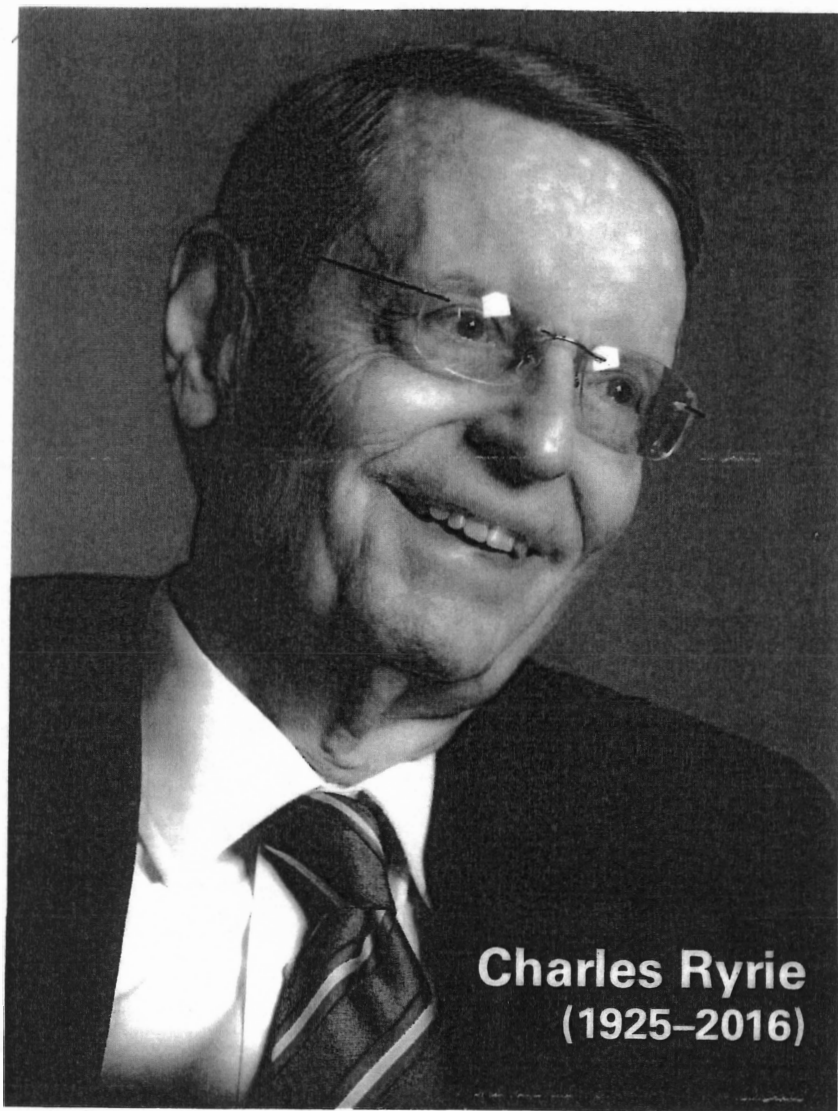
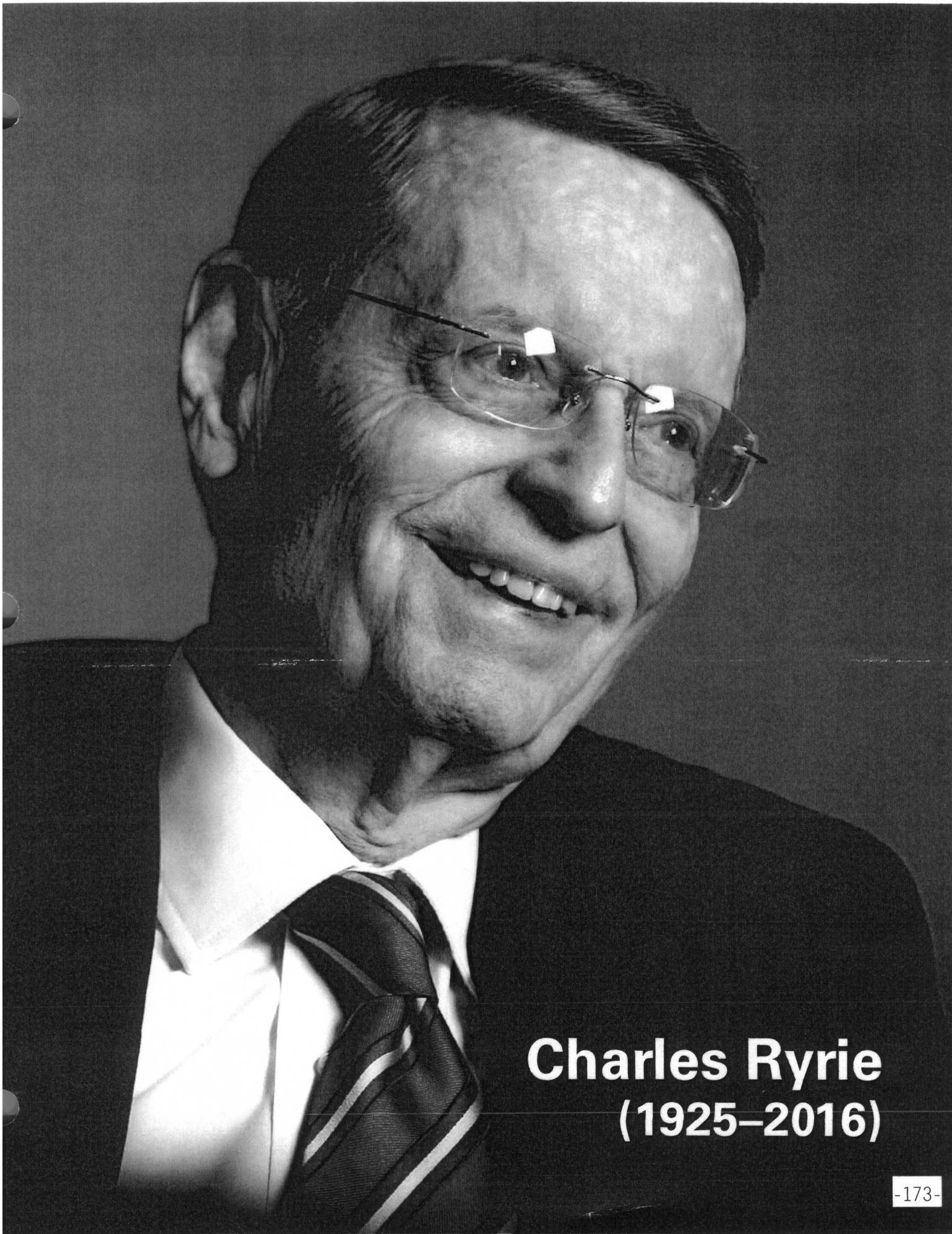


WHAT IS SO UNUSUAL ABOUT  
THE DOCTRINAL CLARITY OF  
**Dr. Charles C. Ryrie?**



**Charles Ryrie**  
(1925–2016)

*Manfred E. Kobex, Th.D.*



**Charles Ryrie**  
**(1925–2016)**

In the preface to his celebrated Study Bible, Charles Ryrie wrote, "The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals." On Feb. 16, after a lifetime of studying and teaching the Scriptures that he loved so well, Dr. Ryrie slipped quietly into the presence of their Author. He was 90 years old.

Charles Ryrie was born on March 2, 1925, to John and Elizabeth Ryrie, and raised in Alton, Illinois. He was a fifth-generation attendee of First Baptist Church of Alton. At a very early age, Charles trusted Christ as Savior under the influence of his father. Although banking was his profession, John Ryrie had a passion for teaching the Bible and served his church as Sunday School teacher and superintendent. Clearly, this passion rubbed off on young Charles, who would later become the most iconic dispensational theologian of his generation.

After graduating as valedictorian of his class in 1942, Ryrie spent a semester studying at Stony Brook boarding school under Frank Gaebelein, and then enrolled at Haverford College. He expected to follow his father into the banking industry, and so declared mathematics as his major. God, however, had other plans for Ryrie's life. In April 1943, Ryrie had an opportunity to visit with Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and president of Dallas Theological Seminary. During that visit, Ryrie felt a decisive pull toward full-time Christian ministry. In a 2012 interview with Paul Weaver, he reflected on this pivot point: "That night I felt a call to ministry. . . . We talked and prayed. I date that night as two things, a dedication of life and call to Christian service."

Ryrie left Haverford College and enrolled at Dallas Theological Seminary, graduating with a ThM in 1947 and a ThD in 1949. (Although he did not complete his undergraduate work at Haverford, the college did confer a baccalaureate degree on Ryrie in 1946, partially on the basis of his graduate work at Dallas.) He later pursued a second doctorate at the University of Edinburgh, graduating with his PhD in 1953. Throughout his studies, he excelled academically and consistently distinguished himself as a sharp thinker and indefatigable student.

Charles Ryrie is remembered chiefly as an educator, writer, and theologian. During the course of his career he taught Biblical studies and systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary, Word of Life Bible Institute, Westmont College, and Criswell College. He also served as president of Philadelphia College of Bible (now Cairn University) from 1958 to 1962. Veteran Regular Baptist minister and educator David Wilcox recalls his studies under Ryrie with fondness:

When many academics loved the obscure, Dr. Ryrie taught me to take the complex details of theology and communicate them in an understandable way. Without any question, as the champion of dispensational truth he stands head and shoulders above

"The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals."  
—Charles Ryrie

all others in our generation. My wife and I were part of a small group at the Dallas home of Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Johnston and Dr. Ryrie was there too. He and I sat alone in the living room while all the others gathered in the family room in another part of the house. I will never forget his gentleness, humility and kindness as he credited the Lord with all praise and glory for anything that he may have accomplished in his life. I love the man. He was a master teacher and a gentleman.

As a writer, Ryrie produced an impressive body of work, the variety of which is staggering. He wrote on Biblical theology, systematic theology, spiritual maturity, isagogics, pedagogy, and theological method. He produced a perennially popular study Bible. He wrote commentaries on Acts, Revelation, and the Thessalonian epistles. His many published articles covered a whole host of issues, including controversial social concerns like capital punishment, civil disobedience, divorce and remarriage, and the problem of poverty. In the academic realm, characterized as it is by specialization and fragmentation, such a varied output is exceedingly rare. To cover this much ground with the competence, comprehensiveness, and clarity that characterized all of Ryrie's writings is even rarer.

It was in his capacity as a theologian, however, that Ryrie truly set himself apart. As a spokesman for traditional dispensationalism, Ryrie was utterly unmatched. Prior to the publication of *Dispensationalism Today*, many works had been written from a dispensational perspective, but relatively few had been written to explain the essence of the dispensational system itself. Ryrie's work rectified this. It provided a careful exposition of the dispensational system, and also furnished a powerful apologetic for why Bible-believing Christians should prefer it over competing theological systems. Ryrie argued persuasively that dispensationalism springs naturally from the consistent use of a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic, and that the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic itself is rooted in a proper understanding of God's character:

If God is the originator of language and if the chief purpose of originating it was to convey His message to humanity, then . . . it must follow that He would use language and expect people to understand it in its literal, normal, and plain sense. The Scriptures, then, cannot be regarded as some special use of language so that in the interpretation of these Scriptures some deeper meaning of the words must be sought.

His work on premillennialism (the topic of his ThD dissertation at Dallas) deployed a similar argument. Ryrie acknowledged that premillennialism was the accepted view of

“In my presence, I never heard Dr. Ryrie make a disparaging remark about anybody. Disagreement, yes. Disparagement, no. He was a quiet and unassuming man. . . . He was in love with Christ and His Word.” —Mike Stallard

the early church, but this alone was not enough to settle the matter. More importantly, he argued, Christians should accept premillennialism on the basis of God’s faithfulness:

Altogether they [the Biblical covenants] form an harmonious whole and an unshakeable basis upon which premillennialism rests. And underlying it all is the very nature of God Himself in that what He has plainly spoken He will do, and what He has assuredly promised He will perform. This is the basis of the premillennial faith.

Ryrie’s theological influence also extended to other controversial topics. He was an important critic of the charismatic movement, neoorthodoxy, neoevangelicalism, lordship salvation, and Reformed theology. And yet, despite having taken strong stances on so many controversial topics, Ryrie always displayed an irenic spirit. He was never quarrelsome or mean-spirited, and he judiciously refrained from ad hominem arguments. Reflecting on this, Mike Stallard, professor of systematic theology at Baptist Bible Seminary, writes, “In my presence, I never heard Dr. Ryrie make a disparaging mark about anybody. Disagreement, yes. Disparagement, no. He was a quiet and unassuming man.”

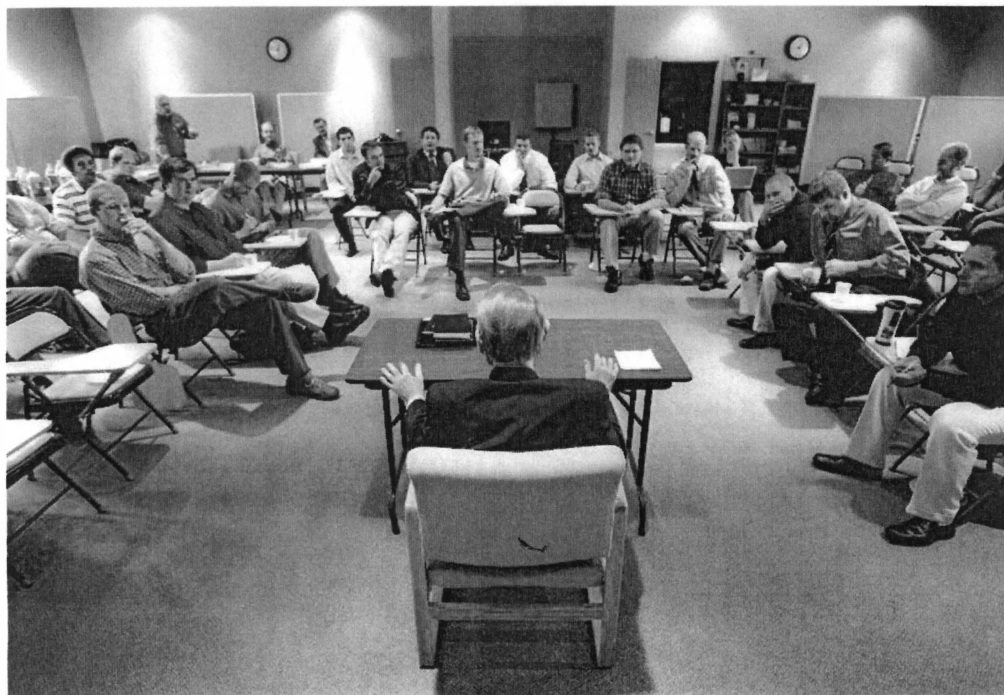
Perhaps the most impressive thing about Ryrie was his fervent desire to make Scriptural and doctrinal truth accessible to the layperson. Although he was a gifted scholar in his own

right, the bulk of his work was not directed to the academy. It was directed to the average churchgoer. In this, he was a true servant to the Body of Christ. “When I was working on the Study Bible,” Ryrie told the *Baptist Bulletin* in 2008, “I thought of the people in home Bible classes.” The same was true of his theological work. “Theology is for everyone,” Ryrie wrote in the introduction to his magnum opus *Basic Theology*. “Indeed, everyone needs to be a theologian.” So he wrote theology, not just for the seminarian and philosopher, but for everyone. And in framing the task of theology, he was very careful to insist that theology should not be studied merely for its own sake; the true purpose is relational and Christ-centered: “To conform our lives to the image of Christ is the ultimate goal in studying theology. Yet in the final analysis no book can do that. Only God and you can.”

With the passing of Charles Ryrie from this world to the next, the Christian church has lost a spiritual giant. Countless scores of people have come to know Christ, have developed an appetite for sustained Biblical and theological study, and have grown stronger and deeper in their relationship to Jesus Christ, all because of the tireless work of Charles Caldwell Ryrie. Heaven’s gain is truly our loss. Well done, good and faithful servant. **B**

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*David Gunn is managing editor of the Baptist Bulletin.*



Charles Ryrie participates in the inaugural meeting of the Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics. The meetings were held Sept. 24 and 25, 2008, on the campus of Summit University and resulted in the Summit Statement on Dispensational Hermeneutics. Now nine years old, the Council continues the important work of advancing scholarly Biblical studies from the perspective of traditional dispensationalism, a cause that Ryrie spent his entire career championing.

Up Close



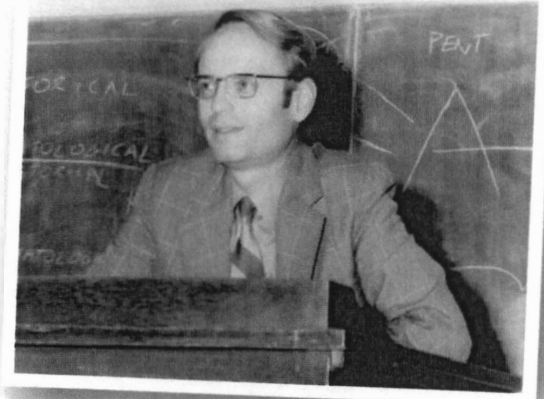
“Have  
Something  
to Say,  
and Say It  
Clearly”

Q & A WITH DR. CHARLES RYRIE

*Charles Ryrie has spent the last 60 years teaching the Bible. While on the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary, he taught hundreds of the pastors and teachers who have led our movement. Now retired, he has lived long enough to see his ideas embraced by his students and, in turn, their students.*

*But he has never been an “ivory tower” seminary professor—his teaching and writing ministry has always been aimed squarely at the congregation. “When I was working on the Study Bible,” he explains, “I thought of the people in home Bible classes.”*

*The Baptist Bulletin was grateful to interview Dr. Ryrie when he was on the campus of Baptist Bible Seminary, where he spoke at the recent Barndollar Lecture Series and participated in the Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics.*



## PHOTOS BY DARRELL GOEMAAT | INTERVIEW BY KEVIN MUNGONS

### **Tell us a bit about your life in Alton, Ill.**

I grew up at First Baptist Church of Alton, which was Northern Baptist—American Baptist. I was the fifth generation from our family in that church.

My father taught Sunday School there, after beginning with home Bible classes. Many of the people who came to the house were schoolteachers, mostly women. My father would occasionally teach Scofield’s *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*. One time I was able to sit in on that series, if I promised to keep quiet and be still. I still remember some of that.

*Dr. Ryrie recalls this Bible study as the first time he studied the ideas of dispensationalism, though he did not yet know the term. He graduated from Alton High School in January 1942, just six weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Though he modestly avoided the fact during our interview, Ryrie was always a gifted student. The Alton Evening Telegraph reported his 96.8 grade average in bold print under the front-page headline “Charles Ryrie Valedictorian at Alton High.” No one had to remind the graduates of the growing world turbulence. The girls’ chorus ignored the ill-timed sentimental songs printed in the graduation program (such as “Within a Dreaming Harbor”), and instead sang a medley of patriotic tunes. The high school music teacher wore his newly issued army uniform and shipped out two days after the ceremony.*

*A gifted pianist, Ryrie played Chopin’s Ballade No. 3 in A-*

*flat just before the diplomas were awarded. Today he calls himself a “past tense” pianist, though he still has a piano at home and occasionally sits down to play favorite hymns such as “Marvelous Grace” and “Like a River Glorious.”*

*Following the ceremony, Ryrie left for Stony Brook School on Long Island, where he studied for an additional semester with Frank E. Gaebelin. Ryrie then entered college with the intention of studying math and music—and with the expectation that he would follow his father into the banking industry.*

### **What changed your career path toward ministry?**

Lewis Sperry Chafer is the reason I am in the ministry and the reason I went to seminary. That happened when I was a junior in college. At the time, I went to Haverford College in Pennsylvania, a Quaker school. Chafer was holding meetings in the area. I went to one of the meetings and said to him, “I should like to talk to you.” He said, “I’ll let you know after I check my schedule.” So eventually he sent—this will tell you how old I am—he sent me a telegram. There were no phones in the Haverford dorms at the time. He said, “I can meet you at a certain time and a certain place at a hotel.” And during that meeting is when I feel I was called to the ministry. (I still like the phrase “called to the ministry.”) And from there I went to the seminary, where Chafer was teaching all of those years.

**Prior to that, Chafer was a friend of your family, a friend of your parents.**

Yes, it started back with my grandfather. My grandfather was a widower, so he lived with my family. Chafer would come to St. Louis to a Brethren Assembly to speak—at least that's the one I remember—my parents kind of dragged me along, you know. Yes, I had known him for some time before we met in that hotel room.

I thought about this once in a while, when seminary students asked to meet with me. I was sometimes tempted to think, "I don't have time for you." But then I would think of Chafer, who took time for me, and not just because I was a potential seminary student—because I wasn't at that time.

**Soon after you finished your first degree at Dallas, you were ordained. Didn't your parents leave your home church soon after this?**

I was ordained at First Baptist . . . some-time just after Noah came out of the ark. 1947. Ancient history. So when my folks thought they couldn't stay [at First Baptist] any longer, it was a big deal. It wasn't really a church split—they just left. They joined Brown Street Baptist Church, and by that time I was in seminary, so I never belonged to Brown Street, but that's where I attended when I went home.

*In 1941, at the height of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Northern Baptist Convention, Milton Heights Baptist Church began fellowshipping in the GARBC. John and Elizabeth Caldwell Ryrie joined the church soon after it moved to a new building on Brown Street in 1949.*

*"His parents were leaders in a Sunday School*

*class here at church," says Clint Bonnell, a retired ABWE missionary who is still a member of Brown Street Baptist Church. "This was often referred to as 'the Ryrie class.' It was a ladies' class—for teachers, businesswomen, professionals."*

*"When the Ryries left First Baptist, they brought their whole Sunday School class with them," says Clint's wife, Dorothy. "Not all of them ended up joining Brown Street, but many did."*

*John and Elizabeth Caldwell Ryrie spent the rest of their lives ministering at Brown Street Baptist, even donating a piano to the church. By this time Charles Ryrie had joined First Baptist Church in Dallas, befriending the pastor, W. A. Criswell, and regularly teaching a Sunday School class there. He returned to Brown Street Baptist several times for prophecy and dispensationalism conferences; though he had had a full teaching and writing ministry, he continued to minister to people in local church settings.*

**Do you think the average person understands dispensationalism as well as it was understood 20 or 30 years ago?**

Probably not. Part of it is a general decrease in Bible knowledge in our conservative evangelical churches. And part of it is that you don't have the prophecy conferences today, which are kissing cousins to dispensationalism. We just don't have them that much anymore. We have every other kind of seminar, but not prophecy. I think that's a contributing factor.

**How would you advise a young pastor who wants to teach dispensationalism to his congregation?**

Do a teaching series. I went to a church in Oklahoma last fall where the pastor had taken Wednesday nights to talk about

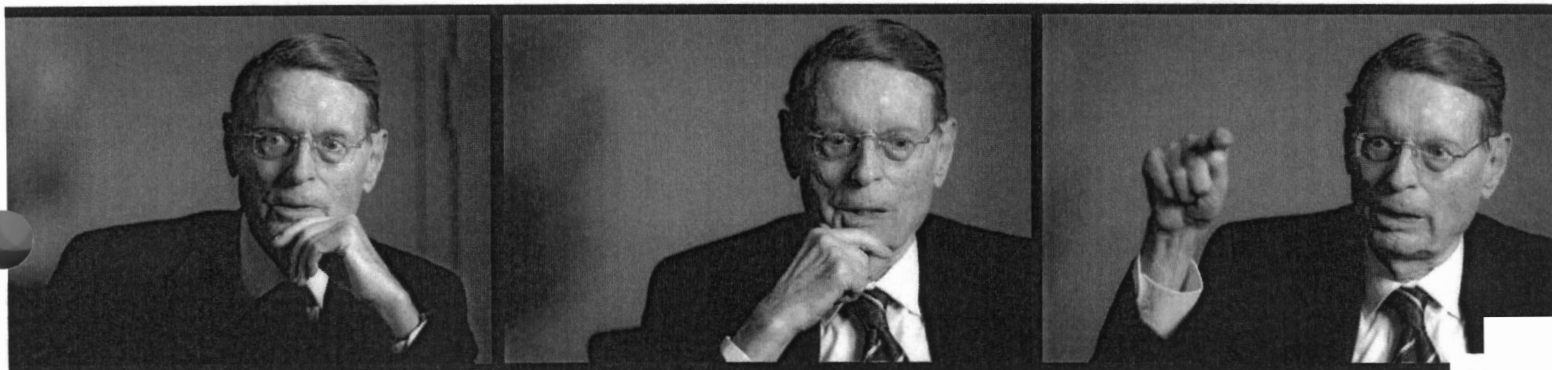
dispensationalism. Then on the last night he asked me to come up as a guest. The church was filled—three or four hundred people there, many from outside his church.

I don't think you have to teach dispensationalism every Sunday. I think if a church or a denomination has a doctrinal statement, then the pastor should go over that with the congregation in some kind of cycle. New people are coming in, and the older people have stopped thinking about those things. And I also think he should go over it meticulously with the leadership.

Take all the layers away, and it is ultimately leadership by a board—deacons, elders, whatever your polity is—it is ultimately their responsibility where the church goes. Unless we keep feeding and teaching the leadership, not just the members of the congregation, I think we're in trouble. And the same carries for our schools—if the boards of trustees are not spiritually alert and mature, anything could happen. I think the faculty is extremely important, but ultimately the board of the church or the organization holds the responsibility for doctrinal truth.

**Can you tell us what led to your work on the Ryrie Study Bible?**

It started one year on the way to my first Christian Booksellers Association meeting in Cincinnati. On the bus going in, a publisher who had published a book of mine said, "I want to talk to you." He wanted me to edit a multiauthor volume of some sort, I don't remember now, a dictionary or something. I said, "No, thank you! I am no good at riding heard on a hundred authors, making deadlines, and all that." So in return he said, "Propose something to me." I thought about that a while. There weren't many study Bibles available then. The Scofield Bible had just been revised. The Pilgrim Bible was



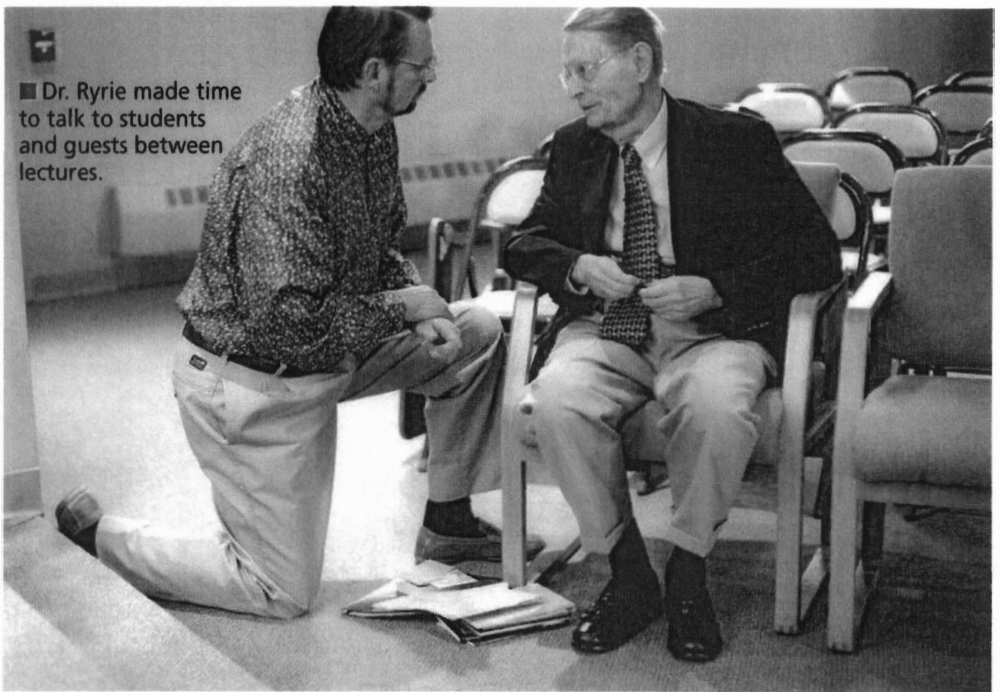
good, and used. There was a Lutheran New Testament Study Bible, and the Open Bible was maybe out by then. . . . I'm not sure of the dates. So I told him, "I think evangelicals need another study Bible. Not like the Scofield—there's nothing wrong with it—but more interpretive." I tried to write something with exegetically standard notes. I would say that the Scofield notes are more thematic, a synthesis of things. (I like the Scofield, that is not a criticism, believe me.) So I proposed this to him, and he agreed.

So we agreed on a New Testament. That's all they wanted to take a chance at. But by the time I finished my part, that publisher had been sold to a larger conglomerate. The man came back to me and said, "I don't think we'll be able to publish your Bible for years, because we've got so much going with this merger. So you have the right to do whatever you want with it."

And ultimately I went with Moody. One reason was that at that point, Moody was pretty sure they could get rights to the New American Standard, which had just come out. (I had written the notes using the King James.) But they did get the New American, so the notes were adapted to that, and later to other translations as well. That's how it came to be.

**Many of us admire your writing for its famously spare, crisp explanations of complex issues.**

Writers can't always do that easily. It's not easy. When I was working on the study Bible, I thought of people in home Bible classes, and I would sometimes ask, "Would they want a note on this verse or an explanation of this doctrine? Simply?" These people were my make-believe audience. Actually, they weren't make-believe, they were real people.



■ Dr. Ryrie made time to talk to students and guests between lectures.

*The Ryrie Study Bible was released in 1976 as a New Testament, with the complete Bible finished in 1978. Dr. Ryrie also prepared a significant revision in 1995. "The expansion had about 2,000 more notes, more in-text helps, charts, diagrams, that sort of stuff," Ryrie says. He recently traveled to Hong Kong for the release of a Chinese version of the study Bible, which had previously been translated into Spanish and Portuguese. "I think someone is talking about a Hindi version, but I don't know what stage that is in," Ryrie says.*

*A representative of Moody Publishing estimates they have sold about 2.5 million copies of the Ryrie Study Bible.*

*"Well, they are probably about right," Ryrie comments. "I don't keep a running total! The Evangelical Press Association started giving a platinum medallion if you have any books over a million copies. I have one of those, and it was already at a million and a half before they started.*

*"But I really don't like to parade those figures. . . . I just don't like that."*

**With your study Bible in several translations, which translation do you prefer to use?**

I do use the New American Standard, and one of the reasons is I feel more secure with it. When I'm traveling, people will ask for a question-and-answer session. I feel if I need to quickly look something up in the New American, I can be more secure that the verses are translated more accurately.

The New International is good for reading, but it takes some liberties, especially

the new one, the Today's New International Version—the gender neutral one.

**Which of your books has been the most influential?**

Well, excluding the study Bible from my answer, I would say the Lord has . . . well, the variety of my books amazes me. *Object Lessons* for teachers is one. *Dispensationalism* is one. *Basic Theology* is one. And of the older books, *Balancing the Christian Life* comes up once in a while. I've had people here today talk about reading that as new Christians.

**When I studied with Myron Houghton (one of your former students), he referred to you as a Baptist theologian. Do you think that is a fair label?**

I'm not ashamed of the fact that I'm a Baptist! I've never been anything else in church affiliation.

**How did you develop your ability to explain things in simple language that a layperson can understand?**

On one side, that's God's gift to me. Or to be more technical, it's the way the gift of teaching or exhortation is worked out in me: conciseness.

On the human side, I think it is because off and on through the years, I've taught children. If you want to advise your writers to write more clearly, tell them to go host a

Good News Club somewhere, and *teach* it!

### Do you still teach Bible study classes for church members?

Everywhere I've been, not all the time, but in every place I have been located, I've tried to teach home Bible classes. And I'm teaching one now, about 15 people in the Dallas area. I think that's a good size. If you teach—not quite one-on-one, but on a small group basis—if you want them to learn something, you have to put it at their level. Do you remember the *Sunday School Times*? Philip Howard was the editor for many years. Many years ago he came to speak, and I went up to him afterward. (This was a big thing for me. I'm shy, I really am.) I said, "Dr. Howard, how do you learn to write?" I wasn't a writer yet, I hadn't written anything, but I guess I had some latent interest. He said to me—at the time, I was probably a sophomore in college—he said, "Have something to say and say it clearly."

You can't improve on that.

### Do you have any more books you would like to write?

If you have an idea for one, you can tell me, but I don't have any guarantees now!

### You are still keeping a pretty lively speaking schedule.

I'm very thankful to the Lord for both the ability to do things and to have something to do. I've seen people, not as old as I, who not only don't do anything, they don't *want* to do anything. They seem glad to get out of the swim of things. I understand that, but there's still lots to do, and occasionally I have to turn down some requests.

Traveling is not easy anymore, but I'm glad I can do it. The only quarrel I have with the Lord on this matter is that He doesn't spread out the opportunities. They all seem to come at once. Sometimes I still get overextended.

### Tell us a little bit about your family.

All three of my children live in Dallas. I also have three grandchildren. Now this is an interesting thing . . . early in the summer, I baptized two of my grandchildren. One was 12 [Matthew], and the older one [Stephen] wanted to be baptized

on a certain date in September. It was his birthday, his 16th birthday.

### What do you think are some of the core issues that people in the pew need to know and understand now?

It's hard to say what is most important for them without knowing each one and where they stand spiritually. The most important issues are always about what you believe. What you believe will determine what you do. If what you believe is good, healthy doctrine, you will have healthy actions and practices. But you can't have good practice if you don't have good doctrine.

*"Everybody criticizes me on the Internet," Dr. Ryrie had told us at the start of his interview. And then he laughed and added, "If you run out of material for this article, just Google my name!"*

*We didn't run out of material. In fact, we've posted the rest of the interview at [www.BaptistBulletin.org](http://www.BaptistBulletin.org), including questions about Dr. Ryrie's collection of Bibles, his ideas on current theological controversies, his thoughts about the role of women in the church, more thoughts about his ministry of writing, and a few parting comments on the decline of systematic theology. ■*

*Interview by Kevin Mungons, managing editor of the Baptist Bulletin. Photos by Darrell Goemaat, director of photography. Photo page 27 courtesy Dallas Theological Seminary Archives.*

■ Two of Charles Ryrie's grandsons, Matthew (left) and Stephen, help cut the cake for the recent opening of the Charles Ryrie Library and Study Center on the campus of Word of Life Bible Institute. Dr. Ryrie was pleased to baptize both of his grandsons this year. (Photo courtesy Adam Rushlow, Word of Life Bible Institute.)

## The Essential Ryrie

Our editors chose a dozen practical books by Charles Ryrie—worthy of any church or home library.

- *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*. Moody (11th edition, 1989), 192 pages, paper, \$13.99
- *Balancing the Christian Life*. Moody (25th Anniversary Edition, 1994), 256 pages, paper, \$14.99
- *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth*. Moody (1999), 560 pages, hardcover, \$34.99
- *Biblical Answers to Contemporary Issues*. Moody (1991), 135 pages, paper, out of print
- *Dispensationalism*. Moody (2007), 272 pages, paper, \$14.99
- *Nailing Down a Board: Serving Effectively on the Not-for-Profit Board*. Kregel (1999), 96 pages, paper, \$8.99
- *Object Lessons: 100 Lessons from Everyday Life*. Moody (1991), 112 pages, paper, \$6.99
- *Ryrie's Practical Guide to Communicating Bible Doctrine*. B&H Publishing Group (2005), 88 pages, hardcover, \$12.99
- *So Great Salvation: What It Means to Believe in Jesus Christ*. Moody (1997), 160 pages, paper, \$12.99
- *The Miracles of Our Lord*. ECS Ministries (2005 reprint), 192 pages, paper, \$9.95
- *The Ryrie Study Bible with DVD*. Moody (2008), 2,336 pages, leather, \$84.99



6 <sup>a</sup>Ps 96:1, <sup>b</sup>Ps 116:7, 119:17, 142:7  
 6 I will <sup>a</sup>sing unto the LORD, because he hath <sup>b</sup>dealt bountifully with me.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

\*1 <sup>a</sup>Ps 10:4, 53:1, <sup>b</sup>Ps 14:1-3, 130:3, Ro 3:10-12  
 14 The fool hath <sup>a</sup>said in his heart, *There is no God.* They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* <sup>b</sup>none that doeth good.

\*2-3 <sup>a</sup>Ps 33:13, 14, 102:19, <sup>b</sup>Ps 92:6, <sup>c</sup>1 Ch 22:19  
 2 The LORD <sup>a</sup>looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did <sup>b</sup>understand, and <sup>c</sup>seek God.

3 <sup>a</sup>Ps 58:3, <sup>b</sup>Ps 143:2, Ro 3:10-12  
 3 They are all <sup>a</sup>gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* <sup>b</sup>none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 <sup>a</sup>Ps 82:5, <sup>b</sup>Ps 27:2, Jer 10:25, Amos 8:4, <sup>c</sup>Ps 79:6, Is 64:7  
 4 Have all the workers of iniquity no <sup>a</sup>knowledge? who <sup>b</sup>eat up my people as they eat bread, and <sup>c</sup>call not upon the LORD.

5 <sup>a</sup>Ps 73:15, 112:2  
 5 There were they in great fear: for God *is* in the <sup>a</sup>generation of the righteous.

6 <sup>a</sup>Ps 42:3, 10, <sup>b</sup>Ps 40:17  
 6 Ye have <sup>a</sup>shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his <sup>b</sup>refuge.

\*7 <sup>a</sup>Ps 53:6, <sup>b</sup>Ps 85:1, 2  
 7 Oh that <sup>a</sup>the salvation of Israel *were* come out of Zion! when the LORD <sup>b</sup>bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

A Psalm of David.

1 <sup>a</sup>Ps 27:5, 6; 61:4, <sup>b</sup>Ps 24:3  
 15 LORD, who shall abide <sup>a</sup>in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy <sup>b</sup>holy hill?

2 <sup>a</sup>Ps 24:4, Is 33:15, <sup>b</sup>Zec 8:16, Eph 4:25  
 2 He that <sup>a</sup>walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and <sup>b</sup>speaketh the truth in his heart.

\*3 <sup>a</sup>Ps 50:20, <sup>b</sup>Ps 28:3, <sup>c</sup>Ex 23:1  
 3 *He that* <sup>a</sup>backbiteth not with his tongue, nor <sup>b</sup>doeth evil to his neighbour, nor <sup>c</sup>taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

\*4 <sup>a</sup>Ps 53:5, <sup>b</sup>Ps 73:20, 28:10, <sup>c</sup>Judg 11:35  
 4 In whose eyes <sup>a</sup>a vile person is contemned; but he <sup>b</sup>honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* <sup>c</sup>swareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

\*5 <sup>a</sup>Ex 22:25, Lev 25:36, Deu 23:20, <sup>b</sup>Ex 23:8, Deu 16:19  
 5 *He that* <sup>a</sup>putteth not out his money to usury, nor <sup>b</sup>taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

Mich'tam of David.

1 <sup>a</sup>Ps 17:8, <sup>b</sup>Ps 7:1  
 16 <sup>a</sup>Preserve me, O God: for in thee do <sup>b</sup>I put my trust.

\*2 <sup>a</sup>Ps 73:25  
 2 *O my soul*, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: <sup>a</sup>my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

\*3 <sup>a</sup>Ps 101:6, <sup>b</sup>Ps 119:63  
 3 *But to the* <sup>a</sup>saints that are in the earth, and *to* the excellent, <sup>b</sup>in whom *is* all my delight.

**Psalm 14** David laments the moral foolishness and corruption of the whole human race (vv. 1-6), and longs for the establishment of the righteous kingdom of the Lord on earth (v. 7). This psalm, with only slight changes in verses 5-6, is identical to Psalm 53.

14:1 *The fool* (one who is **morally perverse**, not mentally deficient) is described as to his belief ("no God") and behavior ("no good"). His is a practical rather than a theoretical atheism.

14:2-3 Paul cites these verses in Rom. 3:10-12 in support of the universal and perennial sinfulness of mankind. *filthy*. Morally corrupt.

14:7 David longs for the establishing of the Messianic kingdom on earth (cf. Isa. 59:20-21; Rom. 11:26-27).

**Psalm 15** Here David describes the character of the person who qualifies to be a guest of God. The synonymous, parallel questions of verse 1 are answered in the following verses by an elevenfold description of the righteous man who is upright in deed, word, attitude, and fi-

nances. These qualities, not natural to men, are imparted by God.

15:3 *backbiteth*. Slanders.

15:4 *contemned*. Despised (see note on Psalm 10:13).

15:5 *to usury*. See notes on Lev. 25:35-46 and Deut. 24:10-13.

**Psalm 16** In this song of trust, David declares that as he has trusted the Lord to be his portion in life (vv. 1-8), so will he trust Him to preserve him in death (vv. 9-11). The meaning of *Michtam* (also used in the headings of Psalms 56-60) is uncertain. It is apparently derived from a verb meaning "to cover," and may indicate psalms dealing with protection (covering) from one's enemies or psalms recited silently (with lips covering the mouth).

16:2 *my goodness extendeth not to thee*. Better, I have no good besides Thee.

16:3 David delights not only in God but also in the people of God.

4 <sup>a</sup>Ps 32:10, <sup>b</sup>Ps 106:37, 38, <sup>c</sup>Ex 23:13, Jos 23:7

\*5-6 <sup>a</sup>Ps 73:26, 119:57, 142:5, <sup>b</sup>Ps 23:5, <sup>c</sup>Ps 125:3

6 <sup>a</sup>Ps 78:55, <sup>b</sup>Jer 3:19

\*7 <sup>a</sup>Ps 73:24, <sup>b</sup>Ps 77:6

\*8-10 <sup>a</sup>Ps 16:8-11, Ac 2:25-28, <sup>b</sup>Ps 27:8, 123:1, 2, <sup>c</sup>Ps 73:23, 110:5, 121:5, <sup>d</sup>Ps 112:6

9 <sup>a</sup>Ps 4:7, 13:5, <sup>b</sup>Ps 30:12, 57:8, 108:1, <sup>c</sup>Ps 4:8

10 <sup>a</sup>Ps 49:15, 86:13, <sup>b</sup>Ac 13:35

11 <sup>a</sup>Ps 139:24, Mt 7:14, <sup>b</sup>Ps 21:6, 43:4, <sup>c</sup>Ps 36:7, 8, 46:4

1 <sup>a</sup>Ps 9:4, <sup>b</sup>Ps 61:1, 142:6, <sup>c</sup>Ps 88:2, <sup>d</sup>Is 29:13

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**The footnotes in the Ryrie Study Bible:**  
 Clear, concise, conservative but comprehensive

\*2 aMI 4:17; 24 14 bDan 2:44; MI 4:17, 23; 10:7 2 And saying, <sup>a</sup>Repent ye: for the <sup>b</sup>kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of <sup>a</sup>by the prophet Esa'ias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, <sup>b</sup>Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.

4 a2 Ki 1:8; Zec 13:4 bLev 11:22 4 And the same John had his <sup>a</sup>raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was <sup>b</sup>locusts and wild honey.

5 aLk 33 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all <sup>a</sup>the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

\*7 aMI 16:1; 23:13, 15 bMI 16:1; 22:23; Ac 4:1; 5:17; 23:6-10 cMI 12:34; 23:33 d1 Th 1:10; 5:9 7 But when he saw many of the <sup>a</sup>Pharisees and <sup>b</sup>Sad'ducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O <sup>c</sup>generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from <sup>d</sup>the wrath to come?

3:2 Repent ye. Repentance is a change of mind that bears fruit in a changed life (see v. 8). *kingdom of heaven*. This is the rule of heaven over the earth. The Jewish people of Christ's day were looking for this Messianic or Davidic kingdom to be established on the earth, and this is what John proclaimed as being "at hand." The rejection of Christ by the people delayed its establishment until the second coming of Christ (Matt. 25:31). The character of the kingdom today is described in the parables of Matt. 13.

3:7 **Pharisees**. The Pharisees were the most influential of the Jewish sects at the time of Christ. Though holding orthodox doctrines, their zeal for the Mosaic law led them to a degenerate, though strict, outward observance of both the law and their equally authoritative (in their own eyes) interpretations of it. They knew the Scriptures (Matt. 23:2), tithed (Luke 18:12), fasted (Matt. 9:14), prayed (Mark 12:40); but they were also hypocritical (Matt. 23:15), self-righteous (Luke 18:9), and the foremost persecutors of the Lord (Matt. 9:3).

**Sadducees**. The Sadducees, whose membership came largely from the priesthood and upper classes, were the anti-supernaturalists of Christ's day. They denied the truth of bodily resurrection, of future punishment and reward, and of the existence of angels (Acts 23:8). Though they upheld the written law of Moses, they were opposed to the oral traditions observed by the Pharisees. They were the party of the high-priestly families of Jerusalem with direct interests in the apparatus of

8 Bring forth therefore fruits <sup>a</sup>meet for repentance: 8 aAc 26:20

9 And think not to say within yourselves, <sup>a</sup>We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. \*9 aJn 8:33, 39

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore <sup>a</sup>every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 10 aMI 7:19

11 <sup>a</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: <sup>b</sup>he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: \*11 aJn 1:26 bJn 1:33

12 Whose <sup>a</sup>fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and <sup>b</sup>gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with <sup>c</sup>unquenchable fire. \*12 aLk 3:17; Is 30:24 bMI 13:30 cMk 9:43, 48

temple worship and generally collaborated with the Roman rulers. They opposed Christ as vigorously as the Pharisees and were condemned by Him as severely, though not so frequently (Matt. 16:1-4, 6).

3:9 *We have Abraham to our father*. The common teaching of that day said that the Jews participated in the merits of Abraham, which made their prayers acceptable, helped in war, expiated sins, appeased the wrath of God, and assured a share in God's eternal kingdom. Consequently the people were startled when John and Jesus preached the necessity of personal repentance.

3:11 baptize. **Baptism** is a form of identification. John's baptism was a sign of an individual's acknowledgment of his need of repentance for the remission of his sins. When Jesus was baptized by John (v. 15) He identified Himself with John's message of righteousness (though, being sinless, He Himself needed no cleansing from sin). The baptism with the Holy Spirit, predicted here, identifies members of the body of Christ with Christ, the risen Head of that body (1 Cor. 12:13). Christian baptism is identification with the Christian message and the Christian group. *with fire*. Probably a reference to the judgments associated with the return of Christ (v. 12; Mal. 3:1-5; 4:1-3).

3:12 *Whose fan is in his hand*. A wooden shovel used for tossing grain against the wind after threshing so that the lighter chaff would be blown away, leaving the kernels to settle in a pile.

13 aMI 13:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21, 22; Jn 1:31-34 bMI 2:22 13 Galil bapt 14

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3:16-17 This concept of Spirit upon beginning

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