

Doctrine of Faith

1. Definition and Concept:

1.1 Faith is a non-meritorious system of perception given to us by God.

1.2 God gives the ability to believe to all "normal human beings." Joh 1:6-12

1.3 In a spiritual sense the result of faith is given to all others who never reach the age of accountability 2Sa 12:21-23.

1.4 There are three basic methods for learning:

1.4.1 Rationalism is the ability to reason things out.

1.4.2 Empiricism is the ability to learn by feeling, seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting and/or touching.

1.4.3 Faith is the acceptance of a thought or idea as truth because you are told it is so. Most agree 70 to 80 percent of that learned is learned by faith. Authority is an important contributor here.

2. In the spiritual realm faith is the most important method.

2.1 Faith is especially important in this realm because no one can prove or disprove God.

3. The object of ones faith in the spiritual realm takes on unprecedented importance. This is emphasized by the Greek verb most often used for faith **Pisteuo**, a transitive verb requiring a direct object. The noun form is **Pistis**.

3.1 Faith therefore can and should have an object of power. More particularly in a spiritual sense faith must have an object with inherent power to produce. In a grammatical sense faith needs a direct object.

3.2 In a secular sense faith in an object like a parachute may prove devastating to the well being of even the most faithful. I read of a woman here in Austin who believed she could call 911 if a rapist came; he came and she died. She had faith in the 911 system; things did not work out so she was raped and murdered.

3.2.1 Misplaced faith then in the secular sense can prove fatal and so also in the spiritual world faith in an object incapable of producing can be devastating.

3.2.2 If you believe in your goodness to get you to heaven the Scripture warns such error will result in your spending eternity in the lake of fire. This is a direct predictable result of faith in an impotent object.

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 4:4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

Rom 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Rom 4:7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

4. The objects of faith then in a spiritual sense are most important. Let's explore this in chart form.

ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ Christ = Eternal Salvation
ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ Doctrine = Spiritual Maturity

4.1 The object of faith for a person's salvation must be Jesus the Christ.

Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Joh 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Rom 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Rom 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

4.2 For spiritual maturity after salvation the Scripture is equally clear; it takes faith in an object with power.

4.2.1 That object is doctrine or the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ clearly tells us we must use the two power options if we are to grow. A lack of faith (that is to say, a refusal to be convinced concerning the truth of the Word of God) will result in no spiritual growth.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

1Pe 4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he Who has suffered for us in the flesh has put an end to the control of our old sin natures;

4.2.2 Faith then is a mental attitude which grows as you take in the Word of God and try it. Experiencing the stated condition often under pressure is part of the principle. You gotta try it and we should fear not trying it.

2Co 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Heb 4:1 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.

Heb 4:2 For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.

Heb 4:3 Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in my anger, "They shall never enter my rest." And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

4.3 In the Old Testament we find a different language but the same concept.

4.4 With reference to Israel's idolatry.

Deu 32:17 They sacrificed to demons, which are not God-- gods they had not known, gods that recently appeared, gods your fathers did not fear.

Deu 32:18 You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.

Deu 32:19 The LORD saw this and rejected them because he was angered by his sons and daughters.

Deu 32:20 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no "**faith**" (**EMUN**).

Deu 32:21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

4.5 Even with a "belly full of doctrine" faith is very often an experiential process. Let's look at Habakkuk as our teaching anecdote. This prophet wrote in c. 620 B.C.

4.5.1 Habakkuk reasons earnestly with God in what would seem to be an effort to dissuade God from a certain course of action.

Hab 1:2 How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save?

Hab 1:3 Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Hab 1:4 Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

4.5.2 God answers Habakkuk.

Hab 1:5 "Look at the nations and watch--and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

Hab 1:6 I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own.

Hab 1:7 They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor.

Hab 1:8 Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like a vulture swooping to devour;

Hab 1:9 they all come bent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand.

Hab 1:10 They deride kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; they build earthen ramps and capture them.

Hab 1:11 Then they sweep past like the wind and go on-- guilty men, whose own strength is their god."

4.5.3 In Hab 1:16 we will find "They sacrifice unto their net." What is meant is that the Babylonians ascribed divine honors to their weapons and, therefore, to themselves. They worshipped and served the creature.

Hab 1:16 Therefore he sacrifices to his sword and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and enjoys the choicest food.

4.5.4 In Hab 2:1 we find the prophet's expostulation comes to an end. He seems now to slowly recognize his place as the clay before the potter; a man who is to live by faith and not by sight.

Hab 2:1 I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what God will say to me, and what answer I am to give ...

4.5.5 He had presented his complaint to God, but in faith, he is now prepared to wait upon the Lord, assured that an answer would come. The assertion sometimes made that Habakkuk is the supreme example of an angry doubter perhaps has been overtaught. Indeed, his prophecy ends on a note of sublime faith.

4.5.6 It is one thing to face the problems that confront believers and ask why things are so, or how they can be so. It is something quite different to question the Divine goodness or justice, or the very existence of God, simply because one does not agree with God's manifest destiny.

4.6 Habakkuk seemed inclined to only question why the condition and not the existence of a good and gracious God. Several interpreters understand the watch tower to be an actual tower or elevation. Habakkuk may be using only a figure of speech. Habakkuk records only his determination to wait for an answer; he does not know when that answer will come.

5. Hab 2:2-4 contains the Lord's answer to his now pliant Prophet.

Hab 2:2 Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.

Hab 2:3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

Hab 2:4 "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright--but the righteous will live by his faith --

5.1 Whether or not the prophet actually wrote the vision on tablets for public reading has been disputed, but it is agreed by all that he was told to record the vision.

5.2 The purpose of recording the vision is for an appointed time and must be preserved so that its truth may be proved. It may reasonably be supposed that Habakkuk made a record of his vision on a clay tablet, which he brought to the attention of many. It would seem to be that the matter was to be made so clear that whoever would later read it might run and publish it or read it on the run.

6. That God will answer in the future and rebuke Babylon is a certainty but when it would occur was not revealed to Habakkuk. God demanded faith from Habakkuk. From hindsight we know not only when it happened but also how it happened. Babylon later falls and Persia as divinely predicted will reign over Chaldea.

Hab 2:2 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

Hab 2:3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

Hab 2:4 Behold, the soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his "faith" (**EMUN**) and God will lift him up.

7. Now let's leave Habakkuk and return to the doctrine.

8. All the merit of faith to be effective must be in an object with an inherent power to produce be it OT faith or NT faith.

9. Faith therefore is often misunderstood for you see the mere act of having faith is useless if there is no object capable of producing.

Jam 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

9.1 Faith in doctrine as we have seen is our method for temporal sanctification i.e. spiritual growth in time, and when faith in doctrine is more real than reality divine good will be produced.

2Pe 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
2Pe 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Pro 22:17 Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.
Pro 22:18 For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

Jam 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Jam 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
Jam 1:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:
Jam 1:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.
Jam 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Isa 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.
Isa 55:9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
Isa 55:10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
Isa 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
Isa 55:12 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.
Isa 55:13 Instead of the thorn bush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD'S renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed."
Isa 56:1 This is what the LORD says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

10. Faith itself, says the Scripture, comes from doctrine, the mind of Christ. Rom 10:17; Phi 2:5; 1Co 2:16, Rom 12:2 and 1Pe 4:1

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Phi 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

1Pe 4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

11. Faith in the sense of a trust and a relaxed mental attitude is one of the fruits of the Spirit of God. Gal 5:22-24

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Gal 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

12. Faith is enhanced when we are tested and proved. 1Pe 1:7

1Pe 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

13. Faith in Christ is the means for overcoming the world. It is the means of avoiding condemnation and the means of obtaining salvation. Faith then is the source of avoiding the bad and gaining the good.

1Jo 5:5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

14. Several passages in the book of Revelation make this clear. Keep in mind "who is he that overcometh? ... he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

Rev 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Rev 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Rev 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Rev 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

Rev 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Rev 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Rev 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

15. A quick point or two about the importance of doctrine in this faith process.
2Pe 1:2-8 stresses the process for acquiring Doctrine.

2Pe 1:2 Grace (**Charis**) and peace (**Eirene**) be multiplied (**Plethuno**-optative) unto you through the knowledge (**Epignosis**) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.1 The Grace Plan of God with its related stability in time is wished upon each and every believer, however, Peter recognizes his wish is not being completely fulfilled. The verb **PLETHUNO** means to augment or multiply.

15.1.1 Peter wishes God's Grace Plan and stability would increase exponentially for all believers.

15.2 The source of this augmentation or multiplication is that wonderful word **EPIGNOSIS** which is Bible Doctrine metabolized in the right lobe of the soul.

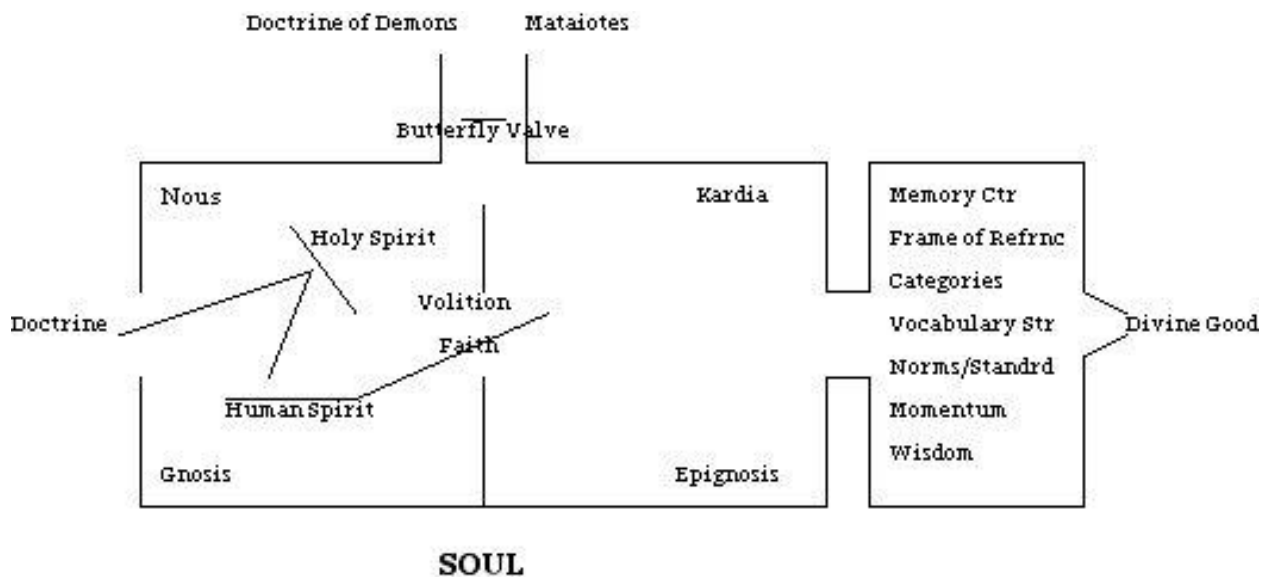
15.2.1 The Lord Jesus Christ our resurrected Celebrity is described in the genitive case meaning we are to acquire [**EPIGNOSIS**] doctrine of our Lord if we are to enjoy God's grace and peace.

15.3 There are no short cuts. Before going on to 2Pe 1:3 let's look one more time at 2Pe 1:2 "Grace (**Charis**) and peace (**Eirene**) be multiplied (**Plethuno**) unto you through the knowledge (**Epignosis**) of the Lord Jesus Christ."

15.3.1 Take note: we get peace “through and by means of doctrine resident in the soul.”

15.3.2 Bible doctrine must however enter the left lobe where it is made perspicuous by God the Holy Spirit and then by faith it must be transferred to the right lobe where it will not only provide peace and stability but it will also produce divine good.

15.3.3 Doctrine in the left lobe is called **Gnosis**; doctrine in the right lobe is called **Epignosis**; **Epignosis** doctrine will become part of the believer’s stream of consciousness and result in the construction of certain building blocks such as a memory center, frame of reference, doctrine assimilated into categories, a new vocabulary, new norms and standards, momentum and wisdom; all of which will facilitate the production of divine good.



15.3.4 I want to give you several notes concerning the meaning of memory center, frame of reference, categories, vocabulary storage, norms and standards, momentum and wisdom.

Memory Center:

1. it brings into focus that which is pertinent
2. it serves as a source of a whole realm of doctrines for reverse process thinking
3. it functions closely with both the vocabulary and categorical storage compartments

Frame of Reference:

1. it serves as a foundation for learning more complex doctrines; provides a system to move from the simple to the complex
2. it provides a new perspective to look at life's experiences
3. it makes possible our becoming Christocentric rather than anthropocentric
4. it serves as a source for an alarm system to alert the soul when false doctrines are heard
5. it provides a means for handling guilt
6. it provides ideas and thoughts for communicating and witnessing

Categorical Storage:

1. a place where technical concepts and ideas are categorized into doctrines, there they are stored for use when the Memory Center and Frame of Reference demands

Vocabulary Storage:

1. a place where words are stored to permit thought in regard to spiritual matters

Norms and Standards:

1. here is where a new conscience is established

Wisdom;

1. divine viewpoint creates in the soul an ability to process data and solve complex problems with skill beyond the human IQ

Momentum:

1. moving doctrine from the left lobe to the right lobe provides momentum to propel the believer forward to even greater spiritual growth

16. The subject continues in 2nd Peter 1:3:

2Pe 1:3 According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life (**Zoe**) and Godliness (**Eusebeia**) through the knowledge (**Dia Ho Epignosis**) of Him that hath called us to glory (**Idios Doxa**) and virtue (**Arete**).

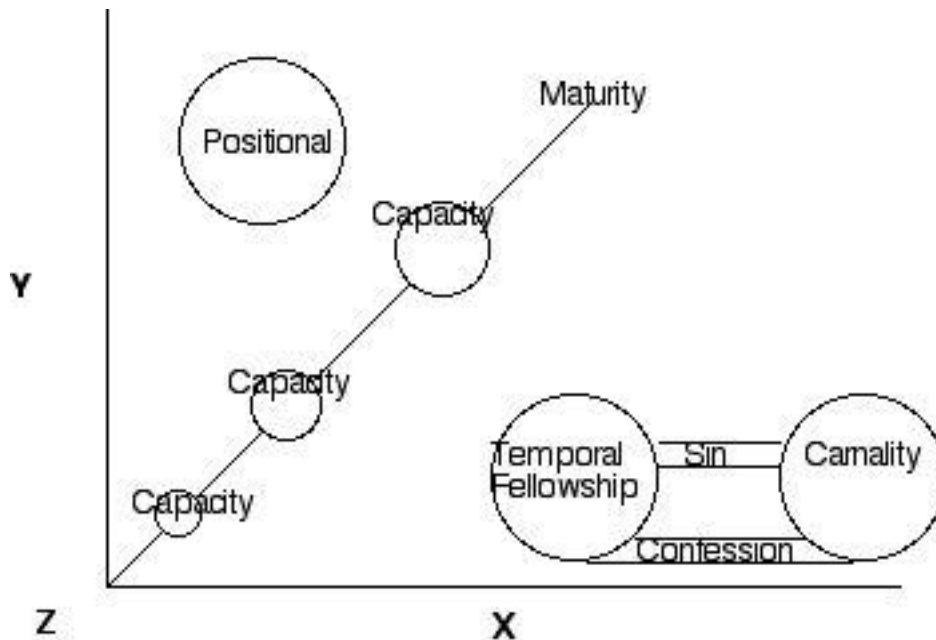
16.1 [ZOE] is here translated "life" meaning that related to both our life in time and eternity. This would certainly include escrow blessings for eternity and logistical grace blessings for time.

16.2 These are marvelous promises but there is a condition precedent; we must follow God's protocol plan; there is the negative alternative and caveat found in verse nine. The person described in 2Pe 1:9 is the one who does not take in the Word. He is described as he who "has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins."

2Pe 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and **hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**

16.3 [EUSEBEIA] is here translated "godliness" meaning the spiritual life of the individual believer. It is special and has been designed with you and I uniquely in mind. The optimum modus vivendi certainly would involve the maximum production of divine good through a maximum intake of the Word of God.

16.3.1 This is best shown on our Trichotomy of The Christian Life Chart:



16.4 [EPIGNOSIS] is translated "through the knowledge" and is a reference to doctrine in the right lobe. Metabolized doctrine defines how we are to think and act based upon an acceptance of the mind of Christ, (i.e. the Holy Scriptures).

16.5 **[KALEO]** is translated "called" meaning: way back yonder in eternity past God called each believer to live the Christian life by using the two power options.

16.6 **[DOXA]** is translated "glory" but unfortunately **[IDIOS]** which appears in the Greek is not translated. It is better "He has called us to His glory" meaning that which glorifies Him.

16.7 **[ARETE]** is translated "virtue" and means we have also been called to His very own "virtue" in the sense of the motivation and the will to do something even when difficult and inconvenient.

16.8 Virtue as used here means the consistent manifestation of positive volition to attend Bible class for the purpose of taking in **[GNOSIS]** which by faith can become useful as (**EPIGNOSIS**).

16.9 **Gnosis** enters first into the left lobe where the Holy Spirit will teach the human spirit, giving each and every believer regardless of human IQ complete perspicacity of that Doctrine which is needed.

16.10 It can then become **[EPIGNOSIS]** but only if the now perspicuous doctrine is accepted, believed and transferred to the right lobe.

16.11 As Doctrine is metabolized we gain capacity for blessing, testing, more doctrine and glorification of Christ; all of this is shown on the Z axis of our Trichotomy of The Christian Life.

17. We all have a choice to transfer the perspicuous doctrine or to reject it. Keep in mind God provides the doctrine and we provide the faith.