

THE SPIRITUAL (SUPERNATURAL) NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE, 5 pgs

1. **The Bible** is not what one would expect from a religious book. Instead of being focused on religious things only, it includes religious things as part of the totality of reality. It is chiefly an account rooted in real history – descriptions, names, dates, people, places, events, circumstances, means, motives, and reasons. Truth is ultimately related to what is. God has shut everyone up to the fact of reality, and everyone has to deal with that reality which is. So we have to face the reality of the universe having an existence and a comprehensible form, and the reality of the uniqueness of Man. Christianity is not just a lot of bits and pieces – history has a beginning and an end, a whole system of truth, and this system is the only one that stands up to all the questions that are presented to us as we face the reality of existence. In other words, **it is only Christianity that gives adequate answers to all the critical questions**.

2. **Reality consists of 2 parts:** the seen and the unseen, **Heb.11:1-3**. Practically, there is little difference between being blind and in the dark. Then again, even if there is enough light, what difference does it make if you don't recognize what you are looking at for what it really is? Both terms can express being clueless. [The same can be said of the relationship between deafness and hearing. Understanding and believing pertain to recognizing the truth when you do hear it.]

EYES OPEN

*⁸When the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he would confer with his officers and say, We will mobilize our forces at such and such a place. ⁹But immediately **Elisha, the man of God**, would warn the king of Israel ... ¹⁰So the king of Israel would send word to the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king ... ¹¹The king of Aram became very upset over this ... one of the officers replied. Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in the privacy of your bedroom! ¹³Go and find out where he is, the king commanded, so I can send troops to seize him ... ¹⁴So one night the king of Aram sent a great army ... to surround the city. ¹⁵When **the servant of the man of God** got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. Oh, sir, what will we do now? the young man cried to Elisha. ¹⁶Don't be afraid! Elisha told him. For there are more on our side than on theirs! ¹⁷Then Elisha prayed, O Lord, open his eyes and let him see ... he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire ... **2 Ki.6:***

3. **Reality may also be thought of as all supernatural.** We are completely immersed in the supernatural matrix of the universe. **Everything witnesses to the glory of God.** **Necessary Being** requires that If anything exists, God must necessarily exist. [Aseity - the power of existence (being) resides only in God himself. The existence of everything else is dependent, contingent upon that.]

a. Everything in the natural world originated or had it's beginning as God's creation.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, **Gen.1:1**.*

*By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible, **Heb.11:3***

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God ...

God created everything through him ... In the Word was life that was the light of men, **Jn.1:1-4**.
for all things in heaven and on earth were created in **Christ** — all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers — all things were created through him and for him, **Col.1:16**.

In these last days he has spoken to us in a son ... **through whom he created the world**, **Heb.1:2**.

b. The continuation of everything in the natural world depends upon God's maintenance [**providence is purposeful sovereignty**]

He himself is before all things and all things are held together in him, **Col.1:17**.

The Son ... **sustains all things by his powerful word**, **Heb.1:3**.

This has all been **introductory** to the question of how we are to live supernaturally. Just as everything is a testimony to the glory of the God who created and sustains it, so is our living unto him.

the 3 Tenses of Salvation

I'm not ashamed of the gospel: it is God's own power for salvation [**past, present, future**] to all, **Rom. 1:16**

SALVATION includes all aspects of our rebirth: **past** – **justification**. God has dealt with the **guilt** of our sin; **present** – **sanctification**. God is delivering us from the **power** of sin; and **future** – **glorification**. God will deliver us from the **presence** of sin. In all aspects, the basis of our salvation is the finished work of Christ, and the instrument is faith – faith in prosperity as well as amid temptations and tribulations, the rough and tumble of life.

4. The basic Christian call **to be alive to God** is positive.

5. **Walking by the Spirit** may be described as living in the supernatural moment.

6. living in the Spirit is an active passivity.

a. **Life as a Christian begins with a one-time negative supernatural act – our death:**

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, **Rom.6:4a**.

We know that our old self was crucified with him, **Rom.6:6a**.

I have been crucified with Christ, **Gal.2:20**.

... [**by**] the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ... the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world, **Gal.6:14**.

b. This death is toward an end:

in order that ... [**we might be redeemed**] **so we too may live a new life** [**ie, a supernatural life**], **Rom. 6:4b**

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, **that we may (1) cease from sinning and (2) live for righteousness**, **1 Pt.2:24**

c. So Christian living proceeds from moment to moment first as a negative act of self-denial

If anyone wants to become my follower, **he must deny himself**, take up his cross, and follow me, **Mt.16:24**.

This daily death to self must come first if I am going to be alive to God. Furthermore, it is to be in the midst of the bloom of life (ie, when our sexual desires are strong) not waiting until our physical bodies lose their desire and zest for things. **We are to say “no” by choice, to die to self at the point when we are engaged in the vitality of a living moving life that could want those things and find enjoyment in them.** Here in the midst of the vigor of life where there is battle and strife there is to be a strong negative by choice and by the grace of God in denying and renouncing ourselves in regard to what is not rightfully ours.

¹¹... **consider [reckon] yourselves dead to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not allow sin reign [rule] in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, ¹³and do not present [or yield] your members to sin as instruments [or weapons] to be used for unrighteousness, [**It isn't necessary to always be in defeat.**] but present [yield] yourselves to God **as those who are alive from the dead** and your members to God as instruments to be used for righteousness, **Rom.6:**

Our obedience to the Gospel has freed us absolutely from the **power** of sin. In the same way we are freed now from sin's **prevalence [or dominance]** in our daily lives.

He has **rescued [delivered]** us from the power of darkness **and transferred** us into the kingdom of his dear son ... **Col.1:13**.

... just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your **members** as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification [holiness], **Rom.6:19**.

The Coming Day of Judgment or The Great Day of the Lord

Behold I will send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me ... The Lord of Heaven's Armies says, **The day of judgment is coming** ... On that day the arrogant and the wicked will be burned up like straw ... But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy ... On the day when I act, you will tread upon the wicked ... says the Lord ... Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord arrives. His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers ... **Mal.3:1; 4:1-6** [**Malachi began with the announcement of God's electing love, but ends with the threat of a curse. His dual thrust of mercy and judgment is echoed by Paul,**

Note the kindness and severity of God ... **Rom.11:22**

¹⁵ for John the baptist will be great before the Lord ... and he will be **filled** by the Holy Spirit ... ¹⁶ and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God [John, whose name means “the Lord is gracious,” turned Jews to Jesus], ¹⁷ and **John will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah** to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. [**Elisha's ministry** was characterized by judg-

ment and redemption and represents the coming of the Lord. Elijah came before Elisha and will be sent to prepare God's people for the Lord's coming]. **Lk.1:**

Then there followed a period known as the 400 silent years where there was no prophet in Israel

Prophecy at the birth of John the Baptist (the first prophet in 400 years)

⁶⁷Then his father, Zechariah, was **filled** with the Holy Spirit and gave this prophecy: ⁶⁸Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people ⁶⁹He has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David ⁷⁰just as he promised through his holy prophets long ago. ⁷¹Now we will be saved from our enemies ... ⁷²He has ... remembered his sacred covenant ... ⁷³with our ancestor Abraham. ⁷⁴We have been rescued from our enemies so **we can serve God without fear**, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness ... ⁷⁶And you ... will be called the prophet of the Most High because you will prepare the way for the Lord. ⁷⁷**You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins.** ⁷⁸Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, ⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death and to guide us to the path of peace, **Lk.1:**

Announcement of the birth of Jesus

⁸That night there were shepherds ... guarding their flocks. ⁹Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, ¹⁰but the angel reassured them. Don't be afraid! he said. I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. ¹¹The Savior ... has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! ¹²And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby ... lying in a manger. ¹³Suddenly, the angel was joined by ... the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, ¹⁴Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased, **Lk.2:**

Prologue

... the Word's ... life brought light to everyone. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. ⁶God sent John the Baptist, to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸John himself ... was simply a witness to tell about the light. ⁹The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹²But to all who believed him ... he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth [aka new creation] that comes from God. ¹⁴So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen the glory of the Father's one and only Son. ¹⁵John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, This is the one I was talking about when I said, Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me. ¹⁶From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ ... ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. JC has revealed God to us ... ²⁹The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! **Jn.1:**

¹⁶ we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, not just clever stories that someone invented. But **we saw the greatness of Jesus with our own eyes.** ¹⁷Jesus heard the voice of God, the Greatest Glory, when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice said This is my Son, whom I love and I am very pleased with him. ¹⁸We heard that voice from heaven while we were with Jesus on the holy mountain. ¹⁹**This makes us more sure about the message the prophets gave.** It is good for you to follow closely what they said as you would follow a light shining in a dark place, until the day begins and the morning star rises in your hearts, 2 Pt.1:

... I [**Jesus**] am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star [**sun**], **Rev.22:16**

⁴⁰As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be **at the end of the age.** ⁴¹**The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.** ⁴²They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear, **Mt.13:**