

redemption. No person can be saved on the grounds of his works or his obedience, for both are flawed by his fallibility. The grounds of our salvation are the grace, mercy and love of God and the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Salvation is conditional. The alien sinner must believe, repent, confess Christ with the mouth, and be immersed in water to be

saved from past sins.

The baptized believer must be faithful to Christ (i.e. continue to be a "believer" in the Bible sense of that term) in order to go to heaven. If he sins, he must repent, confess, and ask God through Christ to forgive him. All of this we know, and can teach with confidence, and have so taught for many years.

What God may or may not do beyond this in response to human contingencies is unknowable, hence to teach anything in this area is to invade the realm of God's awful silence. We need to heed the words of God as quoted by the Psalmist, "Be still! and know that I am God." ~

From The Reflector, January 2015 issue.

NAVARRE MESSENGER

March 15, 2015

Know the UNKNOWABLE?

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call for directions and more information (850) 939-8109

Navarre church of Christ

8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

Place Stamp Here

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible Class for all ages_9:00 AM

Morning Worship Service_10:00 AM

Evening Worship Service_6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages_7:00 PM

This entire publication and previous issues are available online at

navarrechurchofchrist.net

along with some more useful information

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

James W. Adams

For one to assume that he knows the unknowable in religion is the greatest ignorance and the grossest presumption and arrogance. True indeed is the statement, "Wisdom is knowing when you cannot be wise" (Paul Engle).

Some have erroneously concluded that Revelation precludes mysteries. To us finite human beings, the omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, absolutely perfect God revealed in the Bible, being infinite, of necessity must be incomprehensible in many aspects of His nature and operations. Only that knowledge

of God which is necessary to enable humans to glorify Him in their present earthly environment and to fit them to live with Him eternally in the world to come is revealed in the Bible. To perfectly comprehend God in His nature and operations one would have to be Deity himself. The most perfect revelation of God to man is

Jesus Christ and His teaching as set forth in the New Testament.

Recognizing man's inability to comprehend perfectly and to be able to explain and vindicate God's nature and operations, Moses said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong to us and our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut 29:29). Jesus voiced the same sentiment when he said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power" (Acts 1:6). Paul enlarges on the matter by saying, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory," (1 Timothy 3:16).

When Paul wrote, these facts had become matters of revelation, but in Old Testament times they were mysteries of Messianic prophecy. In the Bible usage of the term, any unrevealed thing is a mystery.

All of this is noted to emphasize the fact that there are things about God which are not clearly revealed to us, hence are mysteries. The silence of God in reference to such matters must be respected. This precludes speculation and fruitless and divisive wrangling.

What theologians call, "The Incarnation," i.e. the fleshly manifestation of the Eternal Word in the person of Jesus (John 1:1-4, 14), has been the occasion of endless controversy beginning in the second century. Arius was probably the most able and vocal of the

"church fathers" who denied that Jesus was deity. His famous confrontation with Alexander at the Council of Nice (325 AD) resulted in the official acceptance of the "doctrine of the Trinity" and the condemnation of "Arianism."

Since then, until now, there have been endless controversies over speculative theories concerning the interaction of Deity and humanity in the person of Jesus. Most of them have been futile exercises in semantics and/or nebulous vagaries of human imagination growing out of man's presumption of a knowledge of the unknowable.

The Bible speaks of the "Godhead or Godhood" (Romans 1:20). It says nothing of the "Trinity" or of "hoomasia [Gk. "of the same essence"]. It further teaches

that Jesus was God (John 1:1-4, 14; 8:58; 19:7). It also teaches that Jesus was a man, human, having all the normal characteristics of a human except that he lived above and without sin (John 3:5; Hebrews 4:14-16). He was the Son of Man and the Son of God. Why not teach what the Bible says about his person without feeling the necessity of explaining whatever in his nature and functions seem to be at variance with human analogies?

If God had wanted us to have this knowledge, no doubt he would have revealed it unto us. Our logical (?) deductions concerning the nature of Deity derived from statements of Divine Revelation are flawed by the limitations of human experience and the incapacity of human analogies. While I do not accept many of the aspects of Soren Kierkegaard's exis-

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong to us and our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law"

Deut 29:29

tential philosophy, the following excerpt from his writings expresses a basic fact which all Bible students should recognize; namely, "No analogy perfectly accords with evangelical fact" (Training in Christianity, p. 66).

No human analogy known to me can make three one and one three, yet this is what the Bible teaches concerning the Godhead, and I believe and teach it. No analogy can explain how the man Jesus could

be at the same time God and man and maintain both his Godhood and his manhood while he fulfilled all that the Bible says he came to accomplish and did accomplish. Yet, I believe and teach all the Bible says without fully understanding the how of the matter. One does not have to understand a fact to believe it. I do not understand fully the workings of a computer, but I am using one.

Brethren, let us quit arguing about the unknowable and keep on preaching what we know.

All people of accountable years - who have their right minds are sinners and condemned to eternal ruin.

Salvation can only be had through Jesus Christ and the blood he shed for our