

**Systematic Theology for the Local Church**  
**#53—Pneumatology—Part VII<sup>1</sup>**  
**The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation Part IV: Sealing**  
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The next study will be on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Helpful for that study is Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 67-73. Helpful for the present study is Reymond, pp. 762-67, House, Section 37, Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 80-82.

God's great purpose in salvation is to provide for the forgiveness of some sinners and bring them into his presence. In eternity past he unconditionally selected some for salvation (Eph. 1:4: "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world"). Jesus' death on the Cross constituted substitutionary purchase (1 Pet. 1:18: "you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers") and wrath-removal (propitiation; Rom. 3:25: "God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement") for those individuals, and no others (Jn. 10:15: "I lay down my life for the sheep."). Since they have actually been the recipients of such substitutionary work, they are certain to benefit from it (Jn. 6:39: "And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me"). Because they are corrupted by sin (Eph. 2:1: "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins") and so hate him and refuse to turn to him (Rom. 3:10-11: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God."), God irresistibly calls them in space and time to Christ (Rom. 9:24: "even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles"), changing them by regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3: "In his great mercy he has given us new birth") so they can exercise faith, which itself is a gift of God (Phil. 1:29: "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him"). It is absolutely true that an elect sinner has no choice about coming to Christ: God will bring it to pass. His coming to know Christ and all that follows from that—including bringing him into heaven itself—has been pre-ordained and cannot be altered.

Relevant to this study are two distortions of this plan:

1) Salvation is available for all. Under this view God makes all sinners savable, providing merit for them through the Cross and then letting them decide if they want it or not. This is Arminianism and I reject this categorically. The Bible teaches that God chose some sinners in eternity past to enjoy him in this life and in eternity future, and his plan for this will not be thwarted.

2) A saved person can lose his salvation. Another great error associated with this plan is the view that even though a person is genuinely saved he might sin in such a way that God would reject him and take away his salvation, as if his salvation were an entity, a package that moves between him and God and which God gives him but later may decide to take back. This view is ultimately a rejection of God's grace and a subtle injection of human merit and works into the plan of salvation. I reject it categorically. Salvation is not a package of benefits that we get. It is rather the outworking of the eternal plan of the holy Trinity that determines to bring the elect into the presence of God. To assert that a person can lose salvation, and perhaps gain it again, is to show misunderstanding of what God has done in placing that person into the Cross-work of Christ

Thus, the Bible teaches *perseverance of the saints*, a term preferable to 'eternal security.' Perseverance is a biblical doctrine with far-reaching significance. It says that those who have truly believed will, by the grace of God, persevere in the state of salvation through this life, with entrance into the presence of God. All those

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who have placed genuine faith in Christ will surely be brought by God into His presence; none will be or can be lost.

Perseverance of the saints emphasizes the fact that God's plan is to save the elect and make sure that they reach his presence to enjoy him eternally. The term security has been interpreted by some to suggest that security is an entity that is given by God to people who get saved, as if it were something added to salvation. Indeed, the person who rejects the perseverance of the saints believes that: a person becomes saved but may lose his salvation. But the Bible teaches that a person who is saved is a person who will continue (persevere) in the faith, because *by definition* God's plan of salvation includes bringing people into his presence.

But does the NT describe situations where people fail to reach heaven? Yes, it does. This is taught at length in Hebrews, where failure to reach heaven, which is the presence of God, is presented not as an issue of losing salvation but as an issue of not being genuine in the faith. Those that fall short are those that had information and saw the working of God in others but failed to exercise saving faith.

Sometimes the NT speaks of the issue (but does not allow the possibility) of not reaching heaven as the result of threats—things that could cause a person to be unsaved after being saved. These threats are spiritual in nature and are *always presented as external* to the person. If he is a true believer there is *nothing inside him* that could break his spiritual link to God. And, in fact, Paul tells us in Rom. 8:33ff. that the external threats, though real and powerful, cannot sever the believer from life with God. Paul raises the issue of failure to reach heaven but denies its validity in the same breath:

<sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Notice also Jn. 10:27, where Jesus, too, teaches that the threats are external to the believer and cannot succeed:

<sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all ; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

Here the external threats fail to dislodge the believer from the grip of (both!) the Father and Son because of their determination to bring the elect into his presence through the sacrifice of the Son for those very individuals.

One of the ways that God accomplishes his plan of unfailingly bringing a sinner through this life and into his presence is by placing the Spirit in a believer, with resultant permanent indwelling. We will consider the indwelling of the Spirit in general in the next study. This presence of the Spirit in connection with perseverance is called his sealing work, and is taught using words such as seal and pledge. It is both a testimony to the believer of his salvation and therefore his ultimate destination as well as a spiritual means of bringing the believer through this life and into heaven.

As we might expect, along with the perseverance of the saints that it helps to bring about, the doctrine of the sealing work of the Spirit has been distorted. Here are some of these errors:

- 1) Some say that sealing was present in the OT. However, there are no statements to this effect anywhere in the Bible.
- 2) Some say that sealing is the same thing as filling. We will see in a future study that filling is intermittent and has different purposes from sealing.
- 3) Some say that sealing is the same as indwelling. Actually indwelling is the means for sealing.
- 4) Some say that sealing can be obtained after salvation. We will treat this error during in this study.
- 5) Some say that sealing can be perceived. Here is a quote describing this<sup>2</sup>:

Since He is our seal, how can we know that we are saved? We can know by knowing the work and presence of the Spirit in our life. If you have known the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, then you have known the seal that guarantees your salvation.

There is nothing in the Bible that indicates that sealing can be perceived. The Christian should accept by faith the New Testament's teaching that God causes it to happen at salvation and that the Spirit is in him if he has believed. Seeking sealing is meaningless.

- 6) Because of the terrible error of thinking that a believer can become unsaved, some explicitly state that a sealed believer can be lost.

Paul wanted Christians, who were sealed with the Holy Spirit, to know that “No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” In other words, he wanted them to know that the seal would not prevent those sins from nullifying their inheritance of the kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

We will show in this study the error of this view. We will carefully present the details of the three passages that directly teach sealing, drawing conclusions as we go and finally summarizing with a definition.

## 1. 2 Corinthians 1:22

<sup>21</sup> Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, <sup>22</sup> set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

<sup>21</sup> ὁ δὲ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς σὺν ὑμῖν εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ χρίσας ἡμᾶς θεός, <sup>22</sup> ὁ καὶ σφραγισάμενος ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς τὸν ἄρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν.

### a. The meaning of *arrabōna*

The word translated ‘deposit’ and ‘guaranteeing’ (ἄρραβῶνα; *arrabōna*) can also be understood as ‘pledge’ or ‘earnest’ (or ‘earnest money’). Some have interpreted this as denoting what we know today as a down payment. Anthony Hoekema has commented on this<sup>4</sup>:

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.open.org/mrdsnts/d03150.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/seal.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 62.

One could perhaps render the word ‘down payment’ or ‘first installment,’ if it were not for the fact that, in today’s world, a down payment does not guarantee the payment of the entire sum due. Hence the word *arrabōn* can better be translated pledge or guarantee.

The English Standard Version has a good translation:

who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

The NIV has chosen to translate *arrabōna* with two English words—‘a deposit, guaranteeing,’ which is also acceptable. It seems to me that the translators were trying to capture the two semantic pieces in *arrabōna* here: 1) the fact that the Spirit is a deposit and 2) the effect of the deposit.

b. The initiator and means of sealing

This text tells us that it is God who does the sealing. But notice that the text also mentions Christ and the Spirit. So we have to conclude that ‘God’ here is the Father, and it is the Father who accomplishes the sealing through placing the Spirit in the believer. The presence of the Spirit in the believer is his indwelling ministry. The initiation of the indwelling of the Spirit is therefore the initiation of the sealing.

c. The relation between ‘Spirit’ and *arrabōn*

Translating *arrabōna* as ‘earnest,’ the AV has:

Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

This translation raises the question of the relationship of ‘earnest’ and ‘Spirit,’ since the phrase ‘earnest of the Spirit’ can be understood in two ways:

1. the earnest that consists of the Spirit
2. the earnest that comes from the Spirit (as if the earnest and Spirit are two different things)

We cannot solve this translation/interpretation problem until we look at the next passage.

d. The relation between sealing and guaranteeing

This text does not tell us about the relationship between the sealing and the guaranteeing, except to suggest that they are parallel. The text says literally ‘who sealed us and gave us the guarantee of the Spirit.’ There is no intrinsic connection here. We will see that the next passages tell us more.

## 2. Ephesians 1:13-14

<sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

<sup>13</sup> Ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ, <sup>14</sup> ὁ ἔστιν ἀρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν, εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως, εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.

a. The relation between ‘Spirit’ and *arrabōn*

This text tells us that the Spirit himself *is* the guarantee. This enables us to solve the translation/interpretation problem in 2 Cor. 1:22, where we saw the possibility of two ways of understanding the relation between the Spirit and the earnest:

1. the guarantee that consists of the Spirit
2. the guarantee that comes from the Spirit

Since Eph. 1:14 says that the Spirit is the guarantee, 2 Cor. 1:22 should be understood as speaking of a ‘guarantee that *consists of* the Spirit,’ not a ‘guarantee that *comes from* the Spirit.’ The NIV of 2 Cor. 1:22 says the Spirit has the *role* of a deposit (‘as a deposit’) that guarantees what is to come, which I find acceptable.

#### b. The relation between the sealing and the Spirit

The NIV translates one word (ἐσφραγίσθητε; *esphragisthēte*) as ‘you were marked in him with a seal,’ adding ‘the promised Holy Spirit’:

Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

However, this could be understood three ways:

Having believed, you were sealed in him *by means of* or *with* or *in* the promised Holy Spirit

We saw in 2 Cor. 1:22 that the Father does the sealing. This passage says that he seals ‘by means of’ or ‘with’ or ‘in’ the Holy Spirit. But which is it? Clearly the Spirit is the instrument that the Father uses, but what does this mean for the believer? Does it mean that God uses the Spirit as an external instrument to do something to the believer so that he gets sealed? Does it mean that the believer is given the Spirit (‘sealed with’) or placed ‘in’ the Spirit?

Using information from Eph. 1:13-14 we concluded that in 2 Cor. 1:22 the indwelling Spirit constitutes the guarantee of what is to come. But we did not see an intrinsic connection between sealing and the guarantee. This passage helps us to put them together. Here are the relationships we see in these two passages:

2 Cor. 1:22:

- The Father seals.
- The Father puts the Spirit in the heart.
- The guarantee consists of the Spirit.

Eph. 1: 13-14

- The Spirit is the guarantee (vv. 13 and 14).
- Sealing is “by means of” or “in” the Spirit (v. 13)—this tells how the Father seals.

We have to conclude that the way or means by which the Father seals is by placing the Spirit in the believer. The presence of the Spirit is the instrument of the sealing. It is not the case that God does something with the Spirit to make the believer sealed, as if there is something coming from outside the believer. Nor is it that the Father puts the believer ‘in’ the Spirit. The means of sealing is the internal presence of the Spirit. It is not, as some say, a seal plus the Spirit. The Spirit is the seal.

#### c. The concept of sealing

The use of a seal in the ancient world provided the following information about the sealed object:

- The intended destination—the seal was to be broken only by the correct recipient
- The control or ownership of the sender
- Security for the object—unintended recipients would think about the consequences of opening something not intended for them.

This use of seals has modern equivalents. Charles Ryrie comments on this<sup>5</sup>:

Registered mail furnishes a good example of the security concept in sealing. When registering a piece of mail, it not only has to be sealed carefully but then the post office stamps it a number of times across the edges of the seal to be able to detect any tampering with that seal. Only two people can legitimately break the seal, the recipient or the sender (if it is delivered back to him). In the case of believers, God is the Sender and God is the Recipient, and God is the One who does the sealing. So only God can break the seal and he has promised not to do so until the day of redemption.

When I was a student in theological seminary, I worked one summer for a furniture company, delivering chairs and tables and unloading trucks and boxcars. I recall one particularly difficult job that began when the crew was told early one hot Dallas morning that we were all to pile into the company trucks and drive to a railroad siding. Little did I know the miserable labor that lay ahead of me. Indeed, the day was long and hot, as we removed box after box of furniture from a boxcar that had been sitting for days in the intense sun. But along with the hard work I remember what happened when we approached the boxcar. The foreman of the crew approached the door with a large pair of wire cutters and proceeded to cut through a heavy band that had been strapped around the door handle—a seal applied at the factory. We knew that, if that seal was intact, no one had tampered with the contents of the railroad car, and we were getting exactly what our store had purchased.

Current examples of this kind only provide imperfect analogies, since the Father's protection of the believer by the indwelling of the Spirit is perfect and no one can remove the seal or prevent the sealed object from reaching its destination.

d. The time of the start of the sealing

Romans 8:9 teaches that all believers possess the Holy Spirit:

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

Similar is Rom. 5:5:

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

If the presence of the Spirit—his indwelling—is the basis for sealing, and when a person is saved they receive the Spirit, then sealing must occur at the point of salvation.

But Eph. 1:13 has been interpreted by some to teach that sealing occurs at some point *after* salvation. The text reads:

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<sup>5</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1987), 360.

Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

‘Having believed’ is a translation of a Greek participle that could also be rendered ‘when you believed,’ or ‘after you believed’ or even ‘because you believed.’ The appropriate translation, which also provides an interpretation, has to be decided by something other than the participle itself.

If the participle is taken to be equivalent to English ‘after,’ then we would conclude that a person could exercise faith, come under the cross-work of Christ, but not yet not be sealed. Since the presence of the Spirit provides sealing, he would not even have the Spirit. But this would be inconsistent with Rom. 8:9. A person without the Spirit is unsaved. So the participle has to be translated ‘having believed’ or, better, ‘when you believed.’

### 3. Eph. 4:30

<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

<sup>30</sup>καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως.

#### a. The goal and duration of the sealing

Paul says in this verse that the goal of sealing is to bring us to the day of redemption. While Jesus redeemed (purchased) the elect on the Cross, entrance into heaven constitutes the completion of God’s acquisition. Ephesians 1:14 expresses the same truth, adding the concept of the guarantee. Notice that God will be taking into heaven what at the present belongs to him already:

who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

The concept of sealing includes the part/whole relationship. The presence of the Spirit in the believer during this life is a taste of the fullness of seeing the Lord Jesus Christ and enjoying him without the presence of sin. And certainly the joy that we can know now from the presence of the Spirit cannot be compared in depth and purity with the joy we will know in the future.

Sealing is an act of God that provides for a new position before him. It has the qualities of a covenant in that God promises to do something and commits to carrying it out. His act of placing the Holy Spirit in the believer is the basis for the covenant and its fulfillment. This is a positional truth. We do not bring about the sealing of the Spirit nor can we change it in any way. Our practice flows from appreciation and understanding of the revealed truth about the accomplished fact of sealing. This provides assurance that the believer cannot fail to reach his destination.

By this point in our study the question of the duration of sealing is settled. We have already seen many things that show that sealing lasts from the moment of salvation to the moment of the believer’s entrance into glory. The basis of the seal is the permanent indwelling of the Spirit, the nature of the seal as a guarantee and the ultimate goal of God’s complete acquisition of the one he has redeemed—all of these show that the sealing of the Spirit provides for the perseverance of the saints.

#### b. The implications of sealing for the Christian life

Theology always has practical outcomes. In 2 Cor. 1 we see that it brings confidence in God’s purposes. Notice the wider context of 2 Cor. 1:22:

<sup>18</sup> But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” <sup>19</sup> For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” <sup>20</sup> For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. <sup>21</sup> Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, <sup>22</sup> set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Ephesians 1:14 teaches that sealing should lead to praise to God for his grace (“to the praise of his glory”) and Eph. 4:30 cautions against grieving the indwelling Spirit (“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God”).

#### **4. Summary and definition**

We are now in a position to put together everything we have seen in a definition:

Sealing is a guarantee that the believer will persevere in Christ all the way to entrance into heaven, when God completes his work of purchasing the individual. It begins at the moment of salvation when the Father places the Holy Spirit in the believer for permanent indwelling. It is unseen and unfelt and should result in praise and obedience to the Spirit.



## **Study questions**

1. What is the difference between perseverance of the saints and security of the believer?
2. Why is it that salvation is not something that can be 'taken away' from a person?
3. How do we know that sealing is not experiential?
4. In what ways is the Spirit involved in the sealing? (How is this a doctrine about him?)
5. How do we determine the duration of the sealing?
6. How do we know that sealing cannot stop?

## Running compilation of key definitions

1. Systematic theology: The organized presentation of all that the Bible teaches about God and His works.
2. Exegesis: The actual practice of studying or interpreting a document or other message to determine its meaning.
3. Context: Context in a document or utterance is the surroundings of a portion of a word, a word, or a group of words.
4. Bibliology: The doctrinal study of the nature of the Bible.
5. Biblical authority: The quality inherent in Scripture by virtue of which human beings are completely answerable to its content.
6. Revelation: The information about Himself given by God to human beings.
7. General revelation: God's disclosure of Himself, available directly to everyone, given through means other than dreams, visions, direct words and Christ Himself.
8. Special revelation: The disclosure of information from God that is not available directly to all human beings.
9. Inspiration: A term applied to the Bible denoting that it is the product of God's creative activity, figuratively breathed out from Him (2 Tim. 3:16); applies to the process of recording Scripture, not specifically to the people involved; actually, *expiration* would be a better term to reflect the concept of 2 Tim. 3:16; the result is *inerrancy*.
10. Textual criticism: The science and art of attempting to discover the original text of a literary work for which the original document does not exist. It is especially important for biblical studies, and the foundational endeavor to all subsequent investigation of the Scriptures.
11. Canon: Transliterated from a Greek Word meaning "standard"; as used of the Bible, it refers to books authenticated as possessing divine origin and therefore authoritative; the Jewish canon consists of thirty-nine books, the Protestant of sixty-six and the Catholic of eighty (including apocryphal books).
12. Inerrancy is a term applied to the Bible, although not specifically found in it; it denotes that the Bible, as originally written, possessed no humanly induced deviations from the message God intended to be recorded and that it is true in every respect; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:19.
13. Infallibility: Although some assert that this term has a different meaning from inerrancy, the two terms are, for purposes of biblical study, synonymous; the Bible is infallible because inerrant, and inerrant because infallible.
14. Illumination is the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God that imparts understanding of the message of Scripture to the believer; not to be confused with inspiration, which in the Bible is used of the work of God in giving Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16); 1 Jn. 2:20; Jn. 16:13.
15. Spirituality: God is not physical, but immaterial, incorporeal, invisible and alive.
16. Self-existence/Aseity: God exists independently of anything else. He is self-existent.
17. Immensity: God is infinite in relation to space.
18. Eternality: God is infinite with regard to time.
19. Simplicity: God is not a plurality and cannot be looked at as divisible into parts.
20. Pure actuality: There is nothing about God that is potential. He is not unfinished in any way.
21. Necessity: God is uncaused and exists because he must exist.
22. Immutability: God is unchanging and unchangeable.
23. Impassibility: God is incapable of being changed or disturbed by what he experiences and is incapable of suffering.
24. Transcendence: God and the world are distinct; he is not part of the world, and the world is not part of him.
25. Immanence: God is present in the world.
26. Infinity: There are no limits to God's person and his perfections.
27. Omnipotence: God can do whatever he wills.
28. Omniscience: God knows everything there is to know.
29. Omnipresence: God is present everywhere in his creation

30. Holiness: God is morally pure and separated from all moral evil and sin.
31. Goodness: A quality that describes or includes his love, benevolence, mercy and grace
32. Truth: God's person, actions, knowledge and revelations correspond to reality
33. Love: God's continual communication of himself to his creatures.
34. Benevolence: God's goodness toward his creatures.
35. Mercy: God's goodness toward those who are helpless.
36. Grace: God's goodness toward sinners.
37. Glory: The greatness of God's perfections.
38. Trinity: There is only one true God, existing as a single Being comprised of three Persons who are equal in every way, yet distinct in their tasks and relations to humanity.
39. God's decree: The decree of God is his plan for the universe that includes all things and is certain to come to pass.
40. Providence: God's care for and upholding of his creation.
41. Sovereignty: God's control over his universe.
42. Christology: The study of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
43. Incarnation: The joining of deity and humanity in one person forever. The word is based on the Latin word for flesh: the Lord Jesus Christ is God joined with human flesh.
44. Pre-existence: Used of the Son, it means that he existed before Bethlehem.
45. Theophany: An appearance of God.
46. Christophany: An appearance of Christ.
47. Priesthood: The system that God established to remedy the problem of alienation between a holy God and sinful human beings.
48. Son of God: A name for Jesus that describes his deity and his approval by the Father at the resurrection.
49. Son of Man: A messianic name for Jesus that emphasizes his humanity backed by deity and his role of taking humans to God through suffering and humiliation.
50. Messiah: A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning 'anointed one'; used of the expected national deliverer of Israel; the linguistic equivalent of Greek *christos*, 'Christ'.
51. Efficacious grace: Efficacious grace is the working of God in an individual that cannot be thwarted and that leads that person to faith in Christ. It is also described as effective calling and irresistible grace.
52. Regeneration: Regeneration is the unseen and unfelt work of the Holy Spirit that overcomes depravity and brings spiritual life and the capacity to please God and exercise faith.
53. Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a "baptism," after salvation.
54. Sealing is a guarantee that the believer will persevere in Christ all the way to entrance into heaven, when God completes his work of purchasing the individual. It begins at the moment of salvation when the Father places the Holy Spirit in the believer for permanent indwelling. It is unseen and unfelt and should result in praise and obedience to the Spirit.