

Msg #170 of Scripture Beneath The Surface

“Numbers In The Bible - Part 1”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about the number three. In scripture, the number three is an important number. Of course, the number seven is also recognized as an important number. The Bible uses the number seven extensively. The creation of the earth culminating in God's rest covers a seven day period. The Bible breaks the days of the week down into seven parts, and emphasizes the need to enter into God's rest just as God rested from his creation work and rested the seventh day.

The number 12 is also important, in that there were 12 apostles, and there are also 12 months of the year. There were 12 tribes of Israel because Jacob had 12 sons. Jesus also told his 12 disciples that in the new earth they would sit on twelve thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.

But the number three is what I would like to talk about today because the number three is actually the foundation of our existence. In the beginning God said, "Let us make man in our image." And of course, we were created in God's image, but then, sometimes people don't realize the extent of the similarity between us humans and God. But the similarity is much more than just what man looks like in the flesh. In fact, our fleshly body is only one part, or one aspect, of who we are and who and what God is.

When we look at scripture, the most important thing for us is to understand it. Scripture is God's word either written down or repeated by the spoken word. It is a description of who God is, what God did in the past, what God is doing in our present time, and what God is going to do in the

future. And our future is most important. At least it is to me. Without a future, we humans have nothing to look forward to. No hope for anything at all. Hope is a basic need for humans, because if there is no reason to hope for something to come, then there is no reason to live.

We humans live for the future. Our hope is for the future. Because God has promised us to have eternal life through Jesus Christ, we humans look forward to eternity. Now, animals, of course, have no hope of a future. The beast forms of earth have not been given the ability to contemplate their future other than day by day. Beasts are unaware that eternity exists. Therefore, it is only humans who have been given the knowledge that life can exist long after our bodies of flesh have died.

It is this hope that we have for eternal life that drives us to be acceptable in God's eyes. We want to live forever. At least, I do, and I expect that you do too. But to do that, we must first become conformists, at least in the sense of conforming to the image of God. God said, "Let us make man in our image," but most humans, including Christians, only think that being in the image of God just means that we have two arms, two legs, a body and a head. But although we are similar to God in our outward looks, we are similar to God in another way also.

You see, God is a spirit. And whatever a spirit is, it's not flesh and blood. We know that the Bible plainly tells us that God is spirit, but that we were made to be flesh and blood. Now, the problem with being flesh and blood is that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's gift of eternal life. 1 Corinthians 15:50 tells us this. So being created as flesh and blood humans is not sufficient to conform to the image of God. Sons of God are not flesh and blood.

It's like this. God is alive, and has thoughts. Therefore he is a living soul. God is spirit, so therefore he is not just alive, but also alive in spirit. And because God became flesh and dwelt among us in the form of Jesus Christ, then he is soul, spirit, and body. Therefore, in order to fully conform to the image of God, we must also be a three part person made up of soul, spirit, and body. It is these three things, the soul, spirit, and body, which make up humans beings, just as God is comprised of a soul, spirit and body. You see, there's the number three, and it describes God as a three part person just as we humans are three part persons. Three is an important number.

When we use the term, God, it refers to the one and only God of heaven. And as Deuteronomy 6:4 tells us, "the Lord our God is one Lord." He is not three Gods, but he can be more completely comprehended when you see him from the three different aspects of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three individual parts are what make up God. And this is pretty fantastic, especially when we realize that we are also three individual parts which together make us up to be one single person. This is how we can be made in the image of God even though God is a spirit and we are flesh and blood.

You see, I am Randy Smith, but I am made up of a body, a soul, and a spirit. I have a soul because I am alive, and can think. I have a body that other human beings can see and recognize, and I have a spirit which is the connection between the thoughts of my mind and the actions of

my body. It is my spirit which moves my body to speak or act in accord with what my mind thinks.

Now, I've spoken many times on the triune concept of God and man, but today I want you to think more about the concept of three part humans as God is a three part God, instead of just thinking that we only look like God. I want you to realize that it is these three parts of God and these three parts of humans which are so important to understanding the Bible, especially when the Bible is talking about eternal things.

So, what I would like to do today is to give you some overview of ways in which the three part, or triune, aspect of God and the triune aspect of humans, plays into meaningful understanding of God's word. God has told us many things, but much of what he tells us is not understood very well because God is a spirit. You see, we are flesh and blood, but God isn't. We humans are still flesh and blood, but as Christians we are born again spirit beings. But this doesn't make us righteous in the sight of God. In fact, God cannot look upon evil, and the Bible tells us that all flesh is evil in that we are born into a sinful state. No, we are not born sinners, but we have been born into flesh and blood bodies which have been birthed by sinful humans. Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. And because sin entered into the human race through Adam, then all flesh became cursed from God. This means that because of the sin of Adam and Eve, no flesh and blood person can come into God's presence unless he lives a perfect life.

Now, if we were to live a perfect life, then, and only then, could we enter into the presence of God. Of course, as Jesus plainly said in Matthew 19:17, there is no one who is good except God himself. That means no one. Period! God is the only one who is perfect. And by the way, notice this one thing. Jesus lived a perfect life. He was good. And because the Bible tells us very clearly that there is no one good but God, and Jesus himself was good, this very fact also establishes the fact that he is also God. This single fact alone establishes that Jesus Christ is also God, because Jesus Christ lived a perfect life. If he wasn't God, he could not have been perfect. And Hebrews 4:15 tells us plainly that Jesus did not sin. Therefore, his body of flesh became glorified, and by his glorified body he can enter into the presence of God. This is important, in that when we put on Christ we are then also part of the glorified body of Christ and can enter with him into the very presence of God.

So, in order to enter into the presence of God, we humans have been given the opportunity to crucify our old man of the flesh and be born again in spirit and thereby become part of the body of Christ. In this way we become part of Jesus. Of course, Jesus still remains as our head, and therefore he still maintains his authority over us. But we are able to enter into the presence of God with him by being part of him. This is why we Christians always refer to ourselves as the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body, but we Christians are the parts that make up Christ's body. If we weren't, we wouldn't be able to enter into the presence of God. We would be accursed from God just like the rest of the wicked.

Now, it is the Holy Spirit that can communicate with God, because God is a spirit. And it is the Holy Spirit that can communicate with humans because he can move us to act and speak. Just as

a race horse dances and prances at the starting gate because he is spirited, we are also moved to act and speak because of the spirit within us. As Christians, the Holy Spirit moves us, and we act accordingly. This is how the Holy Spirit reveals God's will to us. The Holy Spirit is the form of communication that God has chosen to interact with us Christians. In return, we Christians speak to God from our earthly human perspective, and because the Holy Spirit searches out our hearts and understands what our true desires are, he then reveals these thoughts and intents of our hearts unto God. Without the Holy Spirit, there would be no communication link between Christians and God.

Now, let's go a little deeper. Because God is triune, because he is made up of three distinct parts, therefore, whatever God created and whatever God intended for his plan of salvation for the earth must include the concept of the number three. God is made up of three distinct parts, and therefore he made humans to be three distinct parts in order to conform to his image. And because we are also three part people as God is three part, God then uses the concept of three parts to explain his overall plan in the earth. He uses the three part concept to explain why the wicked people will end up in the lake of fire and brimstone and why Christians will end up living with God for eternity.

You see, the whole aspect of God being truth, and Satan rebelling against the truth, means that God's word is being attacked. God is truth, and Satan attacked God by just one thing, and that was by attacking his word. But God testifies that his word is true, and Jesus testifies that God's word is true. And finally, the third part of God, the Holy Spirit, also testifies that God's word is true.

Now, let me take a minute here to explain the concept of testimony. When you testify of something, it means that you are telling the truth about something. Your testimony is either true or it is false. Whatever witness you give will be judged to be either true or false, but it will be judged as true or false by comparing it with God's word. You see, we know, absolutely know, that God's word is true, and that Satan's word is false. Satan is a liar, but God is truth. It's plain and simple. But when we are finally judged at the end of our time on earth, we will be judged by looking at our testimony and seeing if it conforms with God's testimony. If it aligns with God's word, then our testimony will stand. If it doesn't align with God's word, then our testimony will be thrown out. If God rejects our testimony, then we will go to hell, pure plain and simple.

But then, our testimony will be judged according to the way God's word is judged. And yes, God's word can be judged too. We all judge God's word in the sense that we hear it and make our own determination to whether it is true or false. However, as Christians, we know that God's word will stand eternally no matter how we judge it to be. But the testimony of God stands forever because God doesn't just say something and expect us to believe it. God not only speaks the truth, but he confirms his word. It is by the testimony of God and the confirmation of his testimony that we humans are able to recognize God's word as truth. Even Jesus himself refers to this testimony with the accompanying confirmation as being the proof that God's word is true.

In John chapter 5, verses 31-37, Jesus tells us that his own testimony of himself, by itself, is not true. What he meant was, that if he claimed that his word was true, but he was the only witness to that claim, and there were no further witnesses to the fact that he was speaking truth, then as he said himself, his word could not be considered to be true. And this is what he was trying to explain. If only one testimony is given, then no determination can be made as to whether that first testimony is true or false. However, he also explains that the Holy Spirit added a witness to his testimony by accomplishing the miracles as Jesus spoke the words. In this way, when people saw the miracles take place, then they were convinced that when Jesus spoke the words, that his words were certainly true. Because if they weren't true, no miracles would have resulted. The only way miracles can happen when the word of God is spoken is because the power of God is actually behind those words. So the Holy Spirit testified of Jesus that his word was true by empowering Jesus. In addition, Jesus explains that God the Father also testifies of him.

It is these three witnesses, these three testimonies, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit which establish that the word of God is true. God speaks, and we can hear it or read it as others relate it to us. This is God's word. Then we see God demonstrate his word through the flesh and blood person of Jesus Christ. In this way God is further revealed to mankind, and therefore mankind has two witnesses which agree with one another because the words of Jesus and the words of God conform to one another. But the third witness is the Holy Spirit which causes the actions and words of Jesus to be fruitful. We know that anyone can say to a cripple man, "rise up and walk." But if the Holy Spirit of God does not provide the power, the words, "rise up and walk," will be just empty words. But when Jesus said to the crippled man, "rise up and walk," the crippled man rose up and walked. This also gave witness to the words of Jesus that he was actually speaking the truth, and therefore the words of Jesus were confirmed to be the true word of God.

You see, we believe in Jesus not just because he told us he is God, but because he also demonstrated it with power. The Father testified, Jesus testified, and the Holy Spirit testified. Therefore, God's word is true. No doubt about it. But what would happen if Jesus had said, "rise up and walk," and the crippled man had remained a cripple? And what would have happened if Jesus had claimed to heal the blind and sick, but the blind and sick stayed blind and sick? Would we believe in Jesus? No, we wouldn't. But because of the three testimonies of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all conform to one identical concept, then God is believed.

However, what we can really learn from this, and what is so absolutely important to realize, is that it is this same three part testimony which establishes our own personal testimony. You see, if by the authority of our mind we speak something, it cannot be believed unless it is confirmed by the further testimony of our body and our spirit. If we testify that we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior with our lips, that is one testimony. But if our daily words and actions don't line up with the established word of God, then the testimony that our flesh and blood body adds to our words is seen as false. And if our body is not in accord with what our lips claim to be, then one of our two testimonies must be thrown out. But then, which one of our testimonies is true? If we say that we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, but our daily words and actions give a different story, then which testimony is true? When there are two different testimonies, which one can be believed?

Well, this is why the Bible tells us in the Old Testament that any matter of life and death cannot be decided unless there are two or three witnesses which attest to it. Sometimes this simple rule of judgment in the Old Testament is overlooked by Christians as not being important. But you see, this simple rule that God established for Israel is at the very heart of judgment in all things. Truth is determined not by one witness, but by at least two or three witnesses. If there is only one witness, then no judgment can be given. If there are only two witnesses, then they must also agree in order for judgment to be given. If two witnesses are contrary to each other, then a third witness must be given which will determine which of the two initial witnesses were actually true.

It is this concept of two or three witnesses by which even God himself is judged. Jesus said even his own word, by itself, was not true. But his own word was true because there were two other witnesses which supported his word. The other two witnesses were the Father and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, because we are created in the image of God, we also are made up of three parts. And consequently, we give testimony as to whether we are true Christians or not by giving three witnesses to it, just as God gives three witnesses of himself.

You know, I've told you about the three witnesses that God gives of himself, and I've explained how we also give three witnesses in order to establish our own words, whether they are true or false. But if you really want to understand God's word, you will have to apply these same principles of the number three. The Bible gives Christians all kinds of information which will strengthen and enable us. However, in order to comprehend the prophetic message to the church in these last days, we must understand the foundation of God's word. And the foundation of God's word is established on himself. God is a three part God. He is triune. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And in these last days, the knowledge of who God is and how we have been created in the very image of God is extremely useful in helping us survive spiritually in this great tribulation period.

And we are in the greatest tribulation the world has ever known or ever will experience. And the reason that it is the greatest tribulation in the history of the world is because never before in the history of the world has the souls of men been in so much danger of hell. No, I'm not talking about a danger to the flesh and blood bodies of Christians. Christians have always been killed for their faith. But the tribulation of these last days is not just a danger to our flesh and blood bodies, but a danger to our very souls. What Satan is attempting to do to Christians is much more than to kill the body, it is to kill the soul. We are being bombarded with lies to such a great extent that Christians are falling away fast. Never in the history of the world has there been a tribulation that is so destructive to the souls of men as it is in these last days. There is so much deception in the world now that many people are actually claiming to be Christians, but have become lukewarm. They are in danger of giving up on God. All it will take is a little more tribulation and they will cave in. No? You say no way? But then, the Bible itself says that if the time were not shortened, even the very elect would be deceived. Don't be fooled into thinking that you are so secure that nothing could ever touch you. God himself tells us that it will get so bad that if he didn't put a stop to it that even the elect would be deceived. If you think you will never be deceived, then you had better take another look at yourself. Satan is not called the great deceiver for nothing. Tribulation is here, and most Christians don't even know it.