

The God Factor: Regaining Our Lost Dominion

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter. As the heavens for height and the earth for depth, so the heart of kings is unsearchable. Pr. 25:2-3

So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 1 Cor. 15:42b-43

The God factor: theory of everything

I first heard about the God factor in a *National Geographic* article as I waited for a dental appointment. It told about the Large Hadron Collider on the border of Switzerland and France. It's the world's biggest particle accelerator, a seventeen mile circular tunnel 320 feet underground, with huge magnets designed to accelerate subatomic particles (parts of an atom), mainly protons, to nearly the speed of light, and then collide with each other. The collision smashes the protons into subparticles for a fraction of a second, during which computers analyze the results in hopes of getting to the bottom of what makes everything function in the universe: the *theory of everything*.

Well, on July 4th, 2012, scientists finally announced the discovery of the Higgs boson, the "God particle," which seemed to confirm the existence of the Higgs field, responsible for determining the mass of all other subatomic particles. But a year later and they still don't understand what it is that makes up 96 percent of the mass in the universe—dark matter (because light can't escape the extreme gravity), and something else it was supposed to answer: the relationship between the four forces that keep everything in the universe from falling apart: electromagnetic fields, the strong and weak forces that hold an atom together, and the mystery of gravity that attracts massive objects to each other by warping time and space.

The Christ factor

One of the factors that helped Columbus conclude the earth was indeed round was Isaiah 40:22, where God "sits above the circle of the earth." If today's scientists would take a closer look at Colossians 1:17, they might get insight into to what they're looking for.

Verse 16 tell us that Jesus created everything "visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers." They were "created through Him and for Him."

But verse 17 goes right to the heart of the matter, or the heart of *matter*: "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" [cohere, are held, or bound together, Greek, *sunistao*, #4921]."

How could anything be plainer in telling us the *God factor*, the "unified field theory," the "theory of everything"? It is simply *Jesus Christ*.

But Paul doesn't stop with that. He goes on in the same chapter to explain a "mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints." It "is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (1:26-27)

In fact, the entire purpose of his ministry, that for which Christ worked in him "mightily," was that he "may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

In the next chapter he tells of his "great conflict" or struggle, his longing to see the believers "knit together in love." *Knit together* (*sumbibazo*, #4822), means "to cause to coalesce, to join together, put together" (*Thayer's*). *Coalesce* means "to grow together, fuse, to come together so as to form one whole; unite" (*The American Heritage Dictionary*).

God's original intent in creation was "that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in *one* all things in *Christ*, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Eph. 1:10).

This is the "fellowship/relationship" part of family life. The pleasure a father and mother have with their children is directly related to the fellowship their children have *with each other*.

Paul told the Philippian, "Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of *one accord*, of *one mind*... Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (Php. 2:2,4).

But fellowship and relationship must lead to *responsibility*. The first definition of *responsible* in *The American Heritage Dictionary* is "legally or ethically accountable for the care or welfare of another."

It's the definition that fits my purpose in this article. For I intend to show biblically that the *love* that bonds people together in Christ and makes them accountable and responsible to one another is the same *law* that holds the universe together, from micro to macro, from the atom to the cosmos. It's the *God factor*.

The instruction of wisdom

Governments based on freedom are called "democracies," because they are "government of the people, by the people, for the people," by representatives taken "from the people" (*Gettysburg Address*, Heb. 5:1-2).

But democracies, like kings, work only as well as the people that run them, that is, when their leaders are accountable to the people as their *true* representatives.

Because we're all messed up through the fall, we need someone *weak* enough in himself to understand us, yet *strong* enough in God to deliver us: someone totally aware of the awful limitation of his humanity, yet completely dependent on the awesome limitlessness of God's power. One who, though limping, stays in God's face. (Gen. 32:28-31; 49:10-11, Ps. 16:8; 22; 24:6; 25; 38; 40; 88, etc. 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 13:4)

Solomon gave us the book of Proverbs as a guide to *wisdom*, because "wisdom is the principle thing." "She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her." By wisdom "kings reign, and rulers decree justice. . . princes rule, and nobles, and all the judges of the earth." (Pr. 4:7; 3:15; 8:11,15)

Wisdom accompanied the Creator as "a master craftsman" during creation. "And I was daily His delight . . . and my delight was with the sons of men." Notice again wisdom operating in both the personal and the physical, the *God factor* behind everything. (Pr. 8:30-31)

Another theme in Proverbs and essential to wisdom is *instruction* through *reproof*, *rebuke*, *correction*, and *chastening*. It's the conditioning, breaking, and mellowing of the heart, undoing

the curse of the Fall. Five Hebrew correction words in Proverbs repeated 64 times in 52 verses reinforce the *fear of God*, the basis of wisdom. (Pr. 1:7,27; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 15:33)

The final chapter, Proverbs 31, begins with a mother *instructing* and warning her son, Lemuel, who is heir to the throne or already king.

If the mother is Bathsheba, her passion might have grown out of the terrible conflict over her sin of adultery with King David and his murder of her husband and the suffering that followed to the end of David's life (2 Sam. 11).

At any rate these nine verses to her son capture the purpose of kingly responsibility to "keep [guard] your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." A listening heart opens the door to wisdom: "Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord.. (Pr. 4:23; 8:34; 15:31)

Can you feel their pain?

What happened in the Fall of man is very simple, but impossible to recover from without outside help. Not just Adam and Eve, but "*all* we like sheep have gone astray." We eat of the Tree of the Knowledge through our addiction to the five senses—food, money, comfort, material things, TV, entertainment, Internet, reading, etc. (Is. 53:6, Gen. 3:5-6, Rom. 3:9-23)

Many of us are in some way so *intoxicated* by the "cares, riches, and pleasures of life," that we don't feel enough pain to empathize with or relate to others. We live for ourselves with little or no sense of responsibility to help the needy around us. (Mt. 25:31-46, Lu. 8:14)

Even the desperately needy have too many alternative "remedies" to turn to in place of God. "Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes [inventions, devices]." (Ecc. 7:29)

Proverbs 23:29-35 describes someone who drowns his troubles in alcohol. "They have struck me, but I was not hurt. They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" (v.35)

What God needs are those who will endure "the reproofs of instruction": whatever it takes to expose them to real pain, sorrow, rejection, darkness, desolation, and despair without *escaping from or medicating* it. Because what they'll feel is not their pain alone, but the pain of most of the people on this planet. (Is. 50:10-11)

King Lemuel's mother saw what would happen to her son if he allowed women and alcohol to dull his senses and destroy his sensitivity to the human predicament, *lest [he] drink and forget the law, and pervert the justice of all the afflicted* (v.5, Pr. 23:29-35).

She pleads with him, "Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy" (vv. 8-9).

This is our calling as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people," called to "deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter" (1 Pet. 2:9, Pr. 24:11, 1 Pet. 2:9, Rev. 1:6).

Incredibly, *the integrity and stability of the universe depend on it*: "Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation

groans and labors with birth pangs together until now." (Rom. 8:21-22)

This has to be true even from common sense: If the physical world exists for the personal and spiritual and not the other way around, then personal/spiritual relationships have **On high the priority of the times, for that's what that's another name for it. It's the God factor.**

Solomon's failure

For many years I wondered why God gave Solomon riches if He knew they would contribute to his destruction, especially considering that Solomon only asked for an "understanding heart," to "discern between good and evil," in order to rule with wisdom and justice (1 Ki. 3:10,11).

I actually felt a little critical toward God because of it, yet knew He was God. So one day I specifically asked God to show me why. Within a few minutes what I believe is the answer came:

Solomon inherited the wisdom David had gained through a lifetime of the pain and suffering that drove him and kept him in God's face. Through it we have the inexhaustible treasure of his more than 70 Psalms, and a similar number of psalms written by others under his influence.

King Solomon, then, is the outcome of the foundation laid by David. Jesus acknowledged the glory and wisdom of Solomon. Why would God, then, literally bait Solomon to his spiritual ruin? (Mt. 6:29; 12:42, Dt. 17:17)

For two reasons: First because the ultimate value of relationship occurs within the context of freedom. Love is meaningless unless we are completely free to chose another path. (Josh. 24:15, Gal. 5:1,13; 4:24-31)

This is why the book of Job is such a goldmine of wisdom. Under enough pressure to destroy almost anybody, Job kept enduring. Finally that pressure brought to the surface the wrong attitudes he'd bottled inside himself when he lashed out against his persecutors (Job. 30).

When God finally spoke, Job's eyes opened to a God infinitely more awesome and sovereign than he'd ever dreamed. The new security he gained through this insight liberated him to *pray* for those who had accused him. That's when his "captivity" turned and he ended up with much more than he had before. (Job. 42, Dt. 8:3,7f).

The book places human *freedom* deep within the heart of a *sovereign* God. Despite centuries of debate, the two opposites cannot be separated (Rom. 8:25,29; 11:2,22,32-36).

The second thing I learned that day is that God didn't "bait" or "tempt" Solomon to sin; He simply exposed him to enough *freedom* to *test* him and ultimately *refine* him through *revealing his own heart to himself* (Dt. 8:2, 2 Chr. 32:31, Job. 40:4; 42:5-6, Jer. 17:9, Rom. 3:19-20, 2 Cor. 3:18).

It's very similar to why God left Satan in the Garden of Eden to test Adam and Eve. Not to ruin them, but to reveal and expose the dead seriousness of their need to depend on God—*that without Him we can do nothing*. (Jn. 5:19; 15:5, 1 Cor. 3:11-13, 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 13:4, Php. 4:13, Jas. 1:13, Dan. 11:35, Zech. 13:9)

So 1 Kings 11 records Solomon's turning away to other gods because of his many "foreign wives," despite God's attempt to correct him through enemies He raised up against him.

What Solomon did with his freedom was to indulge in everything the Fall of man represents, everything that can possibly satisfy the senses.

He “surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.” “He had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines.” “Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure.” (Gen. 3:6, 1 Ki. 10:23; 11:3, 1 Jn. 2:15, Ecc. 2:10)

But what did it bring him? “The eye is not satisfied. . . . All is vanity and grasping for the wind. . . . For all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest.” (Ecc. 1:8,14; 2:23)

Hearing the rebukes of life

Solomon experienced the void and darkness that haunted Adam and Eve after they yielded to the same categories of sin. In his emptiness no doubt he could hear his dear mother pleading with him to turn away from “that which destroys kings.” (Gen. 3:6, 1 Jn. 2:16)

And, broken by sin, he awoke from his “drunken” stupor. For he wrote Ecclesiastes at the end of his life, when “strong men bow down” and “desire fails.” More than any other book in the Bible, it reveals the complete futility of human effort apart from God. (Ecc. 12:3-5)

“For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the *bondage* of corruption into the glorious *liberty* of the children of God.” (Rom. 8:20-21)

It is the 9-11 of man’s achievements: “I returned and saw under the sun that—the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all (Ecc. 9:11).

It’s the perfect joining of man’s freedom and God’s sovereignty—the *goal* of our freedom, the conclusion of doing it *our* way, that we might finally understand God’s mercy and grace in order that, ironically, we might *truly* be free! (Rom. 9:15-23)

It explains why God reveals Himself not to the “wise and prudent,” but to “babes,” and why He *waits* while we do our thing. And why we must *endure* until we come to the end of ourselves: “Therefore the Lord will wait, that *He may be gracious to you.*” (Is. 30:18a, Mt. 11:25; 24:13, Lu. 21:19, Jas. 1:3-4; 5:11)

For some, this wisdom can only be gained through experience (the *hard way*), as with Solomon. The phrase, “I saw/have seen,” occurs 19 times in Ecclesiastes. (Ecc. 12:3,5)

Does all this mean it’s better to experience sin and then repent, than to resist temptation and never fall? For “where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.” Paul raised the same question. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Rom. 5:20; 6:1-2)

Solomon did not have an advantage in using his “liberty as an opportunity for the flesh.” He reaped *much grief and sorrow* for his tiny “vapor” of pleasure, and paved the way for the downfall of his son and the whole kingdom. David had paved the way for the *success* of his son and fought all the battles that gave Solomon the kingdom. (Gal. 5:13; 6:8, Jas. 4:14, 1 Ki. 12)

Moses chose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward” (Heb. 11:25-26).

His reward was that he almost overcame death, like Enoch before him and Elijah after him. For we see him standing with Elijah and Jesus in their “transfigured” or resurrection bodies thousands of years ahead of the resurrection of the saints yet to come (Mt. 17:3, 1 Cor. 15:20f, Jude 1:9).

Stripped of joy and peace in his old age, exhausted, wasted, and humbled, Solomon’s wisdom returned to him. In “the fear of the Lord,” he began to “hear the rebukes of life” (Pr. 15:31-33, Ecc. 12:13).

Ultimate love

There is no solid date given to “the song of songs, which is Solomon’s.” I believe it may be the final product of his failure and recovery. (S.S. 1:1; 8:5-7, Ecc. 12:14)

Ecclesiastes deals with his emptiness without God. In light of the wisdom he had known, and with a thousand wives and concubines among whom he had not “found one,” it must have left a deep longing for an intimacy with God far beyond what most of us know (Ecc. 7:28, S.S. 1:6-7).

It is my opinion that God heard his cry and gave him what he longed for—an intimacy with the King of the Universe that matched the wisdom He had given him (Job 28:12-28; 42:5).

Didn’t Jesus rebuke Simon the Pharisee for his lack of love in contrast to the sinful women, who had been “forgiven much”? The flask of costly perfume demonstrated a depth of love far surpassing that of the religiously “upright” Simon. (Lu. 7:37-48)

Solomon’s love song is a poetic description of the intimacy of marriage. “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” And therein lies the mystery, I believe, of why “he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than” John the Baptist, which includes Moses, Enoch, Elijah, and David. (Eph. 5:32, Mt. 11:11).

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something *better* for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us” (Heb. 11:39-40).

The New Covenant added the dimension of a “new birth” through the Spirit, with the fulfilled promise of a unified “tabernacle”: For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body,” the Church! (Acts 2, 1 Cor. 12:13a).

This is the fellowship of believers *in one accord* the Old Testament spoke of only in prophecy or in the symbolism and worship of the Tabernacles of Moses and David (Ex. 26; 40:35, Lev. 9:22-24, 1 Chr. 15-16, 2 Chr. 6, Is. 16:5, Am. 9:11, Ac. 15:16, Ps. 27, 48, 132-133).

Those who have *experienced* such union and intimacy with God and His children understand what Paul meant by “the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God. . . .” (Eph. 3:9).

And for many of these believers the Song of Solomon describes the spiritual progression of this “marriage” within God’s family. It is the finished product of what God originally intended in creation. (S.S. 6:8-10, Acts 1:14; 2:1,46; 4:24; 5:12, Eph. 1:10,22-23; 2:13-22; 3:18-19; 4:1-16)

It is His “dwelling place,” “the mountain of the Lord,” “the Jerusalem above,” Zion, from which His dominion over creation issues, and through which the “manifold wisdom of God,” will “be made known *by the Church* to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.”

(Ex. 15:17, Dt. 12:5, 1 Ki. 8:30f, Ps. 2; 50:1-6; 76:2; 132-134, Is. 2:2; 11:9; 25, Ez. 20:”40, Joel 2:1, Mic. 4:1-2, Gal. 4:26, Eph. 2:22; 3:10, Heb. 12:22).

This is not to negate or do away with natural Israel and Jerusalem, which even now is “a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples,” as God lures them to their destruction. It will be a time when spiritual and natural Israel fight together with spiritual weapons and become “one stick” in God’s hand through Him “whom [we] pierced” (Ez. 37-39, Zech. 12, Rom 9).

The legal authority behind everything

The New Covenant was the highest fulfillment of the law, “written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.” (2 Cor. 3:3, Ps. 40:8, Jer. 31:33, Ez. 36:26,27, Heb. 8:10; 10:16)

It is “the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus” which sets us “free from the law of sin and death,” liberating us to love and serve one another, and so fulfills the whole law. (Mt. 12:30-31, Jn. 13:34; 15:12, Rom. 8:2; 13:8-10, Gal. 5:13-14, 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Jn. 4:7-8, Jas. 1:25; 2:8,12)

It’s the answer to Jesus’ prayer before His crucifixion, “that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me . . . and have loved them as You have loved Me” (Jn. 17:21, 23).

This love is the “kingdom of heaven,” the “kingdom of God.” It functions through God’s family, the Church. God’s idea of His Church is not a social organization, but His saints bonded together in intimate love. I believe it’s the earthly beginning of “the marriage supper of the Lamb,” (Mt. 4:17; 12:28; 16:18, Eph. 1:22; 3:10,21; 5:23-32, Col. 1:18, Rev. 19:9)

God’s legal government of Israel began with the “Tabernacle in the wilderness,” a symbolic picture of His “congregation in the wilderness,” “coupled together . . . that it might be one” (Ex. 26:1-18, Acfs. 7:38, Heb. 8:2; 9:1-2; 13:11).

Coupled together in Hebrew is *habar* or *chabar* [guttural h/ch]. (Strong’s #2266) It means “joined, united, bound, compact,” as in Psalm 122:3, “Jerusalem is built as a city that is *compact together*.” It’s the word-root of *Hebron*, the mountain occupied by the *giants* which put fear into the ten spies and caused Israel to miss their inheritance in Canaan (Num. 13-14).

God now controls the spiritual realm—our inheritance—and its giants, “rulers of the darkness of this age,” *through the prayers of His saints*, especially when they know who they are “in Christ” and agree “in one accord.” (Mt. 16:17-19; 18:19-20, Jn. 17:21-23, Acts 2:1f, 1 Cor. 12:12f, Eph. 4:1f; 6:12,18, Col. 1:27-28)

Bible history is the story of His people conquering the “evil empire” on this planet, not as a personal achievement, as with Eastern religion, but through taking responsibility as our brothers’ keeper (Ex. 14, 32, Josh. 10, Ac. 13:11)

But we will not be *able* to “keep” our brother *from the heart* unless we feel his pain. Christ, our Forerunner, has “been there and done that” *for us*, “leaving us an example, that [we] should follow His steps” (1 Pet. 2:21; also Col. 1:24, Php. 3:10)

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, *He Himself likewise shared in the same*, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of

death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. . . . “Therefore, *in all things He had to be made like His brethren*, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that *He Himself has suffered, being tempted*, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

“He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since *He himself is also subject to weakness*. . . . And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.” (Heb. 2:14-15,17-18, Heb. 5:2,4)

As the Lamb *slain in our place*, Jesus became *legally* qualified before the throne of God to open the seals of judgment that will restore our fallen planet. He became our High Priest through taking our sin and feeling our pain. (Heb. 5:1-9, Rev. 5)

How can we do any less than, through our sin and weakness, *identify* with our brother, *feeling his infirmity* in order to bear his burdens and see his deliverance as God delivers us? It is that which will qualify us to “rule and reign with Him,” regaining the dominion we lost. (Lu. 22:28-30, Rom. 8:17, 2 Tim. 2:12, Rev. 20:4)

This is the reason we are saved not by works, but by faith. The lengthier process by which faith grows allows God to show us what’s in our hearts in order that we may *understand* the weakness of others. If we live by the law instead of by the Spirit, we’ll be *disqualified* as heirs and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. 4, Gal. 3)

If all creation awaits the outcome, it should be our highest priority to find and experience the true *God factor* through which our Redeemer will “make all things new.” And the saints “will possess the kingdom forever.” (Is. 65:17; 66:22, Dan. 7:18, 1 Cor. 15:25, Heb. 10:12-13, 2 Pet. 2:13, Rev. 12:10-11)

*Scriptures from the New King James Bible 2009, updated 2013 Victor Dodsworth
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