

Principle: Failure to convert the problem-solving device of personal love for God to unconditional love for people is the Gordian knot that stifles most Christians' spiritual growth and precludes conveyance of escrow blessings in eternity.

The term "Gordian knot" is an allusion that illustrates the problem confronted by most Christians.

Gordian \gor'-dē-an\ knot. An intricate problem, especially one insoluble on its own terms. A knotty problem. "Cutting the Gordian knot" means taking decisive, swift action to resolve a complicated problem once and for all.

In Greek legend, Gordius was a peasant who became king of Phrygia, now central Turkey, an ancient country with interesting procedures for selecting leaders. Gordius won his throne by fulfilling a prophecy that whoever drove up to the temple of Zeus in a wagon would become king. Gordius, in gratitude, dedicated his wagon to Zeus. The wagon was secured to the temple by an intricate knot, and it was said that whoever could undo it would rule all Asia. Many tried to untie the knot without success until Alexander the Great arrived on the scene and cut the knot with a single stroke of his sword. Thus, a quick, thorough resolution to an apparently insoluble problem.¹

The eighth problem-solving device is the Gordian knot for a large number of believers. Alexander solved the problem of Gordius's knot with one fell swoop of his sword. The believer's struggle with others can also be resolved by use of rebound.

However, inability to be grace oriented toward others with whom you disagree, dislike, or disdain keeps the knot securely tied.

Spiritual growth provides the solution in problem-solving device number four: grace orientation which is next incorporated into number five: doctrinal orientation.

When grace is ignored and doctrine is not applied, further advance in the spiritual-growth spectrum is affected by this tragic flaw.

¹ Elizabeth Webber and Mike Feinsilber, *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Allusions* (Springfield, Mass., Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1999), 235.

This means that curiosity of, interest in, and concentration on Bible teaching only results in academic orientation not doctrinal application.

The inability to have a relaxed mental attitude toward others means you are vulnerable to iconoclastic arrogance and feet-of-clay syndrome.

When this occurs, all functionality of spiritual-growth is short-circuited and unconditional love for others does not have the necessary foundation of personal love for God.

The personal love that is deployed is for self, motivated by self-centeredness, self-validation, and self-aggrandizement behind a veil of self-approval sustained by self-justification.

Refusal to deploy the biblical inventory that has been communicated through repetition results in retrogression through reversionism.

All of this reveals the believer's failure to apply the royal law that is mentioned by our good friend James in:

James 2:8 If you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"² you are doing well. (NASB)

- (3) **Sharing the Happiness of God** or the Copacetic Spiritual Life. It, too, is invisible. It is acquired through the inculcation of biblical principles and serves as the penultimate problem-solving device.

John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

v. 11 "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy might be made full.

² Leviticus 19:18, 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord' (NASB); Matthew 7:12, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (NASB); and 1 John 4:7, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and anyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (NASB).

- (4) **Occupation with Christ** is personal love for Him. This occurs when the believer has maximum inventory of mystery doctrines in his soul which he considers his number one priority in life.

True worship is concentration on God and His Word circulating in the soul of the believer. Worship of God is thinking with the mind of Christ, which is an expression of the believer's love and respect for God in response to God's love for him. With this reciprocal love for God, the believer has a mental attitude culminating in occupation with Christ.³

Hebrews 12:2 Be concentrating on Jesus [ignore distractions and be occupied with Christ], the Founder and Perfecter of our doctrine [resident in the soul], Who instead of his present happiness [during the judgment of our sins and the physical agony of the crucifixion], He endured [by concentration on resident doctrine] the cross, having disregarded the disgrace [of being identified with our sins], and He [post ascension] sat down [the true humanity of Christ, not His deity] at the right hand of God [session]. (EXT)

18. Having developed efficient use of these assets, the mature believer is prepared to engage the ultimate challenge of evidence testing.

Evidence Testing: The Courtroom

1. This is Lucifer's "coup de main \kü-de-maⁿ\": sudden, vigorous onslaught; surprise attack; bold stroke."⁴
2. Evidence testing is Lucifer's cross-examination of every witness presented by God in the historical trial of all fallen angels.
3. All believers who attain maturity are qualified to argue as a witness for the Prosecution against Satan, who cross-examines them as he represents the Dark Side for the defense.
4. The witnesses for the Prosecution will receive one of two possible tests which will be administered by Satan himself.

³ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *The Unfailing Love of God*, ed. Robert B. Thieme III (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2009), 85.

⁴ *The Harper Dictionary of Foreign Terms*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Eugene Ehrlich (Markham, ON.: Fitzhenry and Whiteside Ltd., 1987), 79.

5. Witnesses for the Prosecution must have completed the spiritual advance through spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity while executing the last 4 of the ten problem-solving devices, 7 through 10.

6. Paul indicates this last phase of the spiritual advance in:

2 Corinthians 2:9 And He [God] has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness [suffering is necessary for spiritual advance]. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

v. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (NASB)

7. The word “power” is **δύναμις (dúnamis)** and refers to the omnipotence of God accessed by the believer when filled with the Holy Spirit inside the bubble.
8. The word “weakness” is **ἀσθένεια (asthénēia)** which makes reference to the progressive stages of suffering for blessing that every advancing believer must endure and pass for continued advance in the process.
9. The pressures, adversities, dangers, and hardships common to the devil’s world eventually overcome the unbeliever and reversionistic believer.
10. However, suffering for blessing is what is common to the advancing believer. It is he who understands that our earthly life is a brief “hour upon the stage,” but it can have eternal impact.
11. The weaknesses are obvious, but what about the power? It is two-fold. First, the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit followed by consistent inculcation and application of what the Spirit teaches the believer from the Word of God.
12. No person engages the areas of suffering and testing without accommodating these two power sources on a regular and ongoing basis.
13. The part some believers play in the Church Age is their demonstration of steadfastness while being cross-examined by Lucifer during the rebuttal phase of his appeal.