

Hebrews 12:28 So since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us give thanks, and through this let us offer worship pleasing to God in devotion and awe.

v. 29 For our God is indeed a devouring fire. (NET)

This expression, “once more,” in verse 27 denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, “since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom,” let us show respect, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; “for our God is indeed a devouring fire” (v. 29).

- (9) So-called scientific laws are simply the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ in holding the universe together and at the same time holding back eternity, so that the human race will have the opportunity for evangelism and the glorification of our Lord.

Hebrews 1:10 You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands.

v. 11 They will perish, but You remain. And they all will become old like a garment,

v. 12 and like a mantle you will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.” (NASB)

- k. The most important thing in the world is the spiritual life. Until we understand that, we will never understand what true reality is really about. The believer learns to love God through Bible doctrine. He learns to respect God through divine discipline. Believers have no respect for God because they are depending on emotional experience.

There is no hope for us as individuals, or a group, unless we resume our respect for God. We show our respect for God by obedience to God.

- l. The believer learns to love God through Bible doctrine. He learns to respect God through divine discipline. Some believers have no respect for God because they are depending on emotional experiences. There is no hope for us as individuals or as a group unless we reorient our respect toward God. We demonstrate this respect by our obedience to God.



2 Peter 1:17 For He [**Jesus**] received from the immediate source of God the Father, highest honor and glory when there came a voice, having been carried to Him from the majestic glory, “This keeps on being My beloved Son in Whom I am well-pleased.”

v. 18 Furthermore we have heard this voice, which was being transmitted from heaven, when we were with Him on the holy mountain [**the Mount of Transfiguration**]. (EXT)

NOTE: The Greek word, “transfigured,” is found twice in Scripture regarding the transfiguration of Christ: Matthew 17:2 and Mark 9:2. In the *Koiné* Greek, it is the constative, aorist passive indicative of the verb, **μεταμορφώω** (*metamorphóō*), referring to the transformation of the Lord’s earthly form to a supernatural form [i.e., a resurrection body].

Summary:

- (1) The believers who suffer the most in time of disaster are those who have no respect for God in time of prosperity.
- (2) In time of punishment, it is based upon the same principle. This punishment comes because, during the time of prosperity, believers lost their respect for God through negligence or rejection of Bible doctrine. The importance of learning doctrine is the blessing of consistent exposure to Bible teaching. But, when the distractions of life occur, is because of no spiritual strength in the soul of the believer.
- (3) For this reason, God permits the attack of terrorism as a punishment on the one hand and self-imposed discipline on the other hand, where believers who have failed to follow the colors to the high ground of spiritual maturity suffer terribly and many die the sin unto death. There is no way to have respect for God, His grace, and His plan unless the believer is consistent in his daily walk with the Lord, and this comes from daily intake of Bible doctrine. This daily walk comes from:
 - a. The power of prevailing prayer.
 - b. Fulfilling the advance to the high ground of spiritual maturity.
 - c. The passing of tests with great victory when the shock of disaster occurs.

- (4) Many believers demonstrate their weakness by blaming God for disasters that come to the nation, while at the same time other believers demonstrate their strength in times of disaster. They have been faithful in spiritual warfare by consistent perception and metabolization of the Word of God. They have developed a tremendous respect for the Lord which comes with their perception and understanding of doctrine.
 - (5) As long as we are alive in a time of carnality, it is never too late to rebound and keep moving. Unless the believer recognizes his own sins and evil and his own failure to recognize the true value of life in Bible doctrine, he will suffer terribly during times of disaster.
 - (6) The believer who lives in carnality and sin and takes advantage of the grace of God in time will have a most miserable life and lose blessings that come to the believer during disaster testing.
 - (7) The story of Peter emphasizes how believers can fail and recover to advance to spiritual maturity. It is never too late to recover as long as we are alive on earth. It is never too late to recover as long as we have respect for God.
 - (8) God the Father had to judge His Son for the grace of God to be able to forgive us in rebound, to sustain us in our spiritual life, and to strengthen us with decisions regarding what is really important in life—Bible doctrine!
 - (9) Remember that only a right thing done in a right way is right, and that right way is the infallible Word of God. The execution of the unique spiritual life is a right thing done in a right way.
 - (10) Never look back on your failures, but advance on the basis of what God has provided in grace: a system of recovery, called rebound.
- d. The empirical⁹ perception includes seeing our Lord transformed and hearing the voice of God the Father. Seeing Christ transformed as He will appear at the Second Advent and hearing the voice of God the Father is empirical knowledge of the Second Advent. But such knowledge from experience does not carry the reality of **ἐπίγνωσις (epignōsis)**, or metabolized doctrine, found in the pages of the Word of God.

⁹ “empirical”: originating in or based on observation or experience. Relying on experience or observation alone often without due regard for system and theory. “Empiricism”: a theory that all knowledge originates in experience” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, eleventh ed. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2014), 408.



- e. If there is a conflict between what the Bible says and your empirical knowledge or how you feel, the Bible is always right.
- f. Ultimate reality is the infallible Word of God, not empirical or rational systems of knowledge, or feeling and emotion.

2 Peter 1:19 We keep on having and holding a more reliable and more certain doctrine of prophecy, regarding which you keep on doing honorably, by taking heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the Morning Star [Jesus Christ] dawns¹⁰ [metabolized doctrine], shall arise in your stream of consciousness. (EXT)

- g. Peter, James, and John had empirical knowledge of the Second Advent, but it was not the right knowledge. The right knowledge is Bible doctrine in the soul. Bible doctrine of the Second Advent is much more reliable than empirical knowledge of the Second Advent. The second advent of Christ from the experience of the Mount of Transfiguration would only have meaning by understanding the doctrine of the Second Advent. The experience is not to be compared to *ἐπίγνωσις* (*epignōsis*) doctrine. The biblical account of the Second Advent is more reliable than the empirical observation on the Mount of Transfiguration.
- h. Bible doctrine is the source of all knowledge for the Christian life. Three things are not the source of knowledge: emotion, experience, and any form of empirical knowledge. Perception, metabolization, and application of doctrine should, therefore, be more important to us than our feelings or experiences.
- i. The content of the Word of God must be more real to you than anything else in life, and that only comes by learning Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine is more real and much more reliable than any form of empiricism or emotion. You will succeed or fail in your spiritual life based on your understanding and acceptance of this principle.
- j. The shining lamp is analogous to Bible doctrine by which we see clearly in the dark place. The dark place is the confusion and darkness in which we live in the cosmic system of Satan. The analogy we use today is “a light at the end of a tunnel.” The eyes automatically focus on light when we are in a dark place.

¹⁰ See Revelation 22:16, “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and descendant of David, the bright morning star!” (NET)



- k. The more reliable source of knowledge is prophetic doctrine about the Second Advent or Bible doctrine circulating in our streams of consciousness.
- l. There is a system of prophetic concepts that can be put together and provide you an understanding of your eternal future.
- m. Experience was keeping Peter, James, and John from advancing in the spiritual life. They saw the transfiguration and were distracted from the more reliable doctrine by their experience. They were living by experience. But their experience was not to be compared to **ἐπίγνωσις (epignōsis)** knowledge of doctrine. Empirical knowledge cannot compare with experiential knowledge.
- n. Jesus Christ is the Morning Star mentioned in 2 Peter 1:19. He is the strategic winner in the First Advent and the tactical winner in the Second Advent. The Morning Star is the title of our Lord as the victor of the angelic conflict. The highest decoration given to mature believers is the **Order of the Morning Star**. Winner believers are given as a reward the title of Christ as the winner in the angelic conflict.

Doctrine of the Order of the Morning Star

The highest decoration awarded to Church Age believers at their post-Rapture evaluation.

In Revelation 2:26–28, the Lord declares that “he who overcomes ... I will give him the morning star.” This is a promise to distinguish the mature believer with the symbol of His own victorious royal title: Christ is the “star” that came forth from Jacob to defeat sin and death (Numbers 24:17; cf. Matthew 2:2), and now, as the glorified King, He is the “bright morning star” seated at the right hand of the Father (Revelation 22:16; cf. 2 Peter 1:19).

When believers appear before the “judgment seat [*béma*] of Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:10), the Lord will award a distinguished badge of honor—the order of the morning star—to those who have achieved super grace status in the Christian life. These are the invisible heroes who glorify Christ to the maximum on earth. As part of their commemoration in heaven, they will receive a uniform of glory, a radiant robe on which to wear the highest decoration.

Supreme privileges that accompany the order of the morning star include:



- (1) a new title in the eternal heraldry (Revelation 2:17);
 - (2) presentation before God the Father in the court of heaven (Revelation 3:5);
 - (3) return with Christ at the Second Advent in decorated glory (all believers in heaven accompany Christ, but Church Age winners are recognized by their decorated uniform) (Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 3:13);
 - (4) presentation before the entire earth during our Lord's second advent coronation (Revelation 19: 5–6);
 - (5) ruler and judge over nations during the Millennium (Luke 19:17–19; 2 Timothy 2:12a; Revelation 2:26; 20:4a);
 - (6) eternal access to the tree of life in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7; 22:14); and
 - (7) history of spiritual life displayed in the heavenly hall of records (Revelation 3:12).¹¹
- o. Doctrine in your right lobe and daily perception of doctrine determines whether you are a winner or loser believer. The winner believer executes the unique spiritual life under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and gives number one priority to Bible doctrine.
 - p. The loser believer lives in perpetual carnality and gives number one priority to the trends of his arrogance and the category of his antagonism toward the unique spiritual life.
 - q. The believer can only serve God through the unique spiritual life under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. In perpetual carnality the believer is the slave of Satan, and therefore, functions under empiricism or rationalism.

He is the enemy of the cross, the enemy of God, a hater of God, against Christ, carnal, double-minded, the agent of the devil, and the disciple of the devil.

DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL LIFE

A. Definition of Eternal Life.

¹¹ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Thieme's Bible Doctrine Dictionary* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2022), 187.

