



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Joy!

Showcasing all humanity finished in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

There is still much light to break forth from the Scriptures. A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

Volume 46
Issue 1126

God Has Planned Everything

Bible Student's Courses

[Click here to listen to this article](#)

Course 1: God / Unit 8: The Logos / Lesson 2: God has Planned Everything

by — Mark D. Vogt

All is out of Him (Romans 11:36)

The idea that God has planned everything and has done all of this designing *before the disruption of the world* is offensive to a lot of believers. They assume that this teaching must be apostasy, and those that teach these things are themselves apostate since this idea attacks the traditional understanding of man's "free will."



From Jehovah are the steps of a man, they have been prepared ... (YLT).

If it was true that man has "free will," what are the implications? The most glaring result would be that the individual would labor under the impression that they have become their own sort of deity or god, that they are the "captain of their own ship," and that they control, to a great extent, their own destiny.

The common phrase "God is my co-pilot" indicated this idea: that God is here to assist individuals in their pursuits. They envision themselves planning and manipulating the factors affecting their own lives in order to lessen "chance" impinging on their lives.

Little do most people know that God has written out the story of each and every life, and that we are all following His script precisely in order to bring about His desired end.

Psalms 139:16 says,

Your eyes saw my embryo, and my days, all of them were written on your scroll; the days, they were formed when there was not one of them (CV).

Psalms 37:23 declares:

So, not only were David's days written on God's scroll, but every human has his or her days written down before they were born. God decided where, during what time in history, to what parents, what race one would be born; what sex, male or female, and any number of factors which determine everything about the individual (see Romans 9:19-23).

God did all of this because HISTORY is *His* Story, and each of our stories are a part of His Story. We are all individual participants in this Divine Production, and God has written all of our individual parts for us, directs us, and produces each narrative which at the present time is being played out on the planet.

Does anyone really think that God would allow one person, let alone billions, to flail about on this Earth, each one trying to carve out their own destiny? No, the truth is found in Proverbs 16:9. ([see PLAN, page 9437](#))

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 46, No. 1126 – June 29, 2026

Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding joy (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3-4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);

- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Ephesians 2:6);
 - adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of saints intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

We're just presenters, not persuaders. – Steve Martin

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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Jesus: The Genuine Man—Rethinking the Doctrine of Pre-existence

Traditional doctrine asserts an eternal pre-existence. This infographic presents biblical arguments for a human Messiah whose existence began at conception and whose glory is earned through faithful human life.

SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF A BEGINNING



The "Genesis" of Jesus

Matthew 1:1 uses the Greek word *genesis* to define Jesus' literal origin and beginning.



Generated at Conception

Luke 1:35 uses future-tense language for Jesus' beginning, describing him as "being generated" in Mary.



God the Sole Creator

Isaiah 44:24 and 45:12 declare that Yahweh stretched out the heavens alone, without a co-creator.

CONCEPT COMPARISON

TRADITIONAL PRE-EXISTENCE



ORIGIN:
Eternity Past



FAITH:
Meaningless
(Divine Certainty)



EXAMPLE:
Unreliable
(God disguised)

SCRIPTURAL HUMANITY



ORIGIN:
Conception
in the Womb



FAITH:
Essential
(Real Trust in God)



EXAMPLE:
Prototype
(Trailblazer for Man)

REINTERPRETING TRADITIONAL "PROOF-TEXTS"



"Firstborn" Denotes Rank, Not Age

In Hebrew thought, "firstborn" refers to supreme status and authority rather than chronological birth order.



The Logos as God's Blueprint

The "Logos" in John 1 is God's plan or purpose embodied in flesh, not a person.

Exaltation is a Earned Reward

Philippians 2 shows Jesus was highly exalted as a reward for his human obedience, not restored.





Tidbits of Truth #89

“Tidbits” is a column dedicated to short comments, thoughts, studies and excerpts.

I suppose that all who do biblical research wish at times that they could set forth fragmentary and unfinished ideas in printed form without people thinking that a final and definitive conclusion has now been chiseled into imperishable granite which shall stand forever as the final word on the subject dealt with. Any such conclusion will be far from correct. — Otis Sellers (1901-1992)

“IN CHRIST” – DISPENSATIONALLY AND REDEMPTIVELY

Care must be taken to distinguish between being “*in Christ*” dispensationally and redemptively.

Dispensationally being “*in Christ*” is a *positional calling* – one that is Super-Celestial, and all-encompassing. Members of the One Body of the Secret Administration have their calling prominently “*before the Disruption of the World*” (Ephesians 1:4).

Redemptively, all are “*in Christ*,” *universally reconciled*. And yet, the *calling* of the One Body will be the instrumental operation in their realization and experience of this marvelous reconciliation.

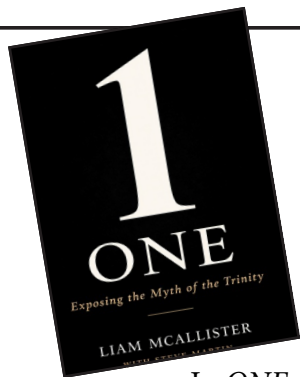
It should also be noted that the past Kingdom believers from among Israel also have a calling “*in Christ*,” yet it is dispensationally “*from the Disruption of the World*” (Matthew 13:35; 25:34) and involves the leading of the Earth’s future inhabitants into full realization of their reconciliation experience.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“WRETCHED MAN”

Romans 7:24

The Greek word commonly translated “*wretched*” is *ταλαίπωρος* (*talaipōros*, G5005) – it’s Greek elements are WEIGHT-CALLOUSED.



ONE: Exposing the Myth of the Trinity

by — Liam McAllister, with Steve Martin

The Trinity: Truth or Tradition?

For centuries, one idea has stood at the center of Christian theology: The Trinity. But what if it isn’t actually found in Scripture?

In *ONE: Exposing the Myth of the Trinity*, Liam McAllister – presented with Steve Martin – cuts through tradition and theological complexity to return to a simple question: What does the Bible actually say?

What emerges is clear and consistent – God is one. Not a mystery to be explained away, but a truth plainly revealed. This is not an attack on faith. It’s a call back to it.

If you’ve ever felt the tension between tradition and the text, if you’ve longed for clarity instead of confusion, this book will challenge what you’ve been taught and invite you into something simpler, clearer, and more freeing.

“Wretched” could be an adequate translation, since the definition of “wretch” is “a person who experiences something unpleasant” (*Cambridge*), or “miserable person” (*Merriam-Webster*).

But sadly, “wretched” also carries an alternative meaning of “wicked” (*Webster’s* 1913), “vile or contemptible” (*Wordsmyth*), and “extremely or deplorably bad” (*Merriam-Webster*).

Growing up in Evangelical Christianity, it is this latter definition that many of us understood as the definition of *talaipōros* in Romans 7:24, yet this is inconsistent with the Greek elements – WEIGHT-CALLOUSED – which are neither moral nor immoral.

Therefore, more suitable alternative translations of “wretched man” would be:

<i>burdened man</i>	<i>toil-strained man</i>
<i>troublesome man</i>	<i>stress-hardened man</i>
<i>trail-exhausted man</i>	<i>difficulty-ridden man</i>
<i>weight-enduring man</i>	<i>suffering-laden man</i>

It is interesting how the word “unhappy” works its way into the meaning of *talaipōro* and “wretched” in some sources.

The following translations actually do translate it as “unhappy” (*Wycliffe, Amplified, Bible in Basic English, Douay-Rheims, Good News*).

Yet, “unhappy” is actually only a possible *response* to WEIGHT-CALLOUSEDNESS. And with the realization of faith – the same WEIGHT-CALLOUSEDNESS – can become, as with Paul, a response of “joy.”

A wretched [WEIGHT-CALLOUSED] man am I!

*What will rescue me out of this body of death?
Grace [JOY]! (CV)*

And with the realization of faith, Paul goes from “unhappy” to “joy”! ALL with the same callouses in place.

It is the WEIGHT of circumstances and environment that “CALLOUSES” us, but even with the “WEIGHT-CALLOUSES” still in place, we can experience the freedom of joy.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

WINNING AN APOLOGETICS ARGUMENT

The late Dr. J. Vernon McGee (1904-1988) of “Thru the Bible” radio program fame said:

When I was a young preacher, I tried to learn as much as I could and have all the answers so I could *best* any man in a theological argument. But I soon learned, when you do this you make an enemy of that man you *bested* in apologetics.¹

So I decided to just teach what Christ accomplished on the cross so they would know God loves them.

— Submitted by James Fine **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: [“In Christ” – *Dispensationally and Redemptively*]; In Christ; [“Wretched Man” – *Romans 7:24*]; Wretched; Romans 7:24; *Talaipōros*; G5005 [Winning an Apologetics Argument]; Arguments; McGee, J. Vernon

1. Apologetics: The branch of theology that is concerned with defending or proving the truth of Christian doctrines.



No Equals! Reasons Why Our Heavenly Father has No Equals or Co-Equals & Why “the Holy Spirit” Is Not a “Person” Separate from the Only True God, the Father

A compilation of two easy to understand titles exposing the error of the Trinity teaching. 56 pages.

Ithaka

by — C.P. Cavafy

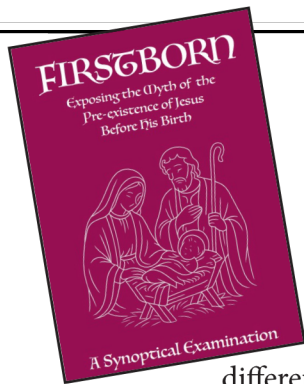
[Note: This is one of my favorite poems of all time. He uses Odysseus's journey home as a comparison to life – a reminder that it's not about the destination so much as the journey. – Bob Evelyn]

As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
angry Poseidon—don't be afraid of them:
you'll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.
Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
wild Poseidon—you won't encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope your road is a long one.
May there be many summer mornings when,
with what pleasure, what joy,

you enter harbors you're seeing for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind—
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to learn and go on learning from their scholars.

Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you're destined for.
But don't hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you're old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you've gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich. **BSN**



Firstborn: Exposing the Myth of Pre-existence (A Synoptical Examination)

Steve Martin, compilation editor

Did Jesus exist before Bethlehem – or did His story truly begin in Mary's womb?

For centuries, Christianity has assumed that Jesus lived eternally in heaven before becoming human. That belief is rarely questioned. But what if Scripture tells a different story?

In *Firstborn: Exposing the Myth of Pre-existence*, Steve Martin invites readers to take a fresh, careful look at the Bible's testimony about Jesus' origin. Examining the Gospels, Paul's letters, and key Old Testament passages, this book reconsiders the verses most often used to support pre-existence and asks whether tradition has spoken louder than Scripture.

What emerges is not a diminished Christ, but a magnified one. Jesus is revealed as a real man whose life began at conception, who lived by faith, learned obedience through suffering, and trusted HIS Father completely – even unto death. His exaltation was not a return to former glory, but God's response to a life of perfect faithfulness. He becomes the first glorified human and the trailblazer of the new humanity.

Written with clarity and humility, *Firstborn* challenges long-held assumptions without hostility or fear. It is not about winning arguments, but about clearing away tradition so the glory of God and the faithfulness of Jesus can be seen more clearly.

If you're ready to examine what Scripture actually says – and to see Jesus not as a divine impersonator, but as the faithful Man Whom God exalted – this book will both challenge and encourage you. 60 pages.

“Lucy” Goes to School

Our dear co-laborer, Johann Grobler from South Africa, wrote to us recently, that it was Book Character Day at his granddaughter's school. He shared that the children could dress up as any book character and bring the book along to school. His granddaughter Ashley and her mom decided on the character “Lucy” in Steve Martin's book, *Always Loved*. **BSN**



PLAN ([continued from front page](#))

*A man's heart, it devises his way, Yet Yahweh,
He establishes his steps (CV).*

Individuals can think and plan all they want, but God is the One in charge. We should give thanks for this. God does a much better job at running our lives than we ever could do, because He is far more qualified for the task than we are or ever could be. And although at times our lives, and the lives of others, may look out of

control, the plain truth of Scripture is that they never have been. Everything is right on track and headed to a glorious end for all – God “*All in all*.” **BSN**

Topics:

Major: God; Logos; Sovereignty

Minor: Consummation; Disruption; Free Will



The Lucy Series

by — Steve Martin

Perfect gifts for bedtime reading or encouragement, wrapping young hearts in truth.

32 pages, full-color paperback, with illustrations.

Always Loved (Book 1) – The story of Lucy and her Daddy's favorite promise.

In *Always Loved*, Lucy discovers that God's love is bigger than mistakes, stronger than fears, and with her every single day. This heartwarming story reassures kids of all ages that nothing can make God stop loving them – ever.

Forever Friends (Book 2) – A story of God's care for every creature.

Forever Friends is a tender, heartwarming story about love, loss and hope told through the simple faith of a child. Based on Romans 8:21 and Revelation 21:5, it reminds children (and adults) that God's care extends to every living creature – and that one day, He will make all things new.

(More to come.)

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This is a volunteer role – but it carries real impact.

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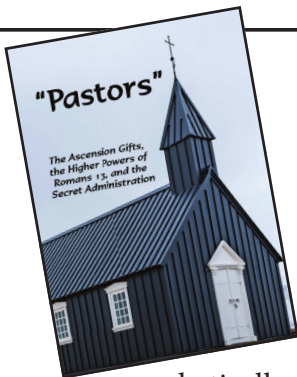
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- Help ensure our books are presented clearly and professionally

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— ANDRÉ SNEIDAR



“Pastors” – The Ascension Gifts, the Higher Powers of Romans 13, and the Secret Administration

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The modern role of “pastor” is not founded on Scripture, but instead is an institutional fabrication of Protestantism. The Ascension Gifts of Ephesians 4 were prophetically a part of Israel's Old Testament promises. The “higher powers” of Romans 13 were not a reference to civil authorities, but rather the spiritual rulers over the Acts-Period churches. Since Acts 28 (the dispensational boundary line) the “powers that be” have been withdrawn. Under the current Secret Administration all of these “gifts” are inoperative. The One Body has no flesh-and-blood rulers. We are to be submissive only to our Head: the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him alone do we owe our allegiance. 76 pages. 3rd Edition!