b*).
4. Man cannot escape the presence of God (Job 34:21–22; Ps. 139:7–10; Prov. 15:3).

#### H. Omnipotence.

1. God is all-powerful, limitless in ability, compatible with His holy character (Gen. 17:1; 18:14; Job 26:7; 42:2; Ps. 24:8; 93:1; 147:5*a*; Isa. 40:26; 50:2; Jer. 27:5; 32:27; Matt. 19:26; Mark 14:36*a*; Luke 1:37; Rev. 4:8).
2. Limitless in authority (Ps. 33:9; Rom. 13:1; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 19:6).
3. Manifestation of His power (2 Chron. 16:9; 25:8; Ps. 74:13).
4. Power of the Son (Matt. 9:6; 28:18; John 10:18; 17:2–3).

5. Application to believer: (1 Sam. 17:47; Ps. 27:1; Isa. 26:4; 40:29; Jer. 33:3; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 1:19; 3:20; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:5).

#### I. Immutability.

1. God is neither capable of nor susceptible to change (Ps. 102:26–27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:12).
2. He is absolute stability (Ps. 40:28; James 1:17).
3. His Word and His works are unchanging: Word (Ps. 119:89; 138:2*b*; 148:6; Isa. 40:8; 1 Pet. 1:25); works (Eccl. 3:14).
4. From His immutability stems His great faithfulness (Lam. 3:22–23).
  - a. Faithful to keep His promises (Num. 23:19; 1 Kings 8:56; 2 Cor. 1:20; Titus 1:2; Heb. 10:23; 11:11).
  - b. Faithful to forgive (1 John 1:9).
  - c. Faithful to keep us saved (2 Tim. 2:12–13).
  - d. Faithful to deliver in pressure (1 Cor. 10:13) and faithful in suffering (1 Pet. 4:19).
  - e. Faithful in His plan (1 Cor. 1:9).
  - f. Faithful in His provision (1 Thess. 5:24).
  - g. Faithful to stabilize the believer (2 Thess. 3:3).
5. Christ was faithful to the Father (Heb. 3:1–2; 13:8; Rev. 1:5; 19:11).

#### J. Veracity.

1. God is absolute Truth (Deut. 32:4*b*).
  - a. In His ways (Ps. 25:10; 86:15; Rev. 15:3).
  - b. In His works (Ps. 33:4; 111:7–8; Dan. 4:37).
  - c. In His Word (2 Sam. 7:28; 1 Kings 17:24; Ps. 19:9; 119:142, 151; 138:2; John 8:45; 17:17; 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 1:13).
2. The veracity of the Godhead:
  - a. The Father (Ps. 31:5; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 10:10*a*; John 3:33; 17:3; Rom. 3:4).
  - b. The Son (John 1:14; 8:32; 14:6; 1 John 5:20; Rev. 16:7; 19:11).
  - c. The Holy Spirit (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6).

## *Appendix F*

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### THE SEVEN DEATHS

- I. Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body:
  - A. When the believer dies, the Holy Spirit takes his soul and his human spirit and separates this immaterial part of man, which is the real person, from the body and enters him into the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).<sup>36</sup>
  - B. Physical death occurs when the electrical impulses of the brain can no longer be detected. Physical death cannot be gauged by the electrical impulses recorded from the heart.
  - C. Physical death is not a tragedy for the believer but a distinct glory (Phil. 1:21).
  - D. The unbeliever has no future with God. When he dies, his soul leaves his body and goes to a place called “Torments” or “Hades.” This is the temporary residence for the unbe-

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36. The human soul is that rational, immaterial aspect of mankind composed of self-consciousness, mentality, volition, and conscience.

The human spirit, created and imputed to every believer at the moment of salvation, is the home for eternal life. It is the immaterial part of mankind that enables man to have a relationship with God. The human spirit is designed by God to make spiritual phenomena or Bible doctrine understandable (1 Cor. 2:12).

- liever where he awaits the Last Judgment and condemnation to permanent residence in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).
- II. Spiritual death is separation from God in time—divine condemnation at the point of physical birth (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1).
    - A. Spiritual death was the result of Adam’s original sin when he lost his human spirit and fellowship with God. He was no longer able to comprehend spiritual phenomenon.
    - B. Spiritual death for all subsequent generations is the result of the imputation at birth of the penalty of Adam’s original sin to the genetically formed sin nature. Every person is born physically alive but spiritually dead. (Rom 5:12, 18; 6:23).
    - C. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in time takes care of the problem of spiritual death (1 Cor. 15:22; 2 Cor. 5:17).
  - III. The second death refers to the Last Judgment, or separation from God for all eternity (Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:12–15).
  - IV. Positional death refers to identification with Christ’s death. We are identified with Christ, not only in His death on the cross (retroactive positional truth), but also in His ascension and session at the right hand of the Father (current positional truth)<sup>37</sup> (Rom. 6:1–14; Col. 2:12; 3:3).
  - V. Temporal death is the believer’s separation from fellowship with God in time.
    - A. When the believer gets out of fellowship with God through sin—mental or overt—he is in status quo carnality, frequently referred to as “death” (Luke 15:24, 32; Rom. 8:6; Eph. 5:14; 1 Tim. 5:6; James 1:15; Rev. 3:1).
    - B. First John 1:9 is the means by which the believer who is out of fellowship may regain fellowship with God.
  - VI. Operational death is any form of Christian service apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit—human good produced by the carnal believer (1 Tim. 5:6; Heb. 6:1; James 2:26)
  - VII. Sexual death is the inability to procreate. It is mentioned twice in the Scripture, once in Romans 4:17–21, and again in Hebrews 11:11–12. Both occurrences have to do with Abraham.

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37. Thieme, *The Divine Outline of History* (1999), 87.

## Appendix G

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# THIRTY-NINE IRREVOCABLE ABSOLUTES AND ONE REVOCABLE ABSOLUTE

Compiled by Lewis Sperry Chafer  
Revised by R. B. Thieme, Jr.

## IRREVOCABLE ABSOLUTES

- I. The believer resides in the eternal plan of God and shares the destiny of Christ. He is:
  - A. foreknown (Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:2);
  - B. elected (Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; Titus 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:2);
  - C. predestined (Rom. 8:29–30; Eph. 1:5, 11);
  - D. chosen (Matt. 22:14; 1 Pet. 2:4);
  - E. called (1 Thess. 5:24).
- II. The believer is reconciled (removal of the barrier between man and God):<sup>38</sup>
  - A. by God (2 Cor. 5:18–19; Col. 1:20);
  - B. to God (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 2:14–17).

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38. Thieme, *The Barrier* (1993).

- III. The believer is redeemed, purchased from the slave market of sin<sup>39</sup> (Rom. 3:24; Col. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18).
- IV. The believer's condemnation, or eternal judgment, is removed (John 3:18; 5:24; Rom. 8:1).
- V. The substitutionary spiritual death of Christ on the cross paid the penalty for all sins (Rom. 4:25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24).
- VI. Every believer receives propitiation for sins; God is satisfied with the work of His Son (Rom. 3:25–26; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).
- VII. The believer is dead to old life, the old sin nature, but alive to God, retroactive positional truth. He is:
  - A. crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20);
  - B. dead with Christ (Rom. 6:8; Col. 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:24);
  - C. buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12);
  - D. raised with Christ, current positional truth (Rom. 6:4; 7:4; Col. 2:12; 3:1).
- VIII. The believer is free from the Mosaic Law. He is:
  - A. dead to the Law (Rom. 7:4);
  - B. delivered (Rom. 6:14; 7:6; 2 Cor. 3:6–11; Gal. 3:25).
- IX. The believer is regenerated (John 13:10; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5). He is:
  - A. born again (John 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:23);
  - B. a child of God (Rom. 8:16; Gal. 3:26);
  - C. a son of God (John 1:12; 2 Cor. 6:18; 1 John 3:2);
  - D. a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:10).
- X. The believer is adopted by God, placed as an adult son because of positional truth (Rom. 8:15, 23 at resurrection; Eph. 1:5).
- XI. The believer is made acceptable to God (Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5). He is:
  - A. made righteous by imputation (Rom. 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9);
  - B. sanctified positionally (1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11);
  - C. perfected forever (Heb. 10:14);
  - D. qualified for inheritance (Col. 1:12).
- XII. The believer is justified, declared righteous (Rom. 3:24; 5:1, 9; 8:30; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:7).

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39. Thieme, *Slave Market of Sin* (1994).

- XIII. The believer receives the unique availability of divine power (2 Pet. 1:3).
- XIV. The believer is guaranteed a heavenly citizenship based on reconciliation (Luke 10:20; Eph. 2:14–19; Phil. 3:20).
- XV. The believer is delivered from the kingdom of Satan (Col. 1:13a; 2:15).
- XVI. The believer is transferred into the kingdom of God (Col. 1:13b).
- XVII. The believer is now on a secure foundation (1 Cor. 3:11; 10:4; Eph. 2:20).
- XVIII. Every believer is a gift from God the Father to Christ (John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11–12, 24).
- XIX. The believer is positionally delivered from the power of the sin nature (Rom. 8:2; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11).
- XX. Every believer is appointed a priest unto God. We are:
- A. a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9);
  - B. a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6).
- XXI. The believer receives eternal security (John 10:28–29; Rom. 8:32, 38–39; Gal. 3:26; 2 Tim. 2:13).
- XXII. The believer is given access to God (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:16; 10:19–20).
- XXIII. Every believer is within the “much more” grace care of God (Rom. 5:9–10). We are:
- A. objects of His love (Eph. 2:4; 5:2);
  - B. objects of His grace;
    1. for salvation (Eph. 2:8–9);
    2. for keeping (Rom. 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:5);
    3. for service (John 17:18; Eph. 4:7);
    4. for instruction (Titus 2:12);
  - C. objects of His power (Eph. 1:19; Phil. 2:13);
  - D. objects of His faithfulness (Phil. 1:6; Heb. 13:5b);
  - E. objects of His peace (John 14:27);
  - F. objects of His consolation (2 Thess. 2:16);
  - G. objects of His intercession (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24).
- XXIV. The believer is the beneficiary of an inheritance as an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Eph. 1:14, 18; Col. 3:24; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:4).
- XXV. Every believer has a new position in Christ (Eph. 2:6). We are:
- A. partners with Christ in life (Col. 3:4);

- B. partners with Christ in service (1 Cor. 1:9);
  1. workers together with God (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:1);
  2. servants of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6);
  3. ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20);
  4. living epistles (2 Cor. 3:3);
  5. servants of God (2 Cor. 6:4).
- XXVI. Believers are recipients of eternal life (John 3:15; 10:28; 20:31; 1 John 5:11–12).
- XXVII. The believer is created a new spiritual species (2 Cor. 5:17).
- XXVIII. The believer is a light in the Lord, part of the angelic conflict<sup>40</sup> (Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:4–5).
- XXIX. The believer is united with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are:
  - A. in God (1 Thess. 1:1; cf., “God in you,” Eph. 4:6);
  - B. in Christ (John 14:20; cf., “Christ in you,” Col. 1:27);
    1. a member in His Body (1 Cor. 12:13);
    2. a branch in the Vine (John 15:5);
    3. a stone in the Building (Eph. 2:21–22; 1 Pet. 2:5);
    4. a sheep in the Flock (John 10:27–29);
    5. a portion of His Bride (Eph. 5:25–27; Rev. 19:6–8; 21:9);
    6. a priest of the kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2:9);
  - C. in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9; “the Spirit in you”).
- XXX. Every believer is the recipient of the ministries of the Holy Spirit. He is:
  - A. born of the Spirit (John 3:5–8);
  - B. baptized with the Spirit (Acts 1:5; 1 Cor. 12:13);
  - C. indwelt by the Spirit (John 7:39; Rom. 5:5; 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:24);
  - D. sealed by the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 4:30);
  - E. given spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:11, 27–31; 13:1–2).
- XXXI. The believer is glorified (Rom. 8:30).
- XXXII. The believer is complete in Christ (Col. 2:10).
- XXXIII. The believer is possessor of every spiritual blessing granted in eternity past (Eph. 1:3).
- XXXIV. The believer receives a human spirit along with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 7:13; 1 Thess. 5:23).

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40. Thieme, *Anti-Semitism* (1991), 11–13, 94–99, 101–02, 110–13.

- XXXV. The believer has all sins and transgressions blotted out<sup>41</sup> (Isa. 43:25; 44:22).
- XXXVI. The believer is the recipient of efficacious grace (Eph. 1:13).
- XXXVII. The believer is guaranteed a resurrection body forever (1 Cor. 15:40–54).
- XXXVIII. The believer is the beneficiary of unlimited atonement (2 Cor. 5:14–15, 19; 1 Tim. 2:6; 4:10; Titus 2:11; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 2:2).
- XXXIX. The believer has equal privilege and equal opportunity under election and predestination (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 3:16–19).

## REVOCABLE ABSOLUTE

- XL. The believer is filled with the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation (Gal. 3:3).

The filling of the Holy Spirit received at salvation is revoked when the believer sins. The filling of the Holy Spirit is recovered when the believer rebounds.

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41. Thieme, *Reversionism*.

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