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The Heavenly Blueprint (Studies in Genesis One)

James B. Jordan

And **darkness** was over the face of the **deep**; and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light **from** the darkness. (Genesis 1:2b-4).

We come now to the work of the **first** day. We noted in an earlier essay the correspondence between the hovering of the darkness over the waters and the hovering of the Spirit over the same waters (see "Star Over Bethlehem: A Snapshot of Dominion," in *Geneva Review* No. 25). While there is a "contest" between the dominion of darkness and that of the Spirit hereon the First Day, this is not a conflict between evil and good. Darkness was not an environment of evil, nor a symbol of sin, at this stage.

The hovering Spirit manifested the presence of the Triune God in creation. It is the Spirit Who *proceed* eternally **from** the Father and also from the Son (in two different ways, according to the properties of each **spirating** Person). Once the world had been created, it is the Spirit who *proceeds* out of eternity into time, and makes manifest the presence of the other two Persons. Here we see the Father *speak* the Word (the Son; John 1:1ff.). The Father and the Word send the Spirit into the creation as initial Light-bearer.

Genesis 1:3 records the creation of the Cloud of Glory, also called **Shekinah** Glory. Light implies **transmission** from some source, with the possibility of **shadowing**. Moreover, the light was not constant, but **alternated** with darkness for three days before the creation of the sun. Thus, there had to be some local source of this created light, and it was not the sun.

As Meredith G. Kline has shown at length, the visible manifestation of God's throne-environment in the creation is always the work of the Spirit, and thus the hovering Spirit in Genesis 1:2 corresponds to the hovering Cloud-Chariot of God elsewhere in the Bible (see Kline, *Images of the Spirit* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], esp. pp. 13-26). Until God spoke from His throne and said, "Let there be light," **there was no** visible manifestation of glory in connection with the

spirit.

Kline's comments on this are worth citing briefly: "If one is first introduced to the **Glory-cloud** as it appears in the later history of God's **covenantal** reign over Israel, he will probably identify it as a special, supernatural, localized version of the general heavenly phenomena of sky and clouds and luminaries. But that will be seen to be a reversal of the real situation if we recognize the presence of the Glory-cloud in Genesis 1:2, creatively poised over an earth-cosmos at a time when light of day and heavenly waters and **firma-**ment had not yet received their name-existence. If we are introduced to the Glory-cloud at Genesis 1:2 and behold the reproduction of its several features of light and **firmament** and clouds transpiring in the creative process, we will identify the general heavenly phenomena as a rendering in the medium of natural

continued. 6

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Who Goes to Prison?

John F. Southworth, Jr.

Among the many myths that surround the American prison system, perhaps the most pervasive is the myth of the young, first-time offender thrown behind stone walls to be a) raped by the hardened criminals there; b) patiently taught to be a consummate criminal by the hardened criminals there; or c) both of the above. On the basis of this myth, many reform efforts have been launched, purportedly to get these young, first-time property offenders out of state prisons. Usually, restitution is seen as the answer to emptying the prisons.

Now, restitution is the Biblical punishment (e.g., Exodus 22: 1-15); while prisons, as presently used, are not. (**Rushdoony**, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, pp. 514-22). But restitution is not the only Biblical **punishment**; so are execution and corporal punishment (e.g., Deuteronomy 19:1 1-13; 25: 1-3). Before we all jump on the "empty the prisons through restitution" bandwagon, a closer look at who actually goes to prison seems in order.

First, the statement of the myth: A generally conservative group, Charles **Colson's** Prison Fellowship, states the myth clearly on page 11 of its booklet "Is There a Better Way? A Perspective on American Prisons": "More than half of the **prisoners** in America are incarcerated for nonviolent crimes. In some jurisdictions this figure is as high as 70 percent." The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (a liberal group funding many prison reform efforts) sounds the same note on page 8 of its booklet "Overcrowded Time: Why Prisons are So Crowded and What Can be Done": "In other words, we are imprisoning more people for less serious crimes, rather than locking up significantly higher numbers of the criminals people fear the most—those who commit arbitrary, unprovoked acts of violence." So, the myth goes, we should divert "non-serious offenders" from state prisons, give them "alternative sentences," and use the space left for those who (by whatever standard the critic chooses) are the worst offenders.

Secondly, the truth that is contained in the myth: Certainly, there have been some young, **first-time** property offenders sent to prisons. Such cases exist, as do **cases** of abuse of younger or smaller convicts. Prisons can be harsh and brutal places. I do not deny this, nor do I deny the terrible and unjust tragedy this can be. Also, I do not deny that restitution needs to be used much more extensively as the punishment for **certain types of crime**; however, would its increased use eliminate prison over-

crowding and "reserve state prisons for the worst offenders"? In other words, the question remains: How often are "**first-time** property offenders" sent to "prison." The answer is: hardly ever.

Finally, the falsity of the myth: The problem is one of the confusing of definitions (an "adding apples and oranges" problem). This hides a conclusion that does not follow from the premise upon which it is seemingly based.

To begin with, the premise deals with all of those "locked up" for any sort of detention facility for any sort of crime for any period of time. For instance, statistics are very often cited that include, as prisoners, all of those locked up in county and city jails, as well as in state prisons. (A jail holds **pre-trial** and relatively short term post-trial inmates, while a prison holds only those inmates convicted for a felony and sentenced to more than one year.) When one realizes the enormous number of people who serve 48-hour sentences for driving while intoxicated (a non-violent, "public order" offense) or thirty-day sentences for third-offense shoplifting (a property offense), the amount by which these statistics are skewed becomes clear.

Restitution is not enough... until we are willing to put the Biblical punishments of execution and corporal punishment into force, we will continue to have a prison problem.

Certainly, by including all of these, it is clear that "more than half" of all prisoners are locked up for non-violent offenses. Certainly some, and perhaps most, of these should be punished by a form of restitution. However, since these people never get to a *prison*, releasing all of them would not create any (or, at the most, a very few) additional beds for "those who commit **arbitrary**, unprovoked acts of violence." Therefore, the "apples" of jail beds are being added to the "oranges" of prison beds.

Next, the definition of "non-violent offense" is important. Such crimes as drug dealing, burglary, and **consensual** sex crimes are regularly included in this category. This also skews the numbers as to who is a "bad" offender requiring "serious" punishment and who is not.

Last, but not least, the number of previous offenses is not considered by the myth. An habitual **burglar**, bad check writer, or pickpocket is included in the category of property offender,

along with the **first-time** thief. The Bible treats **habitual** criminality as an offense punishable by death (Deuteronomy 21: 18-21). The myth **treats** habitual "non-violent" criminality as a nuisance not worthy of "serious" punishment.

A conversation with a trial judge having **criminal** jurisdiction will confirm that the population of state prisons is made up of violent and/or repeat offenders. Ask such a judge how often he sends a **first-time** property offender to state prison. He will look at you blankly and say he cannot remember the last time. These offenders are the ones who **presently** get probation.

In 1982, the Tennessee Department of **Cor-rection** wanted to see how many first-time property offenders were then in its prisons. It searched a sampling of half of **all** the inmate files. According to the myth, one would believe that the researchers should have found "more than half" or perhaps "as high as 70 percent" in this category. Of the 3500 files reviewed, not a single **first-time** property offender **was** found. Every inmate whose **file** was reviewed at random was either a violent offender, a **repeat** offender, or both.

Prisons should **be** emptied and closed. However, ridding prisons of restitution-eligible property offenders will not accomplish this. What the myth fails to address, and what would eventually empty the prisons, is the use of Biblical punishments of execution and corporal punishment; not to those already sentenced, but to those who commit crimes after the law is changed to **permit** this. This would both empty the prisons through the elimination of those who are worthy of death (Deuteronomy 21:22; Remans 1:32) and who deserve to be beaten (Deut. 25:2). It would also deter others from committing these acts (Deut. 17:113; 19:20). Until we are willing to put these punishments into force, we will have a prison problem. Restitution is part of the answer, but by itself restitution will never be enough.

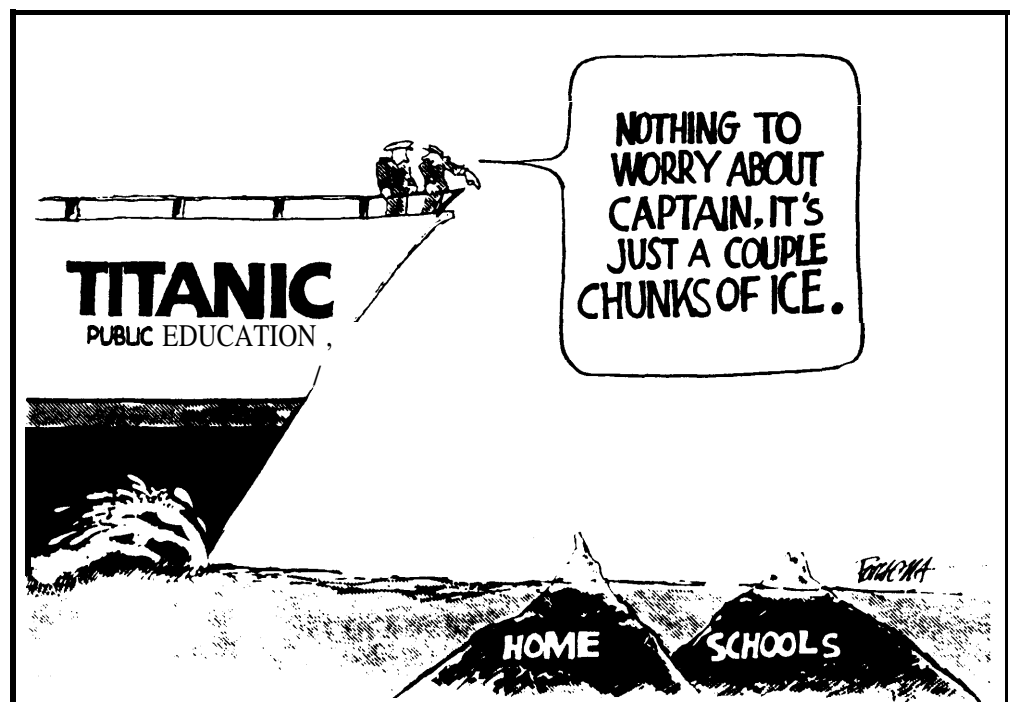
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The Sacrament and Holistic Health

Peter Leithart

The modern **scientific** world-view understands health and healing solely in **terms** of cause and effect. As in every area of life, modern Western man believes that health problems can be resolved by the application of the proper technique. **Sick-**ness is assumed to have a material explanation; health is restored by administration of drugs that trigger certain responses. In fact, such healing does not heal at all. To heal is to restore the sick to **ful-**ness of life. In modern medicine, however, "our concern is often to patch things up temporarily, to mask symptoms. We camouflage the symptoms of allergic hypersensitivity with desensitization shots and antihistamines. This brings relief but may not deal with the underlying problems, which may be genetic, organic, psychosomatic, or some **com-**bination of these" (Kenneth L. Vaux, *Health and Medicine in the Reformed Tradition* [Crossroad, 1984], p. 119). This **scientific** view of health is often based on a philosophical materialism that denies the existence of the spiritual side of man.

Scripture affirms the reality and significance of "secondary causes" in maintaining health. But Scripture most often relates health and healing to the Source of life and health. The Lord heals the sick and sustains the healthy. "Health" and "life" are religious terms. To live is to walk in obedience to God's commands (Deut. 30:15-16). On the



other hand, Paul was not using figurative language when he referred to sinners as dead (**Ephesians 2:1**). The full effects of the unbeliever's terminal condition are not yet apparent, but in the most profound and comprehensive sense, those who are separated from God are dead. Moreover, disease is threatened as a consequence of disobedience (**Deut. 28:27**); health is a reward of obedience (**Ex. 15:26; Deut. 7:15**). Unconfessed sin leads to physical illness (**Ps. 38:1-8**) and confession brings restoration (**Ps. 32:1-5**). Scripture often points explicitly to the relationship between faithfulness to the Word and *physical* well-being (cf. **Prov. 3:7-8; 4:20-22**). The Bible does not teach us to expect a one-to-one correspondence between sin and sickness, and the example of Job reminds us that God causes even the upright to suffer (cf. **John 9:1-3; 2 Cor. 12:1-10**). God's purposes are sometimes better served by our sickness than by our health. All the same, Scripture teaches a relationship between sin and sickness, and between righteousness and health.

***"Scripture teaches a relationship
between sin and sickness, and
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health."***

In order to understand this Biblical teaching concerning health and healing, we must recognize that the Bible views man as a "psychosomatic" unity, a unified being related both to the creation and to the Creator. The Bible does not teach that man is part body and part soul; instead man *is* body and man *is* soul. Not only our souls, but our whole being is to be consumed by devotion to God (**Matt. 22:37; Rem. 6:13; 12: 1**). It is because of this unity that our physical condition is intimately related to our relationship to God.

Paul's warning against unworthy participation in the Lord's Supper cannot be understood outside of this context (**1 Cor. 11:27-32**). Some of the Corinthians were sick and some had died because they failed to examine themselves and to discern the body. It is not my purpose to discuss the nature of this discernment, but simply to point out the clear teaching of this passage in regard to health: Unworthy eating and drinking caused illness and death. Clearly, the sacrament can have a negative effect on health. But does the Lord's Supper have a positive influence on health? The New Testament nowhere makes this point explicitly, but we can conclude from various considerations that worthy participation in the Lord's Supper has a positive influence on health. First, as we have already

noted, man functions as a unit. Thus, we would expect the "spiritual" nourishment of the sacrament to have some effect on physical health. The sacrament nourishes and strengthens the whole man.

A second line of reasoning leads to the same conclusion. Theologians have long debated the *nature* of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper but the vast majority of Christians throughout the centuries have insisted that the believer *in some manner* partakes of Christ in the Supper (cf. **John 6:53-59; 1 Cor. 10:16**). Union to the risen and ascended Christ is strengthened by the sacramental meal. Significantly, this union is the source of new life (**Eph. 2:4-5**) and the basis for the future resurrection of our bodies (**1 Cor. 15:22**). By feeding on Christ in the sacrament the believer receives *eternal, bodily* life (**John 6:54**).

Does this mean that **frequent** and faithful partaking of the Supper makes us healthier? We must be cautious that we do not invest the sacrament with magical powers. Nor is there any simple correlation between health and worthy eating and drinking. Paul, after all, suffered his thorn in the flesh despite his faithful and frequent "breaking of bread." Still, if we understand health in the comprehensive Biblical sense, we can and must say that faithful partaking of the sacrament makes us healthier. In it, we share in the life of the ascended Christ.

(James 5:14-16 is also of interest in this connection. The rite described there should not be understood as a sacrament, but it is fully consistent with the Biblical view of health and healing that we have described above. Healing is not simply a matter of administering the appropriate drugs, but fundamentally a matter of prayer and anointing.)

The reviving power of the Lord's Supper should not, of course, be separated from other elements of the Christian life. On the other hand, there is no justification for arbitrarily ignoring the sacrament's central place in a healthy Christian life, as Franklin Payne does in an otherwise excellent discussion of the relationship between spiritual and physical health (*Biblical/Medical Ethics*, [Crossway, 1985], pp. 83-85). Moreover, the views discussed above in no way deny the importance of proper nutrition, exercise, and other preventative measures, nor the necessity to administer drugs. Each of these things has its place. But the entire life of man is ultimately sustained by feeding on the Living Bread offered in the Word and Sacrament. We must continually recall that man cannot live by bread alone, even if it is whole wheat!

The Root of David

David Chilton

In Revelation 5:5, the Lord Jesus Christ is called *the Lion* from the tribe of Judah, with reference to His work as the Conqueror, the One who has obtained the New Covenant on behalf of His people. This is a well-known expression among Christians, and has its origins all the way back in the prophecy of Jacob in Genesis 49. But the same verse in Revelation also calls Him *the Root of David*—a very strange expression, to our way of thinking. We can more easily understand Isaiah's term: "a shoot from the stem of Jesse" (Isa. 11:1). As a descendant of Jesse and David, Jesus could be called a "branch" (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8); but how could He be called the *Root*? Our perplexity originates in our non-Biblical views of how history works. We are accustomed to thinking of history merely as if it were a cosmic Rube Goldberg machine: Trip a lever at one end, and a series of domino-like whatsits and thingamajigs bang into each other, at long last producing a whatchamacallit at the far end of the machine. By pure cause and effect, each event causes other events, in direct chronological succession.

The Biblical View of History

Now, this is true—but it is not the whole truth. In fact, taken alone and autonomously, it is not true at all, for such a thesis is evolutionary in its as-

"History is not simply a matter of the past causing the future; it is also true that the future causes the past"

sumptions, rather than Biblical. History is not simply a matter of the past causing the future; it is also true that *the future causes the past!*

A simple illustration might help us understand this. Let's say someone finds you packing a sack lunch on a warm Saturday morning, and asks the reason for it. You answer, "Because I'm going to have a picnic at the park today." What has happened? In a sense, *the future—the planned picnic—has determined the past.* Because you wanted a picnic at the park, you then planned a lunch. Logically, the picnic preceded, and caused, the making of the lunch, even though it followed it chronologically. [In the same way, God desired to glorify Himself in Jesus Christ: therefore He created Jesse

and David, and all the other ancestors of Christ's human nature, in order to bring His Son into the world. The Root of David's very existence was the Son of David, Jesus Christ. The "effect" determined the "cause"!

"The Lord Jesus Christ is thus presented in the most radical way possible as the Center of all history, the divine Root as well as the Branch, the Beginning and the End, Alpha and Omega."

The Lord Jesus Christ is thus presented in the most radical way possible as the Center of all history, the divine Root as well as the Branch, the Beginning and the End, Alpha and Omega. And it is as both the conquering Lion and the determining Root that He has prevailed so as to open the Book—the New Covenant—and its seven seals.

The Center of History

Interestingly, however, when St. John turns to see the One who is described in this way, he sees a *Lamb* standing before the Throne. The point of the text is not that Jesus is "lamblike" in the sense of being gentle, sweet, or mild. Christ is called a Lamb, not because He is "nice," but in view of His work. He is the Lamb that was slain, "who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). Thus, *the center of history is the finished, sacrificial work of Christ.* The foundation for His mediatorial kingship (Christ as the Lion) is His mediatorial atonement (Christ as the Lamb). It is because of His sacrifice that He has been exalted to the place of supreme rule and authority. Christ has attained victory through His redemptive suffering and death on our behalf.

This means that Christ's understanding of creation and history originates not from history itself but from the fact that He is both the Creator and Redeemer of the world. Thus, on the basis of His Person, His work, and His exalted position as Savior and World-Ruler, Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, stepped forward to the Throne of His Father, and took the New Covenant out of the right hand of Him who sat upon the Throne (Rev. 5:7). This is how the prophet Daniel described it: "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given

dominion, Glory and a Kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; And His Kingdom is one which will not be destroyed." (Dan. 7:13-14)

"The Redeemed of the Lord are moving toward the complete dominion God had planned as His original program for man."

The central message of the Bible is salvation through Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant. Apart from His work, through which He acquired and eternally possesses the Covenant, there is no hope for mankind. He has overwhelmingly conquered so as to open the Treaty of the Great King; and through Him we too are more than conquerors.

The Destiny of History

In the closing verses of Revelation 5, St. John goes on to show the Church's response to all this in worship, praising God for the outcome of Christ's work. Their "New Song" exults in the fact that Christ has purchased His people out of the nations, not only to redeem them from sin, but to enable them to fulfill God's original Dominion Mandate for man. As the Second Adam, Christ sets His New Creation the task Adam forfeited—this time, however, on the unshakeable foundation of His death, resurrection, and ascension. Salvation has a purpose, a saving to as well as a saving from. Christ has made His people to be kings and priests to our God, and has guaranteed their destiny: "Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth" (v. 10). This shows us the direction of history: The redeemed of the Lord, already a nation of kingly priests, are moving toward the complete dominion God had planned as His original program for man. In Adam it had been lost; Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, has redeemed us and restored us to our royal priesthood, so that we will reign upon the earth. *Through the work of Christ the definitive victory over Satan has been won.* We are promised increasing victories, and increasing rule and dominion, as we bring the Gospel and law of the great King to fruition throughout the world.

The Church in St. John's day was about to experience a time of severe testing and persecution. Already they were seeing what, in a sane age,

could scarcely be imagined: a union between Israel and the evil Beast of the pagan Roman Empire. These Christians needed to understand history as something not ruled by chance or evil men or even the devil, but ruled instead from God's Throne by Jesus Christ. They needed to see that Christ was reigning now, that He had already wrested the world from Satan's grasp, and that even now all things in heaven and earth were bound to acknowledge Him as King. They needed to see themselves in the true light: not as forgotten troops in a lonely outpost fighting a losing battle, but as kings and priests already, waging war and overcoming, predestined to victory, with the absolute assurance of conquest and dominion with the High King over the earth. *They needed the Biblical philosophy of history: That all of history, created and controlled by God's personal and total government, is moving inexorably toward the universal dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The new and final age of history has arrived; the New Covenant has come. Behold, He has conquered!*

Jordan, continued from page 1

revelation of the supernatural Glory-heaven. The heavens declare the glory of God in the special sense that they are a copy of the archetypal Glory of God" (*Images*, p. 20).

We need to make only a slight adjustment to what Kline has written: The Glory Cloud did not come into existence and become visible until verse 3; the hovering Spirit of Genesis 1:2 was not yet shining forth light.

We pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Genesis 1 gives us the first fulfillment of this principle. As the light shone from the Glory Cloud of God's heavenly throne environment, that environment began to be reproduced on the earth. As we have seen in earlier essays, heaven is the blueprint for earth, and man is the master builder whose task it is to build the earth in the image of heaven. God spent one week laying the initial foundations and showing man how to work (which as we have seen is the theological reason why the creation week must be seen as six literal days). Just as man labors to make earth like heaven, so did God.

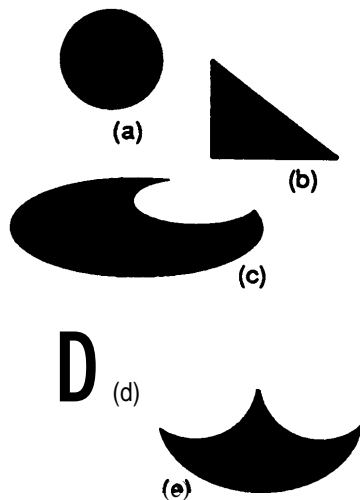
Thus, what happened in Genesis 1:3 was that the heavenly blueprint—the Glory—was made visible. The proceeding Spirit shone His light from the Glory -Blueprint onto the earth, and the earth began to be made after the glorious image of heaven.

No wonder God said the light was good!

The *Right Answer?*

Michael R. Gilstrap

Five figures are shown below. Select the one that is different from the rest.



Several hundred years ago, the inhabitants of a small village in Lithuania were faced with a very difficult problem. A wierd plague came into town. What was curious about the plague was its symptoms in its victims. As soon as an individual contracted the disease, he went into a deep, almost death-like coma. Most folks died within 24 hours, but occasionally one recovered.

The problem the plague presented was the **un**-afflicted had an extremely difficult time determining whether a victim was **dead** or not. Everyone who caught the disease **looked** dead, but how **could** they be sure? Remember, state-of-the **art medical** technology in the early 1700s was a far cry from the bits and bytes of the 1980s.

One day a fellow by the name of **Sigfried Latourette** was walking past the graveyard. This was during the height of the plague. He heard a strange sound coming from one of the fresh graves. He investigated (albeit carefully, who knows what kind of spook is going to pop up out of a new **grave**!) and found that one of the folks the village *thought* was dead, was alive.

This new development really presented a **problem** for the city fathers. They called a town meeting of the whole town to decide what could be done to prevent such a situation from happening again. There was a great deal of discussion, but in the end the town divided into two groups, each with a different solution to the problem.

The largest group decided that **each** "corpse" should be buried with food and water beside the

body, and an **air** hole rigged **from** each coffin to the surface so the "corpse" could eat, **drink**, and breathe until it was discovered.

The second group thought that idea was too expensive. They proposed implanting a twelve inch long stake in every coffin lid directly over the "corpse's" heart. After the lid was finally closed, there would be no doubt as to the appropriateness of the internment. If the plague hadn't gotten the poor sap, the stake certainly would.

Each of the two solutions was workable. **I'm** happy to report that the town opted for solution number one. The interesting thing tome is the road each group took in arriving at two quite different solutions. Group one asked the question, "What must we do in the event someone is buried *alive*?" Group two asked an entirely different question: "How do we guarantee everyone we bury is *dead*?"

Each group asked different questions.. looked at the problem from a different perspective, and came up with totally different solutions to the same problem

Which brings us to the exercise at the beginning of this article. How did you do on the five figure exercise? If you chose figure (b), waytogo! You picked the right answer. Figure (b) is the only figure made up of **all** straight lines.

However, if you chose figure (c), you're right,

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too! Figure (c) is unique in that it is the only one that is asymmetrical.

Several of you may have chosen figure (a). Congratulations! You're right, too. Figure (a) is the only one with no **points** of discontinuity. What about (d)? If you picked (d), give yourself a pat on the back. You're right, too. Figure (d) is the only one that mixes a straight line and a curved line to make the figure.

And if you picked (e)? *Correct-o-mundo!* Right again! Figure (e) is the only figure which looks like a projection of a non-Euclidean triangle into Euclidean space! How's that for a different perspective!

The bottom line is that depending upon your point of view, each of the figures is the right answer.

More than One Right Answer

The problem many of us have in solving the puzzle is that we have been trained to think that there is always *one and only one* right answer. All of our lives the quest for the *right* answer has been our constant mission. Studies tell us that by the time each of us finishes college we will have taken over 2,600 quizzes, tests, and examinations—all after that one all-encompassing commodity—the *right answer*. We have been programmed to **find** that *right* answer, and then quit.

If we're taking a **test**, we **find** the right answer and get a good grade. If we're solving a family problem, we hit upon a solution, implement it, and then wait until another problem arises. If we're faced with a business crisis, we assemble our management team, create a solution, and then punch out until the next crisis. Not very often do we take the time to find the *second* right answer, and not once have we taken the time to **find** the *third*, *fourth*, or even *fifth* right answer to our **problem**. Many times it takes several attempts at solving a

problem to **find** the best possible solution. Yet, most of us never get that far. The five figure puzzle is an example of this.

The fact is, life simply doesn't fit into our neat little molds. It doesn't conform to our quest for the *one right* answer. We all live lives **fraught** with ambiguity and **filled** with vagueness. Problems are not always black on white, in fact, they rarely present themselves in such crystalline fashion. We are constantly bombarded with a never-ending barrage of grays: problems where solutions are not immediately **apparent**.

As Christians, we have learned that we must re-think and **re-evaluate** many of our practices. This myth of the *one right answer* is a practice I believe each of us should abandon. If we are to be the best that we can be in whatever field of endeavor the Lord has called us to, then we must learn to look at problems from many perspectives. We must learn to develop several solutions, and then pick the best from among them. After all, just put yourself in that poor bloke's place who caught the plague and would have recovered if it hadn't been for that stake sticking out of the bottom of the casket lid!

As Karl **Albrecht** points out, if we are forever getting down to exclusively *brass tacks*, then we shall never have the opportunity to consider **steel** tacks, copper tacks, plastic tacks, sailing tacks, income tax, syntax, or contacts.

(Parenthetically, let me hasten to add that I am not implying we live in a universe devoid of absolutes. The Trinity is both one and many. In this essay I am merely calling attention to the "many ness" perspective of life that all of us have a tendency to overlook. There are *right* answers. At times there is **only** one right answer to a problem, for example, confessing faith in **Christ**. In another situation, however, there may be two, *three*, or *four* right answers. Our task is to find the best possible solution, not simply quit after finding the **first** workable solution.)