

Christian Renewal Focused on True Knowledge of Christ vs. Neo-Marxism then CBGM

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The Dividing Line 2018

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Greetings and welcome to "The Dividing Line." We've got a lot to get to today, a lot of exciting stuff. I'm excited. I'm not sure if anyone else will be by the time we get done, but I'm pretty excited about the program today.

First, we announced over the weekend, and you can find this information on our website, well, the initial information, detail, we're going to add stuff. We sort of threw this together really, really quickly so people would be aware of it. But we arranged the first of, it may end up being the only debate, I don't know. We'll see. There's possibility of one other debate during the course of this particular trip coming up in May. The trip via London to Johannesburg, up to Zambia, back to Johannesburg, up to London again, then to the Midlands, Glasgow, and finishing off in Belfast. So prayers appreciated. It's exciting, it's going to be great, but one bad infection and the whole thing really gets ugly.

So prayers for that. But we have confirmed the debate for the last, this is brilliant, the last day of the trip. The next morning I fly out, well, next afternoon probably. The next day I fly out and get back to Phoenix, Lord willing. So the last day of a long trip, you schedule the debate with the toughest opponent you could think of taking on and that, of course, is Peter D. Williams. Some of you have seen the debate that we did in London last year. And you've just got to give Peter Williams a lot of props. Why? First of all, he's one of the few Roman Catholic apologists that I can find who is willing to take on the tough topics; the vast majority of Roman Catholic apologists would not touch either of the topics that we've done with a 10-foot pole. They just wouldn't. You've got to give him props because the unbelievable radio broadcast we did, we've done two unbelievable programs, but the second one we did on the Reformation was really useful for everybody. It was very clear, very understandable, really laid things out well. He is always a gentleman, doesn't engage in cheap debating tricks like many other people do, and most importantly, he studies the other side. He actually listens to what the other side is saying. It's really bugged me to, I'll avoid names, but I'll listen to some of the more popular Roman Catholic apologists and they're repeating arguments from 20 years ago that have been thoroughly debunked, and they haven't bothered to read the debunking stuff. Now, I know, not everyone can read everything. I mean, the internet today, just making a decision as to what is important to listen to, who has any level of credibility, it's a complicated thing. But the point is he takes the time to study the other side, seek to

understand the other side. I don't care what the situation is, that helps a great deal. And so no matter what, a debate with Peter D. Williams is going to be useful beyond the scope of the night in which it takes place and so it's important to get them recorded and get them available and things like that.

So I forget what it was last year, he posted, I follow him on Facebook, and he posted something about indulgences. I mean, he is a believing that's the other thing about this, he's not a liberal, he's a believing Roman Catholic. I would say he's more Catholic than Pope Francis. He's certainly more Orthodox than Pope Francis is, which in and of itself is a contradiction when you think about it, at least in the modern form of Roman Catholicism, the Pope, you know, "I am tradition," etc., etc. That's a long story.

Anyway, he's not a liberal. He is a believing Roman Catholic and as such had posted something about indulgences available for such and such an activity, and so I contacted him and I said, "Okay, here's the topic for our next debate: resolved, indulgences constitute a fundamental denial of the gospel of Jesus Christ." He said, "Let's do it." So we've done one debate. My goodness, that was, when did we do those debates in was it Austin? Yeah, Austin at that television station with, what was that guy's name? Fastiggi. We did something on indulgences with Fastiggi and that was probably 1993-ish, maybe. They're all, well, everything is on Sermon Audio. '94? July '94. So you're talking a long, long time ago here, 20, almost quarter of a century. "Excuse me here, I need to adjust my dentures."

It's been a while but, look, it's most people see, the pressure that's going to be on me is that people who don't regularly interact with the best the other side has to offer figures, "That's a slam dunk. I mean, how can you make a respectable case for indulgences?" Well, Peter D. Williams will. And so, you know, someone comes into that debate just figuring, "Really?" I mean, I can sort of tell you where he's going to go. We know each other well enough. He knows where I'm going to go and I pretty much know where he's going to go. And I mean, there will be some things you can't always predict, but yeah, it's from my perspective, remember the debate with Stravinskias on Purgatory? That debate shed more light on the doctrine of justification than the debate I did with Sungenis on justification in that series on Long Island. It really did because here was an application. It shed tremendous light on the subject. And so that's what I'm hoping this is going to do as well. Obviously, justification is going to become central. By the end of the debate he's going to be arguing against Sola Scriptura, which, you know, you sort of have to do given the situation.

But this is going to be at All Saints Church in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Belfast, Northern Ireland. Couldn't have done that a few years ago. But we will be doing that, and that'll be on June 4th. June 4th. And so all of you who have given toward that travel fund, you're making this available. This is why we can do this kind of stuff, is people support the ministry, and we very much appreciate that. So June 4th, All Saints Church, Belfast, Northern Ireland. Myself and Peter D. Williams, "Indulgences Resolved." We even have it resolved. We've got this one nailed down. Which is good. Look, let's just be honest, anything that Peter D. Williams and I do together is going to be, you're going to have the

rules respected, it's going to be gentlemanly, but it's going to be pitched, it's going to be pointed, it's not going to have compromise. It's going to be what debate's supposed to be.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, Peter's not going to have five guys behind him with 20 different translations searching desperately for something that sounds like what we believe. Yeah, we know that group. No, it's gonna be really really really useful and so we're excited to mention that. But again, scheduling that for the last day of a nearly three week overseas trip may not be the smartest thing I've ever done, but we'll just have to trust the Lord to provide the energy to do that and I hope that you will pray for that.

Thanks, Hakeem, son of Ramallah, king of graphics. He's already posted what I said, that Peter D. Williams is more orthodox than Pope Francis. I'll be interested to see how Peter responds to that. He may or may not appreciate that, but I think quietly, you know, over, you know, at a pub someplace, he'll go, "Yeah, I think so too." But I won't hold him to that. I don't want to get the guy in too much trouble. He's probably getting in enough trouble as it is hanging out with weirdos like me. So anyway, so that's exciting, coming up in the trip in May. So please be praying about that.

You know, it's always been best when I start off with a biblical foundation upon which to make some comments about something. So if you want to look, click over to, turn in your Bibles, or for those of you still basking in the glow of the Shepherd's Conference, open the box, remove, part the tissue paper, don't get a back strain pulling it out of the box, but get out your Preacher's Bible. I saw one. You know who was out at the Temple when we went out there? Matt De Jesus. Matt was out there and he brought his Preacher's Bible with him. So he brought it to show me. So he had it in a backpack. So at the end of the night, he pulled that baby out. It is massive. Oh my goodness. That is, I mean, that's a pretty big Greek Hebrew text back there, but it's nothing compared to the Preacher's Bible. It's just unbelievable.

Anyway, Peter D. Williams saw it. He says, "You might think that. I couldn't possibly comment." There you go. I mean, that's the very next tweet that comes up after Micah's was Peter D. Don't want to get the boy in too much trouble.

So anyway, if you get out your Preacher's Bible and very, very carefully turn over to Colossians 3 I want to make some comments before looking at some other applications here. Colossians 3, "Do not lie to one another." Please note, when Paul uses this phraseology, *eis allelous*, he's talking about within the body. So there is to be honesty, and this is a discussion of how we are to behave within the fellowship of faith.

"Do not lie to one another, having laid aside," *ton palaion anthropon*, "the old man." The old man. So the humanity that we shared outside of the fellowship of faith, that fallen humanity, that humanity in rebellion against God, that unreconciled humanity, the sense is that since you've done this, this is a reality, this is what it means to be in the body, you have laid aside the old man "together with its practices," and some translations will say

"evil practices," but the word "evil" is not there, it's just sort of an interpretational aspect. So lying, being dishonest in interpersonal relationships, pretty common amongst mankind as a whole but in the body, you are not to lie to one another, seeing that there is a new reality that defines what it means to be in Christ and that new reality includes the laying aside, the putting off of the old man together with his practices.

So there is a new reality or a new creature in Christ Jesus, as he says elsewhere, and this new reality, verse 10, "and have put on." So you have a putting off and a putting on and they're both seen as things that have already happened. "And have put on the new," and you just borrow from the preceding, the new man, "the new, who is being," now it changes, in the language there's a change here. So the putting off, the taking on, already happened but the renewing is an ongoing thing. "Which is being renewed unto," it's the goal is "unto a knowledge," or some might say that epignosis, because it is a strengthened form, would be a true knowledge, or some others might say an experiential knowledge but it is an emphasized form, "a true knowledge according to the," eikon, "the image of the one who created him."

And now you go back again to this is a reality that's already taken place just as the putting off, putting on, created, being renewed. Pay attention to the, you know, I think every word of Scripture is inspired of God, and so we look carefully at what it says. So we've put on a new man that is constantly being renewed in the image, renewed to a true knowledge. So there is, Christianity is not Gnostic. It is not the gnosis that is the goal but the gnosis is a means used by the one who created us. And so there is no Christianity without Christ's self-revelation to his people. That's why doctrine is so important. That's why every church that abandons sound doctrine, abandons a recognition that it's God's intention that his people know who he is, dies. Just dies. Just, just gone.

We are being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of him who created him. A renewal, and you have to borrow that back, it's not repeated, it can be assumed in the Greek language. It would be easier for me looking at this to be over here. A renewal where, a renewal in which there is, and you have the negative here, "where there is no distinction," there is no marking off, "of Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but," and this is important to see, "but, Christ, all things and in all." Christ is all and in all.

Now, this renewing then, which is ongoing, this is part of sanctification, this is part of the work of the Holy Spirit of God, it involves the application of true knowledge of who Christ is, this is something that Christ is doing in his people by his Spirit. This is why we minister the word of God regularly. This is why we encourage people to be constantly in the word of God. This is why there's prayer. This is why there's fellowship. It's all bound up in this communication of this true knowledge which renews us to the image of the one who made us. So it all goes back to who made us, who created us in Christ Jesus. Christ is involved, the Father, the Son, this is Trinitarian. Again, you could never put all this stuff together without recognizing the action of the Trinity. But this renewal, and this is in the body, remember, not lying to one another, this renewal is a renewal that sees no distinction in who is being renewed. This is not a renewal that has one form for the Jew

and a different form for the Gentile or the Greek, the specific word used here is Greek. It doesn't look differently in the circumcised or the uncircumcised. The Barbarian, the person who would not be a part of the recognized ethnic groups of the Roman Empire, the Barbarians at the borders. The Scythian, a specific ethnic group. Slave and free. And eleutheros there would normally, doesn't always, but would normally be used of someone who had been a doulos, but no longer was. You could really see how in the fellowship of the church there could be serious ramifications of division, not only between these various ethnic groups, but what if you're sitting there and you still are a doulos, and you're sitting next to someone who once was, but isn't any longer. It might be possible for a person to question God's goodness in granting freedom to the one and not to the other in this life. Slave and free man in all of these things.

So when you look at any of these categories that are given to us, there was deep, deep history that could cause division in the body in light of the history of these groups. I mean, just the Jewish/Greek, Jewish/Gentile division. How many pages of scripture are dedicated to warning us against the divisions that are, I mean, we see those, Paul fights constantly against the idea of there being a Jewish Christian church and a Gentile Christian church. He recognizes this is the destruction of the faith and he fights against it. Even a verse we've all memorized, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The original context, all there is Jew and Gentile to make sure that we all stand equally before God so we can be justified by faith.

All of these, the Roman citizen might look at the barbaros or the Scythes as beneath them. You may have had Army veterans in the Roman legions who had fought in other lands, maybe even generations before. You think of the Punic Wars. You think of, you know, Rome and Carthage and there's a Christian church in Carthage. Cyprian, wow. I've often read Cyprian's letter to the Christians who were in the mines and there's nothing in there about how the Christians and the mines are divided because of their ethnic heritages and how there may have been people in the church in Carthage who had relatives, generations removed, who had fought against each other in the wars, in other battles that took place, in other contexts, maybe not just obviously in Cyprian's day, but these are general principles that you have to apply and realize the church brings together in a radically unified way people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, which includes tribes and tongues that had experienced sinful interaction in generations past.

And so Paul's teaching is the source of unity in this body is found in the putting off of that old man, which may have all sorts of concerns about what's happened in the past, and the putting on of a new man that is being renewed, not with a focus upon the individuals around me, but with a focus upon Christ, and since all the individuals around me in the church, likewise, are looking away from ourselves and toward Christ, he becomes the source of our unity, rather than any type of interpersonal issue where we try to solve intergenerational conflicts from the past. This is why you can have a Christian church in the Middle East. There is no way for modern politicians or modern religious leaders to solve the animosities that have existed in the Middle East for at least 1,400 or more years, and yet you can have a Christian church where Arab, Jew, every kind of, there's all sorts of kinds of Arabs, there's all sorts of kinds of ethnicities in North Africa and the whole

area there. In the Christian church, they sit side by side. They partake of the Lord's Supper. They listen to the word of God. They sing praises to Jesus Christ. They celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ because the source of unity is found in their common renewal to the true knowledge of the image of the one who created. The image is of Christ and if you are trying to create any other image other than simply that of Christ based upon a true knowledge of who he is and what he's done, you are not applying a biblical standard to the creation of Christian unity. And in fact, I would suggest if you're letting anything else in, if you're letting anything else in, then you don't really trust what has been given to the church in the scriptures as the foundation of what our unity is to be.

There's the text. If you're going to disagree with what I just said, you've got to go into the text and show where that's wrong or that's insufficient or that's not enough, and that's not what I'm hearing from my critics these days. Over the past few days, I've had a few interactions where once again, I have been stunned by the willingness of primarily Christian men, but Christian women as well, to insert into my mouth and into my mind beliefs, categories, expressions that I've never given voice to, but which flow from their particular worldview and their particular political worldview, which, and I believe, they're allowing that cultural and political perspective to turn and in some cases twist the biblical parameters as to how we are to have unity in the body of Christ.

I even had one man make the amazing statement that my rhetoric, and that's funny, when they start using vague terms, you know there's a problem because when I challenged this individual to give me specifics, not so good at doing that part. Nothing that he came up with had anything to do with the accusations he was making. So my rhetoric is liked by people who defend Hitler. Really? What in what I just said, and I just did say, I didn't have to mouth the words, but if you listened, if you listened carefully, which a lot of my critics just, they listen carefully to find stuff, but they don't listen carefully to understand, if you listen to what I just said, if you apply what I just said, I just said that the Bible refutes the neo-Marxist attempts to smuggle what is fundamentally a communist mindset into the church. It refutes it because it says the renewal that is taking place in every believer in Christ is focused upon him, it's being performed by his Spirit, and the means is the true knowledge of who he is and what he's done and it does away with the old man. So it does away with your old categories of thinking and it does away with any foundation for putting, and I don't believe in races, but some people use that term, one race or ethnic group against another in light of what their experience with one another has been because their experience with one another is irrelevant in the body of Christ. It died at the cross. It was nailed to the cross. All the sinful actions, done. Done. Nailed to the cross. Same book, by the way, Colossians, nailed to the cross. And so when someone says your rhetoric is liked by someone, what does that mean? I mean, logically, what you'd have to demonstrate is that what I'm teaching is supportive of some defense of Hitler, which is so absurd that no one would even bother to do it. So they won't, they don't go there because they know it would be so easily refuted and made to look as foolish as it really is.

So the same person, then a little while later, I see saying, "Well, his rhetoric could be seen as supportive of the Kinists." The Kinists? Seriously? I mean, you know, I talk

about, I've actually put myself out there and talked about my own history. One of the first couples that I knew of outside of my own family in my youngest days, and I've been told, "Don't talk about that anymore. You don't have the right to." Well, okay. I don't follow you as the Holy Spirit so I'm not going to listen to what you have to say. The earliest couple that I know of other than my parents were a mixed race couple, and so the idea that there is anything in anything I've said that would be supportive of Kinist theology may be the stupidest thing I've ever heard in my life. It requires such a twisting of context and intention that it's beyond my comprehension, and it requires such an overwhelming commitment to a crusade, to a cause that you could just simply dismiss utterly one's entire self-profession of what you believe and where you're coming from to just twist it into the exact opposite of what the reality is and it's frightening to see someone doing something like that.

In the process, I've discovered, for example, that you are not allowed today to do serious historical reading. In the middle of Hitler and the Kinists came the Civil War. And so if you acknowledge that there were many motivations and many issues that led to the Civil War, in other words, actually the only thing you can believe is that there was one reason and one reason only, and everybody that wore blue was good, everybody that wore gray was bad, and that's it. That's it. Evidently, everybody in blue was a Christian. Everybody in gray wasn't. And anybody who knows history knows that that is such a charade. It's just a lie. It's just a lie. Nothing is ever that simple. Nothing is ever that simple. But it has to be today because it needs to fit into our paradigm. It needs to fit into what we are forcing everyone to bow to. And if you don't bow to this, then there are certain words we will use of you and you will be dismissed from the table.

I was thinking on the way home last night, listening to a secular station, a news station, they had a story about George Washington University. At a stoplight, I mentioned to my family, we have this family thing where we can talk to each other. I said, "Man, when I get home, I've got to look this up." But George Washington University is doing a seminar on Christian privilege. Not white privilege. Christian privilege. So I get home, I put Christian privilege in. It's a thing. There's all sorts of stuff. Wikipedia entries. Is there anything that doesn't have a Wikipedia entry? Christian privilege. And so I guess now we're going to be told we need to give up our Christian privilege and I just go, is Christian privilege what happens to Vice President Pence whenever he says anything positive about the Bible or Jesus, and the entire culture and all the media elites become unglued and use every kind of four-letter word under the planet to rip and snort at him? Is that what Christian privilege is? I'm a little confused as to what that is. Is it if you're discovered having donated to Prop 8 in California, how you're drummed out of Silicon Valley, is that the Christian privilege? Up in Canada, where if you have a law school based upon Christian privilege, you can't do that anymore? You're not allowed to? There's no such thing as being able to have a Christian attorney before the law? Is that Christian privilege? I'm just trying to figure it out. Where's the Christian privilege in North Korea, I wonder, or China right now? I'm just a little confused about that.

But yeah, George Washington needs to warn us about Christian privilege, even though at George Washington University, if you are actually an Orthodox Christian, your chances

of getting tenure or having any type of meaningful are nil, they're still going to have something about Christian privilege. Doesn't that tell you this privilege thing might just be a little bit on the vacuous side? Just a little bit. Just a little bit. Yeah, just a little bit. Yeah, George Washington University. Wow.

So, I was thinking about not only that, but I listened to the briefing, and you can't listen to the briefing anymore without multiple times per week hearing about the utter collapse of meaningful, moral, and ethical foundations within Western culture, and you hear judges, you know, there was just today, there was a judge who died who was absolutely, he was the most overturned Federal judge, and he was proud of it because as he said once, "They can't catch them all." So here's a guy, wide open, "I will not do what I said I would do as a judge and follow the Constitution. I'm purposely trying to change things, and they can't stop me." The Liberal Lion, they called him and he died while still on the bench. I mean, these liberals will go until they drop because this is their whole meaning in life. That's why they're there.

And so, you listen to this stuff fairly regularly, and you listen to all this discussion of privilege. That guy, remember a few years ago, what, four or five years ago that Southern Baptist pastor in probably California, it's always a safe guess. Yes. Yeah, I think it was Danny Cortez, I think it was. Yeah. I think it was California. Anyway, who embraced a pro-LGBTQ perspective because his son came out as gay. He resigned as pastor because he said that he had come to realize pastoral privilege, that a pastor has privilege in the church and so he doesn't want to have any privilege. But they don't have anybody to take his place. I mean, I think it's good that he resigned for obviously other reasons. But this is the thinking. If you will think this through, if you will think through what's being said, "Well, you have this privilege and you have that privilege," and you know, if you're in the majority in one country, you might go to another country and you're no longer in the majority, you're in the minority, and so what is behind the thinking in the totalitarian left in our country. See, and this is why for decades now, public education hasn't taught you how to think but what to think, because if you were taught how to think, you would recognize the need to examine the presuppositions behind the positions being forced upon you. Today's American thinks emotionally rather than logically, and therefore entirely absurd presuppositions can be accepted by a large portion of the population because they don't recognize that they're there. The emotional content communicates the worldview presuppositions, but their filters are off for that. It's the emotional thing that they grab hold of.

And so all this privilege stuff, when you think about it, what's being said is we all need to have not equality of opportunity, but equality of outcome. So now they can't make this work, but when you think about it, there should be a lot of objection on these folks' part to the fact that the guys that played for Villanova last night in the NCAA finals, some of them, well, most of them are really tall. I didn't see anybody out there under about 6'1", 6'2". They're privileged. They should give up that privilege and let people that are 5'4 do the same things because, I mean, just think of the advantages that these men have. They just won a national championship. I mean, there's going to be a bunch of those guys. That one guy, D. Lorenzo or something like that, he led Villanova last night off the bench with

31 points. He's probably going to end up in the NBA. Man, you get in the NBA, you get a lot of money. There's a real advantage there. He's advantaged. He has privilege. And you're not supposed to have privilege because, you see, in the Communist worldview, there is no God who raises up one man and abases another. There is no God who makes men to differ. There is no God who makes one man 5'2".

You know, when I taught at this little Christian school one year, the basketball team, there was this one young man who was a tremendous basketball player but at full height as an adult, he may have been 5'4". Great shooter but, you know, when the other guy guarding you is 6'2", basketball is just not going to be your thing. And in the Christian worldview, you go, that's God's doing. You look to what he has gifted you to do. You look to the gifts he's given to you, and you're thankful for them. And you don't complain about everyone else. And you don't say to God, we should all be, everybody should just be 6'0". Just nobody below, nobody above. Everybody should just be 6'0". You don't do that. You recognize God makes men to differ. And you do not find in scripture this, you should be angry at those who have more than you. Now, if they get it unjustly, but see, these people are thinking that justice means we all have the same amount in our bank account at all times. That's not justice. That's not justice and it's not a Christian worldview that gives rise to that kind of greed and envy because that's what it is. It's greed and envy.

So when you think through what all this privilege talk is about, what it boils down to is they want not equality of opportunity, but equality of outcome and I hope you know what that means. From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. Now, he didn't make it up, he borrowed it from somebody else, but he made it famous. His name was Karl Marx. And that's why it is perfectly, absolutely appropriate to identify the foundations of, even when it's dressed in religious garb, this is neo-Marxism. This is Communism. And it's alive and well in the West, and it's taking over because the educational system was set up to allow it to do so. There are so many Communists in our universities right now, it's astounding in their worldview. They're all around us. And those of us that don't want that are sitting around going, "How'd they get there?" It's pretty obvious how they got there.

Now, in case you haven't noticed, Communism and Christianity do not get along. Communism inevitably persecutes believing Christians. Ask anyone in China or North Korea today. The scary thing is, if you talk to even, you know, middle-aged Americans today and say, "Do you know how many people died under Communist regimes in the last century?" I mean, you've watched JayWalking before, you've watched, you know, anybody these days can go out and ask these questions, and when you can show people pictures of Ronald Reagan, they don't know who he was, you don't expect them to know much more about this stuff. And of course, you've got all these people running around with the Che Guevara shirts on. Just mind-numbed robots. Just ask them, "How many people do you think died under Communist regimes in the 20th century?" I really wonder what kind of answers you would get from the vast majority of the American populace. There is no absolute number because how are we supposed to know? But pretty safely, 80

to 100 million. Yeah, that's what I said. Million. Look at Stalin. Look at Mao. Look at Pol Pot. Look at the Killing Fields.

I recently started writing, yeah, I was going to say reading a book while writing, and then my tongue got in front of my eye and I couldn't see what I was saying. I recently started reading a book about the murder of 3.9 million Ukrainian peasants and 1.1 million Russian peasants, so right at 5 million people between December of 1930 and into 1932. So 18 months. Starved to death by the Communist Russian government, Soviet government. Starved to death. I won't even describe. Dying of starvation is ugly and there was no need for it. It was done purposely to wipe out the Ukrainian Nationalist movement. Millions. Millions. People will march on Washington and promote the adoption of a governmental system that was guilty in the last century of the murder of millions of people as if they are the moral virtue warriors. Unbelievable. You know how they get away with it? People don't know. They've been deceived. They've been misled. They don't know. They're ignorant. There's no reason for the ignorance. I mean, the internet is still pretty good at finding stuff like that but it is astounding. It is astounding.

There is a reason why as Christians we should oppose Communism. Communism at its foundation rejects biblical standards regarding the nature of man and God's right as Creator to determine how his creatures live. When you think about the secular worldview that is the foundation of every application of Communism that has ever been established, there is a warfare between that system and the Christian faith. And it's easy to see why. Christianity tells us that man is fundamentally evil and that concentrating power in the hands of fundamentally evil men will result in bad things. And it always has. It always has. The idea of this utopia, this idea of this utopia where we're all satisfied with our loaf of bread and our half a jug of milk each day because that's what we all get, is absurd. No one's going to live that way. You always have the people in power getting more than everybody else because the Bible tells us their heart is desperately sick and wicked. They will lie to others. They will deceive others. And they will fulfill their lusts.

If you have a biblical anthropology, you can't believe this foolishness of the Socialist Communist worldview. It's absurd. You have to warn against it and you do so primarily by preaching the gospel because when you preach the gospel, you preach man is a sinner. God's law says this, man does this, therefore, the best governmental system is one where you spread power out instead of concentrating it in one place. Look at what happened with the kings in Israel. God said, "This is what's going to happen," and that's exactly what happened, right?

Now, Christians can live under any governmental system. And they do. Believe it or not, there are Christians in North Korea. Oh, Lord, pray for them. But that doesn't mean that when we have the freedom to warn against the evils of men, that we should keep our mouths shut and not warn against the evils of men. And so you will have to forgive me, I'm so very, very sorry but I will not keep my mouth shut when I see Marxism putting on Jesus t-shirts and parading around as evangelicalism. Those brothers and sisters may be very dedicated and they may be very sincere, but they're being used. There were lots of really sincere people that were part of the revolution that brought Marxism, Leninism to

power in Russia. There were all sorts of things that the czars had done that were unjust and unfair. But the solution was significantly more murderous than the problem. And those young people, they were zealous. They may have had good motivations, but they were foolish. Foolish in being used in that way.

One of the reasons I go over to this camera is I can't see Twitter. I could put it over here, I suppose, but I put a Accordance over here. I can't see Twitter. And so I do see that there are a bunch of things over there that I'll have to possibly respond to at a later point, or maybe not respond to at all. Honestly, the only reason I keep Twitter going is because there are a few of you that really do help me with show prep, with program prep. You send links that go, I go, "Wow, that's helpful," because I don't sit around doing that kind of stuff all the time. So I do appreciate that.

What am I going to do here? I went sort of long on that. So I'm going to hold off on the next Ehrman response for the next program, which you gonna be around tomorrow? Probably tomorrow because I've got something on Thursday. So we'll put Ehrman off for that because after sort of a heavy start to the program, there's something else I want to discuss that I'm all excited about, but I'm not sure how many of you will be.

So here's the deal. We've done pretty much a whole hour and so those of you who are, figured that was heavy enough.

[unintelligible]

Why? Because if you have to listen, if you have to watch this, everybody else does too, right? Yeah, right.

["Nobody is going to see you. You have to stay right where you are."]

No, I am, we are about to get geeky. We are about to dive deep and I'm well aware of the fact that there are a bunch of you in the audience going, yes, but then there are others... Look, we have a wide audience. What I want to talk about is related to the PhD studies that I'm doing right now. I've actually had time recently to make some, I think, serious advancements in my studies and so I want to do some basic introductory stuff. It's not a total presentation at all, but just some really, let's start here, let's see if we can lay this foundation. Fundamentally, by the time I get done, I'm going to do my best to explain to our audience something that the vast majority of scholars would say we shouldn't even bother trying but that's the nature of this program. We don't advertise. It's all word of mouth. And unlike Bart Ehrman, who showed such disrespect to our audience at the debate, you know, I get done my presentation, he says, "Very intelligent presentation, James, but I doubt anyone really understood it." Well, thank you very much. Our audience, we talk about stuff that almost nobody else talks about. Other people do in a scattered way, but, you know, we call you, what?

["I was just going to mention here, you go and say that, you even hint in that direction, and seven people dropped off the feed."]

Well, there you go.

["Seven."]

Well, 70 or seven?

["Seven."]

Just the number seven?

["Yeah, seven."]

It's the hour, man. Somebody had to go do something, get to work or something.

["See? They're not as bored as you think."]

Anyway, my desire eventually is to seek, you know, you look at some of the books I've written, I will address complicated topics in such a way as to try to make it understandable, not for stupid people, but for people who have not had the opportunity of getting the kind of advanced training in certain areas that would make it easier to grasp these things. And let's face it, in the majority of instances, it's the vocabulary. It's the specialized terminology someone doesn't possess that makes it difficult for them to access these things, not necessarily the complexity of the topic. And so King James Only controversy, the Forgotten Trinity, whatever it might be, this is something I've tried to do over the years to help people to understand these things and people have appreciated that, and that's, I think, one of the reasons that the Lord has put us where we are.

Well, I have mentioned in the past something called CBGM, Coherence-Based Genealogical Method. There are not a lot of people in the world that have a really good handle on CBGM. It is a specialized field of textual critical study. But look, I mentioned at G3, and you don't get props for doing this, but I think it's important, I mentioned in my presentation at G3 that if you're reading from the ESV today, and you read Jude 5, and your ESV says that Jesus delivered a people out of Egypt, whereas your New American Standard says the Lord did it, you've been impacted by CBGM whether you know it or not, and I think it's better to know something about the backgrounds of what's influencing the very text of what's being translated and hence preached, than it is to be ignorant of it.

And so, I don't know how long ago it was, a few months ago, I ended up, because of something in Twitter, doing a few minutes, maybe half an hour on CBGM and basically saying, well, we're applying computers to collations of Greek manuscripts, we're able to connect them together, there's different kinds of what's called coherence, you've got pre-genealogical coherence, and you've got coherence in various textual variants, and you've got local stemata and global stemma and unfortunately, the Germans designed all this, so all the terminology is really difficult to follow. And I sort of got into it, and people were like, "Wow, that's amazing. When are you going to do more?" It's like, when I figure it

out. And be really concerned about anybody who thinks they have it all figured out, because CBGM is still evolving. I mean, if you go online to use the tools that were used to edit the general epistles, initially, and then now the new tools that were just released a matter of months ago for Acts, the Acts of the Apostles, you'll see major changes between those two. So just at that point, there's going to have to be someday, someone's going to have to go back and get that other stuff from the general epistles up to speed with Acts, and my understanding is Mark is next, the gospel of Mark, that's probably going to be an advancement over what was used for Acts. And then you have further collations of manuscripts. You have further discoveries of manuscripts. The reality is that CBGM is being used in Munster, which is where really the center of one of the centers, but the most important center of Textual Study of the New Testament, there in Munster, it's being used in the creation of what's called the ECM, which is going to be, again, envisioned as the standard scholarly Greek New Testament but we all know, even once ECM is done, it's just a matter of time before you restart the process in light of, for the discoveries and the meaningful proper scholarly back and forth about how these systems work and refining how the computer analyzes things and so on and so forth. We've always known the computers were going to get involved eventually but what can they do? How can they help us? What are their limitations? That's where a lot of the conversation is right now.

And so let me give you, ECM stands for Editio Critica Maior. I didn't bring those in. I'm sorry. I have before. If you go back, I brought in Acts, the big four volume stack of stuff, and I showed you what ECM looks like as it's published, but it's also available electronically. I mean, everything anymore. Eventually, I would hope, there would be an ECM module in Accordance, Logos, BibleWorks, whatever. I'd love to see what's already been released. I'd love to have an ECM of the general epistles and Acts in that format but I have a feeling that's not going to happen until at least the gospels are released, at least have Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts, but I've heard that Revelation is going to be thrown in there before some of the gospels. So who knows? Pauline corpus will come out as one and stuff like that.

Anyway, let me give you an example, okay? Let me throw this over here. All right. You got that? We're probably going to have to move over to this camera because I'll be using this screen. Okay. All right.

Let me give an example. Up on the screen, go ahead and throw it up there and what I'm going to do is I'm going to blow up my fonts so this is readable for everybody. All right. Here's Acts 16:32. Now, why would I be specifically concerned about Acts 16:32? Very easy. Right there. Up here in the corner here, there I just see the color. There's P45 and as I began the work on this PhD, P45 is my focus. It's probably going to stay that way, though it's sort of expanding beyond that right now. But anyways, so this is a textual variant wherein P45 is a witness and if you want, real quick here, you don't even have to change anything over there. I'll just drag it over. I was trying to drag it over. Oh, hold on. Hold on. I'll just drag this over. There. There is P45. I didn't have time. I was... I got to it right before the program. Sorry about that. That's the relevant page of P45 I was going to do some... I've gotten some filters where it sort of makes the writing easier to read. I was

going to blow it up for you and show you the variant and stuff like that. Just didn't have time. Sorry. But that's P45 and that's the page.

Anyways, let's go back to this. One of the reasons I was looking at this one is... Now this... Whoa, back, back, back, back, back. Clicked on the wrong thing. Most ministers or scholars, when they're translating the text... This is actually a relevant text if you look over it. "And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house." This is one of the household baptism texts, all right? So it's relevant. I am going to get the Presbyterian started. I can get books started in channel. He's going to be running around lighting his beard on fire.

So here's the... Now, let me show you how this might be relevant. There's a theological thing here. "And they spoke to him the word of the Lord together with all the ones in the house of him." But notice there is a variant at alto. Here's the variant over here. You go over here. Papyrus 127 says altois, plural rather than singular, "spoke to them the word of the Lord," rather than to him, and some of the argument is he's representational of the household, etc., etc.

So the variant actually is relevant at that point but you'll notice P45 isn't there, but P127 is. Here is the variant that I was specifically looking at, the word "tou kyriou," but you'll notice here's another substitution mark. You go over to the substitution mark in the... This is the Nestle-Aland 28th apparatus, and the original hand of Sinaiticus... I'm getting too loud because I'm too excited. The original... We need to sound much more scholarly.

Oh, you have a peak limiter? Okay, good.

The original hand of Sinaiticus and B, which is Vaticanus. So the two major uncials, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, both say "the word of God" rather than "the word of the Lord." But then the text, kyriou, is read by P45, P74, and P127, which are your... really the only three papyri witnesses in Acts at this point and, you know, one of the things I'm going to be looking at is the coherence of the most primitive text. One of my concerns about CBGM is its interface with history. So be looking at the coherence of the papyri. So P45, P74, P127 all read kyriou rather than God.

Now, this is pretty much all that most ministers who took Greek and studied textual criticism... and unfortunately, that number is decreasing more and more and more and more in, sadly, in the vast majority of seminary training in the United States today and I lament that in a major way, this is about all they would see. This is about the extent of the textual data that would be available to them. I mean, you know, and over here is textual data. It is interesting to me that your papyri line up with the Byzantine and 1739, which is a special manuscript, over against Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. This is a relevant textual question.

Now, let me show you... This is fun. Let me show you... If I can pull it up here. All right. Okay. Let me show you the CBGM.

[unintelligible]

What? Do I need a drum roll? I think everyone has gotten from me enough of the excitement. Here is the CBGM apparatus online. I can't blow the fonts up. Sorry. For Acts 16:32. You'll notice this is 12-14. I won't go through it right now. We'll do it at a later point but ECM uses a citation method that's really, really interesting. It allows for more exactness. It's not just a verse, but it's the actual word position.

[unintelligible]

What? Yeah, that is better. You zoomed in on it. That's good. That does help.

Here is your attestation for Acts 16:32, locations 12-14, which is where you have the A text, the Ausgangstext to kyriou, the Lord, and you'll see there's P45, there's P74, there's P127, and you'll notice in comparison to the Nestle-Aland, this is a much fuller citation of manuscripts. And you could click on any one of these and bring up information about them. Here is reading B, which is tou theou, 01-03. So they don't use the Aleph. That's just simply uncial 01. And 16:42 was not cited in the Nestle-Aland. The Nestle-Aland is meant to be a handheld text. You're meant to be able to carry it. So you can't cite everything. That's why the citations are shorter. Kyriou, without the article, is the reading of 05. 1891 omits it. And then these others do not contain it.

So if you've seen the CCNT module in Accordance and Logos, it looks, a similar look to it. But then here is the local... Let's see. Okay, here's the local stemma. And oh, you're going to have to back out of that because I'm showing you two things and one thing's getting lost. I'll just scroll it up. There you go. Up here is your local stemma and then here is coherence at variant passages graphically illustrated. And so you have the original, the Ausgangstext leading to the readings BC and D. These are editorial decisions, but can be examined and you can change things within the computer module. And then the coherence explained here. And then you ready for this? This is where you have to have it spread out. Here is, this is coherence. Come on, stop doing that to me. I guess I'm gonna have to drag it this way, the thing. And here is coherence in attestations. There you go. Let me center that baby up for you.

That, my friends, is part of what the computer can do in CBGM. Now don't feel badly. I'm about to give you some real basic fundamental things to start with. I just wanted you to see graphically what we're talking about. These are not, not, not, not, not, let me repeat that again, not. Whenever anybody sees this, they go, "Oh, that's a chart showing which manuscripts were copied by which." No, no, no, no. And no, again, it is not. And I'll explain that in just a moment. But this is what we're talking about the computers allowing us to do. Here's a general textual flow diagram down below. This is just for one variant and every variant in the ECM, you can bring this up, and this is what you're going to find. This is what you're going to find.

Let me, first of all, thank Gerd Mink and all the people in Munster. There is a lot of work here and it's primarily thankless. We should be, we first of all, need to be thankful that

God has given us peace in the world long enough for us to do things like this. That's a great blessing from God. And having, you may disagree with some of the conclusions of CBGM, but the reality is this, it is better to have this information than to not have it. Knowledge is a good thing. And this is amazing stuff. And this is available to anybody. I didn't have to buy access to this. I logged on, put that variant in, voila, there it was.

Now, 99.9% of your seminary graduates in the world have no idea what any of this means. No, it's not sad. It's because 98% of your seminary professors don't know what this means either. This is new. This is very new. I mean, new, I mean, like this for Acts is what, less than a year since this has been out and a lot of the conferences and stuff have only been in this decade. So it's not that, well, we're just not doing our job. It's that CBGM is incredibly complex, it is counterintuitive, and it goes against everything old fogies like me were taught.

For example, CBGM, if you function on the basis of CBGM, there is exactly one manuscript family that has been identified and no others. Only Byzantine. No such thing as Alexandrian text. No such thing as Caesarean. No such thing as Western. CBGM says they don't exist. They don't show up in the data. Think for a second, if you have, as I have in my Accordance setup, if you have Metzger's commentary on the New Testament, take out all discussion of text types, you don't got nothing left.

So this is a revolution. It's an absolute revolution. I mean, when I finish this, there's no question I'm gonna have to rewrite the King James Only Controversy. Have to. No one today can do graduate work in New Testament textual criticism without dealing with it. You may reject it, but you've got to give reasons why you reject it. You've got to, when the computer can go, "Look, look, look at these where everything fits together." You may go, "Yeah, but I don't think that's relevant because..." You gotta do it. The days of just going, "Well, you know, I've read Bart Ehrman's doctoral thesis, and it was primarily based upon identifying the proto-Alexandrian text based upon, you know, the 70% agreement and reading stuff." CBGM says, doesn't matter. Does that mean Ehrman's no longer a scholar? No. That's what scholarship should be doing. But you can't do anything in the future without recognizing this and without dealing with it and pushing back against it. That's what the Tyndale House Greek New Testament is a pushback. This is a pushback against that and the reasons for that, we'll get into it at another point.

So with that, okay, I put together a real quick, we only have a few minutes, well, I can go as long as I want to, but where did it go? There it is. Put this over here and go. How's that? Okay.

This is gonna be real short, isn't gonna be real long.

[unintelligible]

Well, what? No, of course not. I'm the audio.

Basic principles of CBGM, the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method, which is, there it is, on the screen. You need to start off with a fundamental assumption. And we can just go ahead and leave this on the presentation. They don't need to be looking at me anyway. That also gives me a second to take a sip.

One of the things that we need to communicate right off the bat, the CBGM requires the reader to at least conceptually recognize the distinction between a manuscript and a witness. The text that is written upon a manuscript must be seen at least conceptually as distinct from the physical artifact that is the manuscript itself.

Now, immediately people go, "Why?" And look, there are issues. I mean, I think that it is appropriate that we revisit and talk about the historicity of the text and the fact the text on a manuscript is written in history and it bears relationship to the scribe and what was going on around the scribe and all those things are true, but what you need to understand or you're going to end up really confused by any of the discussion, is that when you saw all those circles or those numbers in the CBGM in those charts, what's being referred to there is the text and not the physical manuscript. And what's important to understand about that, you'll notice the second thing I said down below, it has been well known that certain manuscripts like 1739 especially, but 1881 as well, though produced much later, were copied from very early, sometimes maybe even second and third century exemplars. What does that mean? You can have a 10th century text, a manuscript that was copied in the 10th century, but its text, because its exemplar was extremely earlier, is much earlier than the 10th century as to its relationship to the original text or as is normally used in CBGM writing today. When you talk about the initial text, there's a whole bunch of discussion about that these days too, has been for years. But the German phrase is *Ausgangstext*. *Ausgangstext*. The text of that 10th century manuscript might be representative of a third century witness.

And so what this explains is that when we look at the various charts that are produced by the computers in pre-genealogical, pre-genealogical doesn't matter, but genealogical coherence examples, you can have a manuscript that we would date to the 3rd century being below, in the sense of deriving its text from, a manuscript from the 5th century, which doesn't make any sense if you're thinking of those charts as just starting the 1st century, going 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and thinking of manuscripts rather than the text. We don't know how many generations of copying there were between the *Ausgangstext* and say P45, and the *Ausgangstext* and Sinaiticus, and the *Ausgangstext* and something from the 5th or 6th or 9th century. The theory is that what the computer can recognize are relationships that transcend just simply the historical transmission of text. CBGM recognizes that we've lost many, many manuscripts. You're not going to be able to put together what's called a Lachmanian stemma and trace the text all the way back to an archetype because there have just been so many tens of thousands of manuscripts that have been lost, and so what you have to do is rather than relating manuscripts in a historical setting, you relate the text that they bear to one another based upon common readings and common differences and there's a difference in how you look at that and how you apply that, so on and so forth.

Now, this is the only other screen we have. Principles of Parsimony. What's that supposed to mean? Well, look, one of the biggest problems in putting together a computerized analysis of the readings of literally millions of pages of text, of handwritten text, by the way, because that's what we have. We may have only between 5,700 and 5,800 fragmentary manuscripts in the New Testament. When you put that together, it's millions of pages of handwritten text. The only way to start getting a handle on that is to boil it down to something that's simple enough to be able to make sense out of. So here's what CBGM assumes. Like I said, you get this down and you're way ahead of most folks. You're way ahead of most folks truly out there today.

1. A scribe typically sought to produce an accurate copy of his exemplar. Now, you would think, "Well, duh," but this is important. If you assume that each scribe was just sitting there going, "Well, this is an interesting book, but I'm going to make it better," then you really don't have any reason to be relating manuscripts to one another and making, I'm sorry, witnesses. See, even I do it. It's going to be hard for us old folks to get rid of this. You don't really have any reason for relating texts or witnesses to one another if you don't have a foundational assumption that the scribes were actually trying to produce a meaningful copy of what they were copying. Now, where this immediately gets into problems are texts such as Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis, and P45. The scribe of P45 did not like when things were repeated too often and so there are what are called singular readings in P45. And the whole subject of singular readings, big issue in CBGM, may get to it sometime in the future. I'm just giving you these basic assumptions. The practice of CBGM is a balancing of these four things and sometimes you've got to prioritize one over another, sometimes they're going to be in conflict with one another, and that's just where we currently are. Five years from now, I have a feeling this list is going to be tweaked, improved, expanded in some way, shape, or form. We'll see.

2. When a scribe varies from his exemplar, it is more likely that he has done so because he is referring to an additional source than it is that he has freely chosen to edit or change the text.

So this is one of the big issues of CBGM is how do you detect contamination? What's contamination? Well, what happens when a scribe is copying one manuscript but he has two manuscripts, and he notices there's a difference between the two, and once in a while, he takes what's in one, and once in a while, he takes what's in another? That creates contamination that makes it almost impossible to figure out what the lineage of the text, the witness, is going backwards toward the Ausgangstext. And so one of the principles of parsimony is when a scribe varies from his exemplar, when what he writes down isn't what's in front of him, it is more likely that he's done so because he's looking at another manuscript and goes with that reading, than it is that he has freely chosen to edit or change the text, or that it arises from the scribe himself.

Now, there is a huge discussion of simple scribal error. There is a lot of editorial input. When you were looking at those graphics that I was showing you from online, the thickness of the lines, the color of things, a lot of that is editorial. You have to look at it and make decisions based upon, is this a scribal error? Is this simply misspelling of a

word that's handled differently than actual variance, and additions and subtractions and all the rest of this type of stuff? And I think you could make an argument against number 2 in some ways, especially because there's a tension between number 2 and number 3.

3. Scribes use fewer rather than many sources. You see the tension that exists between 2 and 3. This is important because when you get into using the CBGM modules, you discover that the computer can go, "Well, there's like 47 possible ancestors to this particular reading." And when you start trying to put together the stemma, it works best when you get the smallest number of ancestors. Let's just put it bluntly at that point. But there's a tension between these two and again, this is where, you know, this is not a situation where we just hand everything over to the computers and the computers are telling us what to read. I think a lot of people hear that when they first hear about CBGM. That's not what's happening. That's not what's happening. The computer is helping us to see patterns. It's not telling us what the decision should be. Not yet anyways.

But finally, 4) a witness will be closely related to any additional sources. In other words, any of those additional sources that may have been used, the witness that is the result of that copying is going to be closely related to them. It's not going to be like if someone's sitting around copying P75, which is a really wonderfully accurate copy of the gospels, they're not likely going to be also using Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis which just goes all over the place at the same time. There is going to be a recognizable close relationship between the witness and the additional sources that were used.

Now, as you can see, there are issues and there's going to be balancing going on as we examine things, but you've got to have this sort of as your background. Then the next thing that we'll look at when we have time to do so, the next thing we'll look at, you can go ahead and pull that down, will be types of coherence and I honestly think we'll probably just do like one type at a time because this isn't, it's just not natural ways of thinking. We don't normally think about how texts are related to one another. We just automatically think of manuscripts, not so much. You know, we don't make that distinction between text and manuscript, but it needs to be made while I would also say its connection, the connection between text and manuscript needs to be maintained as well in other contexts. That's why I've got a lot of questions about CBGM.

By the way, on, let me get the date, this is only relevant to folks in the Phoenix area, 7 p.m. on the 19th at Phoenix Seminary, one of the authors of these two books, "A New Approach to Textual Criticism," Tommy Wasserman and Peter J. Gurry. Dr. Gurry teaches out at Phoenix Seminary. Here is Dr. Gurry's, when it's, anybody who works in the field knows that color scheme. It's a Brill book, which means it was expensive. "A Critical Examination of Coherence-Based Genealogical Method in New Testament Textual Criticism," Dr. Gurry, he teaches out there. He is going to be giving a presentation on CBGM on the evening of the 19th. They ask that you sign up. So if you go to Phoenix Seminary, just look up Phoenix Seminary. I'm sure there'll be a link there. I don't have it for you right now. Sorry. I've already, I'm going, but let folks know that that's available. This is probably the most approachable, understandable, readable book on this subject that you can get hold of right now that just came out a few months ago,

SBL Press, by Wasserman and Gurry, "A New Approach to Textual Criticism: An Induction to the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method." If I'm confusing you completely, then maybe that'll help or vice versa. Who knows? Maybe reading both of them will allow you to grab hold of it and and get an idea. So there you go.

So you might say, "Wow, you were excited about that?" Yes, actually, I'm excited about that. And that's just a start and I think it's exciting stuff. And it does have a, I think, very important impact upon Christian apologetics as well. But we'll get to that only after we have a real understanding of what it's all about.

So wow, that was that was a weird program. Nearly an hour with some Bible teaching and a warning about neo-Marxist movements in the church, followed by the beginning of an introduction to Coherence-Based Genealogical Methodology. Yeah, who came up with that idea? Rich has nothing to do with the choice of topics or what we're going to be doing on the program. So please do not call and complain to him. I'm the one that came up with that. I was gonna sneak in some Ehrman stuff. We'll get to that tomorrow and go from there. So we will, Lord willing, see you tomorrow here on "The Dividing Line." God bless.