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B1145 – November 20, 2011
Doctrine Of The Father - Part 2

Today we're going to finish the event called The Emergence of the Church and we are going to go through six works of the Father to do that. We've gone through six works of the Spirit and six works of the Son and we're working backward so that now we come to the Father. And the way to think of this Trinitarily, if I can use that word. Think of the Father as the speaker, the Son as the message, and the Holy Spirit as the effects of that message. So when you think of the works of the Father, think of these six works as causes; these are causes of the plan; think of the six works of the Son as the content of the plan; and think of the six work of the Holy Spirit as the results of the plan.

We talked about six works of the Holy Spirit: regeneration, indwelling, baptism, sealing, spiritual gifts plus the intercession and the interceding ministry of the Holy Spirit. Then we went to the Son and we said He provided righteousness that is imputed to our account, He died and He rose from the dead; He provided eternal life, He directs the church from heaven, He does the priestly ministry, He also makes intercession and He is the Judge. All these things that He does are the center of New Testament revelation. All judgment, both for unbelievers and believers, all judgment has been passed to Him because He is a peer of the human race. The Father is not a peer who judges, the Holy Spirit is not a peer, only the Son is a peer and to Him all judgment has been given.

Now we're going to six works of the Father, and these are all in the area of causation. They are primarily things that are back behind it all, part of the master plan. So the means by which these things come to pass is not really in view, there are means, but we're looking at the causes behind the means. And these are what cause people to get stirred up; they have no problem with

means, but causation behind it bothers people. Big nasty words like election and predestination. Turn to Rom 8:28-30. People get fixated on these things because they have a pagan notion of causation, that's the real problem; the problem is not what the Father does, it's a false notion of what the Father does.

I want to start out, since we are dealing with causation again, with the basic difference between paganism and Biblical faith. The Creator-creature distinction is an absolute distinction. And its failure to understand the Creator-creature distinction that gets all the intellectual tools screwed up on down the line. I'm going to review that again because we're getting into foreknowledge, into predestination, and these things become big issues, and I'm convinced that half the issue isn't really an issue; it becomes an issue because we're sloppy in how we think about them and we get in trouble. The Creator-creature distinction is absolutely necessary to understand anything. If you are not solid on the Creator-creature distinction you cannot intellectually handle truths of foreknowledge and predestination, because what you do, and we all have this tendency, is to think of some idea, whether it's foreknowledge, predestination or election, and think of it as though it's something that holds for both God and man in the same way. And it's not! The Creator-creature distinction holds. The Creator's sovereignty is not the same as human choice. People tend to think they are but they are actually two different things. One is a quality of the Creator and the other is a quality of the creature. There's a correspondence between them, there are certain analogies, but there are also points of dis-analogy. That's why I always come back to the Creator-creature distinction. So that when we think of causation down here in the created order, how we would cause something, say starting a car, a mechanical and chemical process, then we take that idea of causation and project it onto God and we come out with a cold, mechanical God. That's wrong, that's how we think about causation but that's not how God causes things. But people think that way so they get upset with God electing and predestinating and all the rest of it. It's a false notion of causation.

That's the pagan view of causation. One of the features of God is that He is Personal, He's a Personal God. Whatever causation He causes is ultimately personal and not cold, heartless and mechanical. But on the pagan side, where the Creator-creature distinction is denied, the bottom line is that what is back of everything is an impersonal Fate or Chance. You can go to movies

like 2001 where Kubrick and Clarke really knew what they were doing, and that's why in that movie you will see the tumbling black monolith at the start of the film and at the end of the film. In ancient mythologies they spoke of the Tablet of Destiny. Clarke knew what he was doing, Arthur C. Clarke was a very smart pagan and when he filmed it, he designed it like the classic picture we all have of the Ten Commandments. But the problem is there's no person who wrote it, there's no person there, it's just a cold stone tablet.

That's the problem. Without God you have impersonal Fate and Chance and what that does... and this is something that we as Christians need to understand, is to discover there is an agenda going on. Don't buy into this idea that ideas are morally neutral, that there's no hidden agenda going on behind the scenes. The hidden agenda there is that you are trying to avoid personal responsibility; I'm just a victim of my environment and I can't do anything about it, poor me. And what this mentality does is it gives the impression that I can sin and get away with it and there's no one there to whom I will ultimately answer. So what the pagan mind does is effectively create a universe that is safe for sinners. That's the agenda. So all the intellectual hoopla ultimately has a spiritual issue going on of manufacturing and reinventing a view of the world, a view of the universe that keeps the sinner safe from an intervening God to whom they are responsible.

All that by way of introduction because now we look at Rom 8 and get into the hard stuff because this deals with causation. Rom 8 is a good place to look at it because verse 28 all Christians cling too, "all things work together for good," and we like that promise, "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Maybe as you've read this before you didn't notice the verb in the last clause but if you look at that text, and you look at that last clause, what is the verb? The verb is "called." Notice the tense, it says "those who are the called," it doesn't say all things work together for good for everybody, it says the called and that's a select group of humanity and that's part of the answer to the problem of evil. All things somehow work together for good for this select group called "the called." "those who are called according to His purpose."

It's that clause that leads Paul into the next two verses by way of explanation. Paul likes to do this. He likes to back up and start going through the logic of it all. Here's a case where he does that. "all things work together

for good for those who have been called.” Then he qualifies the calling, the calling is not a chance thing; the calling is not something that involves human agency here. The calling is “according to His purpose.” “Who are called according to His purpose,” it doesn’t say according to their purpose. It doesn’t say according to a committee’s purpose. It doesn’t say God and His consultants; it says “His purpose.” The pronoun “His,” is it singular or plural? Singular, God’s purpose, no one else’s purpose, it is God’s purpose alone, His final purpose.

So he’s made some assertions here that really make us start to think and that’s why in verse 29-30 he expands that. What is His purpose? We are “called according to His purpose,” but tell us more about the purpose Paul. So he does, in verse 29 he starts out with “For,” to explain it. “For whom He foreknew, He also predestinated,” the first clause, “whom He foreknew,” foreknowing is active voice but the “whom” is a pronoun in the accusative, it’s not who, it’s “whom He foreknew.” And of course this is an accusative or direct object of the verb, “He foreknows,” “whom He foreknew.” He foreknows whom? Again notice the direction of the action of these verbs. We want to keep watching the verbs and their voice and how they point. “Whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren, 30 and whom He predestined,” again the accusative pronoun, “whom He predestined, these He also called,” again it’s the accusative, it receives the action of the calling, “and whom” again “whom” is the relative pronoun, “whom He called,” so again object of the verb “call,” “He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

So we have five actions listed here in this text: foreknowing, predestining, calling, justifying and glorifying. You’ll notice that they all hang together, all these divine actions; it’s not that a lot of people are foreknown and then only some of those are predestined, that’s not the way the grammar reads. Here’s a silly mathematical example, if five people are foreknown, how many people are predestined? Five and only five. If five are foreknown, five are predestined, five are called, five are justified, and five are glorified. It’s not like there’s five foreknown and four predestined, and three called and two justified and one glorified. The grammar doesn’t permit that. All these actions are part of the same salvation package.

When we start to discuss these, and the first discussion hangs on this verb “foreknow,” here’s a question to think about. Based on the grammar of verse 29-30, is it proper or not to say that foreknowing is the same as omniscience? No, it’s not right, because omniscience, God knows all things, that’s a label for a divine attribute: God knows all things. But foreknowing can’t be a synonym of omniscience because He’s saying here that those whom He foreknows He justifies, and we know He doesn’t justify everyone.

Furthermore, this is only talking about people; it’s not talking about dogs, cats, rocks, the planets. Those are objects of His omniscience, but as far as Paul using the verb foreknowing those are not objects of His foreknowing. So foreknowing is not a synonym of omniscience. Foreknowing is something else, something more restricted than just God’s omniscience. And it appears to be, from the sentence structure, that it is a knowledge in eternity past of the elect or the saved people, that in this case, (we’ll get into predestination and destiny in a minute but right now) foreknowing, wrapped up in its very meaning implies that God has already focused, He’s already focused on a subset of the overall human race. Why He focused on that subset, that’s the debate. Is it because, as some people would say, in eternity past He looked down the corridors of time and saw if someone was going to believe or not, and those whom He saw were going to believe He foreknows? That sounds good and many times people have a good motivation in using that, what they’re trying to do is get what they consider real choice in there. The problem with that is, if you turn to Matt 11, it quickly runs into problems with the text.

Matt 11:20, The Lord Jesus is reproaching certain Jewish cities who heard Him and who rejected Him. And He makes a stunning statement. Verse 20, “Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent.” Notice first of all, are these people ignorant of revelation? No, because verse 20 says they’ve been faced with the revelation. Here’s the Lord Himself, the living Word of God, who has gone into these cities, shown His life clearly. Are we going to say that well, they really didn’t see because it wasn’t clear? Are we going to say that the Lord Jesus was so sloppy, ineffective and confused in His life that it wasn’t a clear revelation? Surely not. The Lord Jesus was a clear revelation. The problem here is if somebody is complaining that they don’t see the light, and there’s a bulb here and you can’t see the light, that’s not an indictment of the bulb, that’s an indictment of your eyeballs. So He’s rebuking these people because

He had done the miracles, He had revealed Himself, and they didn't repent, they didn't respond.

So He says "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred" now look at this, look at this sentence, "if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented," let's stop and think about that. If the revelation that had come in New Testament times to Chorazin and Bethsaida had come in the Old Testament to Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented. Well, who controlled the amount of revelation they received? This shows, it seems to me, that God controls the amount of revelation given to men, wherever He wants to give it, whenever He wants to give it. And to some men He gives more revelation and to some men He gives less. Isn't He saying here in verse 21 that Chorazin and Bethsaida had more revelation than Tyre and Sidon? I think so. So if God gives different amounts of revelation to different people at different times in different places, and He knows in advance...I mean, He's our creator. He knows. For example in Tyre and Sidon, if these people had received the revelation He just gave Chorazin and Bethsaida, these people would have believed. Whoa! That means that God did not give sufficient revelation for these other people to believe, they had sufficient revelation to be condemned because that issue is clear in creation alone; but God's saying I could have made them repent if I gave them more revelation, but I didn't do that, that's not in My plan. So who controls the shots!

That's the problem with saying God foresees someone would believe and He chose them; no, because the set of circumstances that would stimulate belief or not are controlled by God Himself. So that's the Matt 11:21-22 problem. And it's not a new problem, this has been thought through centuries ago, the Reformers thought hard about this one because this is one of the passages that they had to cope with in this discussion.

While you're going back to Rom 8 go to 1 Pet 1:1-2 because here the word "foreknowledge" occurs again. Look at the last clause of verse 1 and the first clause of verse 2. "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens [or foreigners] scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen," notice passive voice again, they "are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God." That's another example showing how the NT text ends, when it describes this eternal intimate knowledge that

is back of everything, it's this word foreknowledge. However we define it, it has to be that which is the first thing He does, He foreknows. And it's His choice because He has set up history this way.

Maybe another example might help us think through this. Forget about salvation for a minute. Let's just talk about Satan and the angels, forget about man. God created Satan; we have to say that, right? When God chose to create Satan did God know that Satan would fall? Sure He did. And He chose to create the other angels who would fall; He created angels who didn't fall. That's why I said I think to me one of the most helpful mental exercises to do get a handle on some of this is to think of yourself if you were an author of a story. C. S. Lewis uses this. Think of it, if you were the author of a story, when you write your story would your characters that you write about have character and choice? Would they respond? Would they do this? Sure they would, you would create them with choice because that's what characters do. And you'd create a story and a plot and maybe it's a suspense novel or something, whatever kind of story turns you on, but you're writing your story and you'd have this character and that character, this character and that character, and they'd be all genuine people interacting. But you're writing the story. They are doing what you want them to do because they're your characters in your story. That's a way to look at history. This cosmos that we're in, we're His story. He's the author. He writes and He puts us into existence with choice. We'll come to the choice thing in a little bit, but we're responsible. He judges us.

So we have responsibility, but the whole thing, all the revelation here and the non-revelation here, and the angels here and Satan here, man here and Jesus there, all that together is a story that He chose to write. And nobody twisted His arm and said God, you've got to write the story that way. He chose freely to write the story. We often don't like that because we're afraid that that makes God the author of sin, but it doesn't. If you don't hold to the fact that God is the ultimate author then you've got a real problem. If you do not hold that God is absolutely sovereign, then you've got to ascribe sovereignty to something else and to what do you ascribe it? Man? Chance?

If God isn't sovereign over all, He cannot be sovereign at all, because by definition sovereignty is over all things. We can debate the linkages that go on here, and this is why I tried to show why certain things we don't believe

the Reformers said correctly or said clearly. Remember we were talking about the atonement and classical Reformed theology holding to a limited atonement and we said why? Well, they're concerned with not making the work of Christ go to waste. We can appreciate why they say that. But the weakness is that there are texts in here, like 1 John 2:2, that show that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the whole world, and it's kind of artificial to try to ram it and cram it and jam that text. We said back then that one way of viewing this God as sovereign over good and evil is to look at it asymmetrically, by which we mean to show that God's sovereignty over good is more direct than God's sovereignty over evil. That is, it's not symmetrical; He's not sovereign over good in the same way that He's sovereign over evil. He doesn't share the same relationship to evil as He does to good. How to explain that we don't know; all we know is that He's not the author of evil. Yet He controls evil; He created the universe according to a plan that had evil coming into the story, it's His choice to do that.

I want to chase a thought here too, because I'm trying to show you that all of Christian theology hangs together, all these parts. When you start working with one part and you get fixed on that one part, the relief comes when you back off and go to some of the other parts and think this through. Let me show you how to do that. Here's an example: we're talking here about God as sovereign, and He's sovereign over evil, and He created a universe deliberately, by a free act of His choice, He created a story that has an evil subplot in it. And we're saying, (we can have an image in our heads, and people have had this image in their heads when they've talked this way), that God is so powerful He does this in an unfeeling way, totally detached; that God is a big Greek statue and He never moves, there's no feeling, no emotion involved. How do we know that's an incorrect image of God? Because of the Second Person. Whatever evil God brings into existence in His story, who is it that gets stuck in the middle of it? He does. So the incarnation. We say, oh gosh, why has Christianity got the Trinity and the incarnation and all these hard things? Because that's the way God is. But they're also there for the reason that they protect all the other truths.

When we say God deliberately created a story with evil in it, but He put Himself at the center to experience that evil. He's not like Allah; Allah doesn't get dirt under his fingernails. The God of the Bible does; the god of post-Biblical Judaism stays aloof, He doesn't get down here down and dirty

but in Christianity God does get down in the dirty. And that's what the incarnation is all about. So the incarnation, by going from the sovereignty thing over to the incarnation and back again, sort of balances your soul a little bit here; it keeps this in perspective, that God is not doing this like He's totally detached and insulated, doesn't sweat it. No, He got right in the center of this thing. Why did He do that? We don't know why He did that, we just know that He did it. And maybe someday He'll share. Gee, you know, I had a trillion different stories I was thinking about and I chose this one, it was the best one for the publisher. Maybe He had a reason, maybe it showed His character more broadly, maybe He'll share His reason with us, but right now we have the words of Paul, of Him, through Him and to Him are all things.

In the Rom 8 passage, he says we are "the called according to His purpose," only one singular pronoun. How He does that we do not know all the details but we have to say at the very least that He has access to our interior. We do know that we can make certain statements at the boundaries of this problem. We know He isn't responsible for evil. But while we're saying He's not responsible for evil, we have to say that He's sovereign over evil, because otherwise evil is unleashed as an uncontrolled power over which we would never have victory. God has to be sovereign over evil. That's the good news of verse 28, that's why "all things," *all things* "work together for good." They wouldn't work together if God weren't sovereign over the whole story; otherwise the promise has absolutely no validity, it'd be just a guess, He does the best He can do. We have theologians, we even have some evangelicals now talking about open theology, where God doesn't really know the future, He sort of sits there and wonders what we're going to do. What a sorry God that is, He's going to take His cue from you and me? Hello! The God of the Scripture doesn't take His cue from you, me or anyone else. He is a self-contained God who would have been perfectly at home without even creating us to start with, so let's get perspective. He doesn't need us around. He has created history to go this way and that's the way it is, period.

Having said that, let's see if we can get some content to His work. Go back to these four nouns: foreknowledge, predestination, calling and justification. Foreknowing we can define not as omniscience, but as His focused knowledge upon those who in eternity will be the saved people, the body of the saved, and in particular this is talking about the Church here. We're not talking about Israel; the context here is the Church. Then we talk about

predestination. In the previous verse, if you back up to verse 29, you get more of a flavor that hints at the content of predestination. Notice what it says, He “predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.”

A couple of comments: the word “predestinate” is not the same as the word “foreknow.” If it were, two different words wouldn’t be used. Two different words are used because they mean two different things. Predestination emphasizes the future destiny, the fact that God has a plan. Jesus Christ is the plan, by the way, notice, “predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.” The word “predestinate” doesn’t apply to those who reject Jesus Christ. Down through history we’ve talked about some of the people, some extremes in the Reformed movement have talked about double predestination. What they’re trying to say is God is sovereign over evil, but they do it in a way that He’s sovereign over evil in the same way as good, so that it’s symmetrical. I can’t find any place in the Scripture where the word “predestinate” is applied to the unsaved. It doesn’t apply; it is used with a certain personal flavor, and the flavor has to do with the person Jesus Christ. It’s as though God says I set in motion a universe that I want conformed to My Son, that plan, that design of eternity future, that’s what I mean when I say I predestinate.

That’s why in a verse like verse 29 “that He might be the first-born among many brethren,” the Lord Jesus. See, the Lord Jesus is the center of the predestination. It’s not just individuals that are saved, the flavor of the word doesn’t have that; the flavor of the word centers on Christ, Jesus Christ. That’s why in Eph 1, that great long passage, occurs in that way, as future history coming to its destiny in Christ Jesus.

Let’s go on to the third action of the Father, He calls. There are many different uses of the word “call” but in Rom 8:29 clearly the usage of this “call” is the call to salvation, because in foreknowing He foreknows us before we’re born. He predestinates us in that He has marked out our destiny in the person of the God-man Savior. Next He calls, so that’s the point in history when He calls us to believe, He calls us to believe the gospel. And it is a genuine choice, but He’s calling us to that choice, it’s not something we crank out ourselves.

If you want an example of this, again for the mind's eye, for the imagination, here's a good example to think about. Think about if you were there in the garden after the fall, and you kind of looked under the bushes and there's Adam and Eve. Who spoke first? God or Adam and Eve? God did. So who called? Did Adam and Eve call for God or did God call for Adam and Eve? God called for Adam and Eve. So with who, then, lies the initiative in calling people to salvation? God. You can see this in your own life. I'll bet most of the people in this room could think back as to how you became a Christian, and I think you could write a 2-3 page story about it; you could probably narrate events that happened in your life prior to the time. You didn't just wake up one day and believe; it was the result of a sequence of things that were going on in your life that led up to that point. This is why, when it comes to evangelism, there's a practical application here for this. This is why when the word of God is taught we have to be careful that in our zeal to win people to Jesus Christ that we don't create peer pressure, we don't put out guilt trips, we don't manipulate trying to get decisions for Christ because when we do that, we get decisions all right, but are they the "call" of God? See, everybody is at a different place, and you can't use the pressure for everybody to come on down. Maybe it's not time for everybody to come on down. So you've got Joe here and it is Joe's time, this message cut to his heart and he's called to believe. So Joe comes down. Well, Joe came to the meeting with Bob, his friend. Now Bob is sitting there thinking gee whiz, I look kind of unspiritual because Joe went forward, so Bob comes forward, but it's not his time to believe and he can't really believe because his heart hasn't been opened yet. It may be, one day next week, or next month, but this is not the time for that. And that's the problem with mass evangelism sometimes. I'm not knocking Billy Graham here, Billy Graham is a great evangelist, and if any of us live up to a tenth of our gift the way he does we'll be doing great.

I'm just saying you have to be careful, and you have to not be discouraged when you may be sitting there witnessing to someone and think oh, gosh, I've gone through the gospel with this person, what is the problem here; I mean, they can practically repeat the gospel back to me and they still don't believe it. That's right. Because no one can believe unless God calls. Now He calls us to witness and put the message and the content out there, that's necessary, but He calls the shots. You can't make anyone believe, and no evangelist can and no pastor can. All the manipulation in the world is just going to produce religious movement but it's not genuine belief. That's got to be God-called.

This is a work of God; He calls. He may use the doggonedest things to call people to salvation. We could go into some odd things; people have been led to Christ in the strangest ways because God's sovereign over all things. Every rule that you have for good evangelism is violated one way or another. I know of one Australian man who happened to be in Europe at the time and sat in on a lecture at a local university and the guy started going into Daniel and how Daniel supposedly prophesied these four kingdoms and all this future history, and he didn't even believe it, but this man heard that and he started researching the book of Daniel and through it he became a believer. So you don't have to march someone down the Roman road, the Holy Spirit can work through any passage He wants and apparently He does that a lot. There are literally thousands of people that become Christians and you wonder how on earth did they ever come to Christ? They didn't even have one tenth the gospel knowledge that we have. God still led them to Christ. That's not an excuse for being sloppy in evangelism, I'm just saying when God wants to call someone to Himself, He can do it.

So we have God's calling and that's the time when He brings all kinds of circumstances in and it may be a whole series of circumstances. By the way, when Paul uses the word "call" and he thinks of this particular call, do you suppose He had his own personal experience in mind? I'll bet he did; I bet when he used this word "call" he thought of himself, and he thought what a tyrant I was, I murdered people in the name of religion. And I was going along that Damascus Road and He called me, I wasn't looking for... was Paul looking for Jesus on the Damascus Road? No, he wasn't looking for Jesus, Jesus was looking for him, and Jesus called him, Jesus initiated that conversation, just like He initiated the conversation in the Garden of Eden.

We come to the fourth one, justification. We've gone over this a number of times so we spent a lot of time here. Justification is God the Father decreeing us to be righteous with Christ's righteousness credited to our account. It is a once and for all thing. It refers to something in time, not eternity; foreknowing and predestinating are in eternity, calling is in time, justification is in time, and glorification is in time. And glorification is, or can be thought to include (you get this by a concordance study of "glorify" when it occurs) regeneration. Glorification can include regeneration. It can also include resurrection so you could say God glorifies us at one point and He

glorifies again in resurrection. But it has to do with the work that the Holy Spirit does. This is another instance where, when we drew the relationship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, glorification is one of these works that explains all this work down here. When God made the decision to glorify us that included all this work down here of the Holy Spirit. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit all work together in this thing.

We go to discipline, child raising, Heb 12:5-6, this is the sixth work that God does and that is He chastens. It's a nasty word in the Hebrew, it's pretty strong, it's not just He yells at us or something, this means corporeal punishment as well as other kinds of punishments; He chastens. It says, "and have you forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons," Heb 12:5-6 is a citation, if you have a study Bible look in the margin and you'll see where it comes from. It comes from Proverbs; Proverbs is full of instructions to parents in child-rearing and this is one of those passages directed at parents in the Old Testament. "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; 6For those whom the Lord Loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." The analogy is with a Jewish dad and a Jewish son, so God does to believers and this scourge means corporeal punishment here.

I find very interesting in our day people just fly off the handle at corporeal punishment. Boy, what God could have done if the modern social worker had been around. Stick kids in time out so they can dream up the next nasty thing they're going to do when the time is up. Just think of the perfect society God could have produced. So now the kids run the home, the kids run the schools and the parents and teachers do everything they can to steer clear of the social workers and the lawyers. Which only communicates one thing to the kids: we are the authority and all we have to do is pull a few strings and get the teacher to make a mistake and then we'll get what we want, the teacher out of here. That's the problem. So the mechanism that we have to protect children against abuse now gets turned against parents and teachers. I'm not saying there aren't cases of abuse and we shouldn't protect against that, but for crying out loud, we've turned everything around and put the paddle in the hands of children so people who used to be in authority are now being abused.

This verse would be unacceptable in the eyes of these people. See what's wrong? They don't know child abuse if it came up and stared them in the face, because abuse has to be defined in terms of an acceptable standard of behavior. You can't define abuse unless you have a standard to define it with, and if you don't have the standard, you can't define what abuse is. So here's an example of a standard. God's character is a standard and He scourges His sons. Why does He do that? He scourges us because we are fallen, miserable, Adamic creatures.

The point is that God disciplines children and He sometimes does it very severely, and that is a work of the Father. That's why, when it says God disciplines kids, what He's doing here is He's activating the Holy Spirit. Remember we said the Holy Spirit is making intercession for us. When God says I want chastening, it doesn't mean He enjoys chastening, He says that these believers need to get shaped up. I mean, they're going to be living in My presence forever, I don't want brats around the new heavens and the new earth so we've got to teach them something. This chastening is the basis of this thing going on down here with the Holy Spirit, that Rom 8 passage where the Holy Spirit is making intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. He's seeing things that need to be changed. Okay, time for this one to change, and so He spanks.

These are the six works of the Father and I've separated them out for teaching purposes but you can't really separate them out, they're all interrelated, they are all part and parcel of the salvation package. We're going to move from the Emergence of the Church away from Israel to the rest of Church History. What has the Holy Spirit been doing in church history? Why do we have twenty centuries of this? What's happening? We want to go through that.

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