

GIFTED

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First Edition

PAGE PUBLISHING, INC.
New York, NY

First originally published by Page Publishing, Inc. 2019

ISBN 978-1-64584-829-5 (Paperback)
ISBN 978-1-64584-831-8 (Digital)

Printed in the United States of America

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Preface

In order to overcome rejection even though one may be gifted, it is important to understand who God is and the purpose He created for each of us as an individual. Being gifted relates to being exceptional, proficient, skillful, and talented. It may even classify an individual as an expert or a professional.

Oftentimes, it is problematic to understand why there is conflict in our lives. We must contend with *good and evil*. As a Christian, we are conscientious that we have a God who created us with expectations. We must make an effort to work on our spiritual lives and to *live peaceably with all men* (Romans 12:18).

Deuteronomy 10:12–13 addresses our purpose in life with a question and answer to the question. It is to the nation of Israel, but it is applicable to us. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?* After we respond out of love for the Lord our God, other issues or distractions seem inconsequential. This is a vertical relationship with love.

This question is similar in Micah 6:8, which states, “*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*” To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly are based on our relationship with others or a horizontal relationship. Jesus stated in John 13:34–35, ³⁴“*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*” ³⁵*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*”

A life of discipline is a result of accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Discipline progresses through intimacy with God. Some distinctive ways to obtain confidence about God is the development of a life of prayer, a life of praise and worship, and a life of wisdom. Isaiah 1:16–20 declares,

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

As we learn to do well, we are walking in the Spirit. These attributes of the fruit of Spirit are in Galatians 5:22–23 and Ephesians 5:9. In addition, 2 Timothy 2:15–16 proclaims, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”

Even though we have a history or a past of being wounded and bewildered, we should love difficult or ungodly people in spite of wanting acceptance. Since *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man* (Luke 2:52), we also will have wisdom and favor. God will grant us favor, and with the right connections, we will have favor with man.

Rejection can be a camouflaged blessing. As an individual develops a relationship with our Creator and understands His purpose and plan for our lives, life is rewarding and fulfilling. It is easy to embrace laughter and easier to commune with God without frustration with ourselves and others.

Introduction

Gifted and yet feeling rejected may be difficult to manage. Questions one may ask are as follows:

- *Why am I left out?*
- *What is my purpose?*
- *Why does it hurt?*
- *Did I do something wrong?*
- *Why do people take advantage of me?*
- *Why was I not invited?*
- *Why do I allow people to manipulate me?*
- *Why do I manipulate others via co-dependence?*
- *Why do I cry so much?*
- *Why do I suffer?*

When low self-esteem issues such as rejection and despondency are addressed, then a person can live within God’s glory without guilt, shame, hurt, and manipulation. One of the best lessons to observe and learn is that seasons rotate in a cycle. In the presence of God, there is a solution of recovery, encouragement, and much joy. Understand that all rejection is not harmful since God has a purpose and plan for your life. God allows some events to happen for our protection and overall in our best interest. Look up and live life in abundance, which is God’s will for you!

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to Christian Theology

“Is it possible to know God?”¹ “Who is God? What is God like?”² When studying about God as a Christian, it is often referred to as Christian theology. Theology is the study of God or gods. Theology does not need to “be Christian”³ since it can be affiliated with any religion such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormonism, Judaism, Islam, and so forth. It is a belief in a deity.

Atheists and Agnostics do not claim a religious belief in theology like those that have belief in Christianity. The atheist is an unbeliever or a skeptic. An atheist chooses to oppose belief in our True God and Savior. An atheist will challenge a “God” that they do not believe in and combat any actions that we as Christians believe in. Why would a person fight something that they say does not exist? It seems purposeless when rationale is a part of one’s thinking process or reasoning.

An agnostic person is a skeptic also to our Christian beliefs but not as far-reaching in their approach with people who do not believe as they do. An agnostic person is open to belief that there is some type of “being” that could exist but is not sure. This type of person does not oppose but is not an advocator willing to defend “a faith” since this individual is halfhearted.

¹ Bray, Gerald *The Doctrine of God*. (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1993), page 13.

² Ibid., page 53.

³ Ibid., page 16.

Most people believe there is some type of Supreme Being or a supernatural force, which symbolizes a belief in God. There are some that fall in the category of an atheist. This creates a concept, “all are wrong to have a belief in God.” There are some that fall in the category of being an agnostic. This relates to “some may be right, but we cannot be sure which.” Agnostics believe in the end it makes little practical difference. “It is viewed that it is not possible to know God and to speculate is a waste of time.”⁴

Christians do not share this view that it is impossible to know God. Christians believe that one can know God through revelation references in the Bible or Holy Scriptures. Romans 1:18–20 is a disclosure of Christianity. This passage advocates in scripture

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

From the perspective of the Bible or the Holy Scriptures, we as believers of this Word of God believe that He is our Father. He is the One that we pray to as “Our Father who is in heaven” (NAS) according to Matthew 6:9. In addition, James 1:17 proclaims that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

We honor God who is superior to mankind. He rules over man in the sense that we were created to worship Him, and we are defined as “His workmanship and His glory!” When man was created, it was

⁴ Ibid., page 13.

in the image of God, and mankind was created different from other creations. Man was given dominion over everything that was created. “And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26–27). As it relates to man created for God’s glory, the scripture in Isaiah says, “Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Isaiah 43:7). John detailed in the book of Revelation, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

Christianity is “connected with the history of the people of Israel.” As history climaxes in Christianity, it leads to the virgin birth, life, death, resurrection of a man named Jesus who was and is the Messiah and Savior. It was prophesied by prophets in the Old Testament that He would come to earth. “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). This is what Christians normally decree as the Gospel of Jesus Christ or good news! As a believer in Christianity, Christians worship God who we encounter and who changes human lives. To believe and have faith in is to know; to know makes this change in our individual lives.

As a Christian, we know God, but how do we really know Him? Where is the proof? Can we share the gospel with an outsider? Is it possible to share with an atheist or agnostic? “With God all things are possible.” Luke 18:25–27 explains

For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

“We learn about God through observation, perception, and correction.”⁵ What is God like? This is answered by understating the “nature of God.” Who is God? This is answered by saying He is not “one person but three.”⁶ God is revealed in three different ways by making himself known. In the Bible, we have three different dispensations and manifestations He made himself known.

He is revealed as God our Father (Theos). The Father also known as “Our Father” is the revealer. The Father is the beginning. Our Father has a Son (Christos) that walked here on earth with mankind as Emmanuel, which is interpreted as God with us. His Son, Jesus Christ, is the revealed. The Son is the arrangement. Thirdly, His Spirit (Pneuma) lives inside of us. The Spirit is known as breath or wind. The Holy Spirit is the revelation. The Spirit is efficacy. In observation, we have His words in the Bible to reflect when we know His promises and He fulfills them in our personal life. By perception, we are made aware of what He has done and it becomes a personal testimony. A testimony is something that we have witnessed and experienced. Correction is when there is improvement in our lives and we are altered. We not only become positive, but we become encouragement to others. Hebrews 12:5–8 explains correction through chastisement. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 gives us a purpose for all scripture and makes it known it “is given by inspiration of God.”

Hebrews 12:5–8: “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chasten-

⁵ Ibid., pages 14–15.

⁶ Ibid., page 53.

ing of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”

2 Timothy 3:16–17: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

According to 1 Peter 1:2, we have “foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”⁷ Because of this foreknowledge, we have some intelligence when it relates to God’s existence. He allows us to know Him because we have sanctification of the Spirit. This sanctification becomes our reverence to God and our recognition of Who God is and represents. It causes us to have obedience by submission to what His Word provides as our boundaries in life. The restrictions or parameters that we have are for our benefits and protection for blessings and prosperity of our well-being. He loves us so much that He wants to guide us as we say yes to His commands and guide us around pitfalls in life. We can easily surrender to such a wonderful God because of the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of our iniquities and transgressions. This means our debt is paid, and Jesus is the substitute for the death that we should have died but loved us so much that He sacrificed His life as a ransom for mankind. To become a Christian, all an individual must do is admit or confess that she or he is a sinner and acknowledge that she or he

⁷ Ibid., pages 141, 147 & 203.

needs a Savior in the person of Jesus Christ and repent and become disciplined in His teachings. We cannot be true followers or disciples unless we embrace His teachings and live by His holy word.

“To be holy is therefore to be righteous according to God’s standard of judgment, which is manifested in the inner relationship of the Trinity” (Father, Son, and Spirit). “Here we see the perfect out-working of the principle that God is faithful even when all human beings are liars” (Romans 3:4). He is willing to fulfill his promises and cleanse us (1 John 1:9)⁸.

The knowledge or revelation of God depends upon the gospel of Jesus Christ. The “Gospel” and “word of God” become virtually synonyms in the New Testament. Romans 1:16 illuminates the gospel “is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew and then for the Gentiles. The gospel is about God’s grace and the way to know God is a way of grace. God is the true evangelist; it is His call that is issued in the form of the gospel and it is He who brings us to faith (2 Thessalonians 2:13–14). “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁹

“What is the gospel?” It is viewed in different perspectives. In the New Testament scriptures such as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we can view these individuals as “writing” the gospel. From the perspective of the Book of the Acts, we can view Luke as “reporting” the gospel. As Jesus preached “the gospel,” He described the “Kingdom of God.” As the apostles preached, they talked about the Kingdom of God but also talked about Jesus as the gospel or good news that was preached about.¹⁰

“Is the gospel true?” Acts 1:3 reveals that Jesus was revealed and it communicates “To whom also he shewed himself alive after his

⁸ Ibid., page 217

⁹ Jensen, Peter *The Revelation of God*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 2002), pages 31, 36, and 37.

¹⁰ Ibid., pages 33–34

passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:”

Apparently, the soldiers that were present when Jesus was crucified were afraid that there might be truth because they were instructed to watch His grave after His burial to make sure the disciples would not be able to steal Jesus’ mortal body. They thought it was possible that something could happen that they were not ready to deal with. Why would they be afraid concerning a dead body? Why did they hire security to guard the body of Jesus when they knew he died a horrible death through crucifixion if they did not truly believe that this was Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Even if the disciples would have stolen His physical body after death, who would have believed that Jesus Christ rose from the dead if they did not physically see Him up walking and talking with people? Therefore, we have infallible proofs written by Luke as a witness in the Book of Acts, and we have documentation written by the Apostle Paul. Paul tells the Christian gospel about Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:3–14:

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace

of God which was with me. Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.

There are arguments to debate when it comes to the credibility of the gospel (Christian Theology). These arguments are grace and evidence. Peter Jensen states that “the gospel is a gospel of grace precisely because it regards human beings as unable on their own to seek and find God.” He also explains that “God is known ‘through himself.’”¹¹ Grace for Christians makes one wonder whether it is proper or correct to pursue any grounds.

“Gospel promotes itself as the truth. Why should we believe it?”¹² Promotion is generally considered as a positive word because it relates to advancement, moving forward and ascending to a higher level as a shift of position. Promotion is often used in an occupation to receive an increase in pay with oftentimes increased responsibilities within employment. It is used to describe a student that moves forward from kindergarten through twelfth grade. If a student is not retained and required to repeat a grade level, then this student is promoted by going up a level in school. Since the Gospel promotes itself, it means that as one advances his or her knowledge in the good news of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, then it is the foundation of truth. Jesus Christ is “the way, the truth and the life according to John 14:6. Jesus can say “I am” since he was the true revelation of the Father to human beings.”¹³ The Gospel is how we know about Jesus and how we build our lives on Him. Jesus shared with His disciples that upon the Rock (of truth) He will build His

¹¹ Ibid., pages 38–39.

¹² Ibid., page 40.

¹³ Letham, Robert *The Work of Christ* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1993), page 92.

church (believers in His kingdom) and “the gates of hell shall not prevail” (Matthew 16:18).

The gospel is truth and promotes itself because God is our salvation that “brought us up out of a pit, out of clay and set our feet upon a rock,” which elevates us or promotes us. It is He that established our goings. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” because the rock represents a place we can hide (Psalm 18:46, 27:5, 40:2, 46:1).

Psalm 62:2 and verse 6 advises us that “He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.” There is no power or any being greater than the foundation that God has prepared for Christians or followers of this gospel. It is “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Romans 1:16).

Even though we do not have record that Jesus wrote about this gospel, we do have “testimony borne to Jesus by the witnesses and evangelists”¹⁴ There are witnesses that God raised Jesus from the dead. According to Acts 17:31 “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

Atheism is more of a modern terminology than an ancient term since there is little known about it in past ages. However, Psalm 14:1 says, “The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.”

Innate, though suppressed, knowledge about the God is witnessed to in the natural world. We are mankind that has been born again, and we can share the gospel to others who need to know that Jesus Christ is the Savior that came to redeem humans back to God and He is our Mediator. What good news this is to someone who is willing to accept Christ as Lord even though we as the messengers may be rejected! Remember we are ambassadors and we represent Him. (Acts 14:14–18, Romans 1:18–31)

¹⁴ Jennsen, Peter – The Revelation God p 41

“The gospel will be either received or not.”¹⁵ Is the Gospel hid? According to 2 Corinthians 4:3 and 4, “If our gospel be hid” or veiled, “it is hid to them that are lost...god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.” In the beginning of chapter 4, it gives Christians the understanding that we have a ministry or service since we have received the mercy of God to handle this ministry in honesty and truth. The gospel should not be shared with personal agendas or motives, but the Word should be rightly divided and explained (2 Timothy 2:15).

God is our creator! Christians learn about God based on creation. This means that He made everything from nothing. In other words, God did not make something from something else that was already made. God revealed Himself through His creation by fashioning the entire universe, earth, land, sea, animals of both water and dry land, as well as mankind. God even created angels. God made man in His image.

CHRISTOLOGY

Christology is the study of Jesus Christ as God. Jesus Christ is God that walked here on earth as a man. He was born through a virgin birth and grew with wisdom and stature. He was our example of how to live a godly life as we submit ourselves to the will of God our Father. Jesus Christ was always in existence in what is before the beginning of time. He was part of the creation with the “Father” and the “Spirit” when the word was spoken to frame our world. Jesus is the “Word” that was made flesh (John 1).

Within the work of Jesus Christ there are three great offices. Jesus Christ, who is also God the Son operates efficiently and effectively as prophet, priest, and king. The bible has passages which gives evidence of illustrations of Him in these distinctive roles.

As prophet, God is the mouthpiece of Yahweh. Jesus claimed to be uniquely identified with God and He set his own word as author-

¹⁵ Ibid Page 43

ity. Prophets always claimed to be speaking in the name of higher source than themselves.

As the priest, Jesus was our substitute representing us on the cross through the crucifixion. Jesus intercedes on God’s right hand.

As our King, He acknowledged to Pilate he was king (John 18:36–37). We accept that He is King of kings. His kingdom supersedes all earthly kingdoms. We can approach His throne boldly (Hebrews 4:16)!

After His resurrection, based on 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; Ephesians 1:18–23, Revelations 1:5, 17–18, Jesus Christ is described as:

1. Speaking and teaching the word of God
2. Offering himself as a vicarious sacrifice to God, and
3. Reigning over his church and the world as the risen Lord.¹⁶

Jesus Christ represents Christology since He is God with man. The prophet Isaiah prophesied about Him as Immanuel being born through a human body of a virgin conception according to Isaiah 7:14. In the New Testament scriptures according to Matthew and Luke, God with man is Emmanuel interpreted as God with us. This Virgin, whose name is Mary, would have a son.¹⁷ His name in the Greek language is *Jesus*. His purpose is to save people from their sins.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matthew 1:21–23)

¹⁶ Letham, Robert *The Work of Christ* Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1993), page 22

¹⁷ Ferguson, Sinclair B *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1996), page 38

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:30–35)

The cross represents Jesus Christ coming as the Savior in flesh to die for our sins and for our healing. He took the shame, the guilt, and other things that we could not overcome on our own. He suffered because He loved us so much. His purpose was to “fix” what Adam messed up in the garden. There are various covenants made in the Old Testament, but the covenant was not totally sealed until Jesus Christ walked here with mankind and died on the cross for us.

When I read often about covenants in the Bible, I think about blood shed for me even though I am not worthy. Even when I read about the rainbow in Genesis, I understand that the earth will never be destroyed by water or flooding ever again because God made that promise to Noah. When God “established” the covenant, I believe that this meant that Jesus was how the covenant would be completed (Genesis 9:9, 11). As our Redeemer, he purchased us with His own blood that was shed for us on Calvary.

When Adam and Eve hid in the garden, the Bible explains that they went and hid themselves among the trees. That place was then cursed because of the state of losing their fellowship with God. They were no longer in the presence of God (Genesis 3).

Reflected in the Old Testament scriptures, when someone deserved death, hanging on tree was a punishment. Deuteronomy 21:22–23 declares, “And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; [for he that is hanged is accursed of God:] that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.” Because of the tree being cursed, Galatians 3:13 explains that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

The reconciliation of God with mankind is clear in Colossians 3:3 (“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”). The blessing is that Jesus came back to redeem us from the curse of the law because we could not help ourselves be redeemed since our own blood was contaminated. Jesus came through a virgin birth that did not have a trace of sin. He had to be born to enter the earthly realm legally. The essential point is Adam went to the trees to hide from the presence of God, and Jesus went to the tree to take the curse so that our “life is hid with Christ in God.” So today, Christians are redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb, which was our permanent sacrifice, and we do not have to present animals as a sacrifice for our sins! Because He died, I can live the abundant life and I am not rejected by Him when I walk in godly counsel and obey His commandments.

I AM

Jesus is known for saying “I AM,” which is manifested within the New Testament account of His life. I AM that I AM is a phrase also noted within the Old Testament book of Exodus. It is established as “a foreshadow” of Christ coming as the Son of God. In Exodus which is included in the Torah as the second of the five books of Moses, there is a Hebrew group of people that are enslaved to work for the Egyptians. These Hebrews were enslaved for over four hundred years. Initially, this family that was descendants of Abraham,