

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

What Are We Created For?

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:37-40).

THE SELFLESS LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

I remember sermons preached before from my father about the successful mission of Jesus Christ. How that the Lord came into this world as Emmanuel (God with us!) to accomplish the will of the Father, as our text verse above puts it. He came to die for sinners, He came to substitute Himself as the atonement of the elect of God, and He came to live a perfect life that could be imputed upon those



loved before the foundation of the earth. Really, it is marvelous to see how Christ fulfilled every prophecy, picture, and commandment of the Law of God. Selah! Think about it!

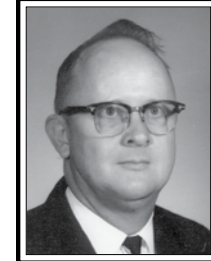
What I would like to glean from His wondrous life for our thoughts, is the fact of how selfless was this sacrificial life. **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."** There at the Garden of Gethsemane, that selfless desire to accomplish the purposes of the Father that had sent Him unto this work, despite the great cost to Him personally is vividly portrayed in Luke 22:42-45: **"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops**

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Humanism and the Bible

By E. D. Strickland
(1915 - 2003)

There is no God as a first cause in the eyes of the humanist. Since he denies a personal living God as the first cause and still has no answer, to first causes, he must spend his time exclusively to effects rather than cause. He becomes very unscientific and imbalanced in his philosophy of cause and effect. Effect without cause is non-scientific in my estimation. What established scientist will deny there is a cause for every effect? How can the first effect be non caused? I am perfectly satisfied to stand on Genesis 1:1, **"In the**



beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

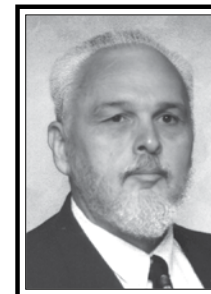
Let all the evolutionary deceiving teachers in our secular schools do a little deep thinking on the subject of a first cause or if you prefer first causes. How about you humanistic teachers confessing your ignorance in your own field at first cause. Please quit deceiving the innocent and inquiring minds of our youth. If you deny God, tell them you are ignorant at first

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The Successful Gardener

By Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

Should we have a high opinion of God or a low one? The Bible makes it clear that God is a success in everything He does. His unequalled ability and power is recorded thus: **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far**



country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isa. 46:9-11).

In this specific instance God spoke of using a man to execute His purpose. That man was not one of God's chosen people, the Jewish Nation, but rather is portrayed as a **"ravenous bird from the east"**. According to the Bible, God says, **"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."** We conclude that the

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June 5, 2020 Volume XXXX, Number 6

Whole Number 485

Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia Cockrell
THE BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts are to be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of BBB and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication.

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One year.....\$6.00
Two years.....\$10.00
Five years.....\$24.00

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9	3,000	FM
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WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000	FM
KARL, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000	AM

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of blood falling down to the ground..." A complete study of Isaiah 53 is necessary to see the ultimate price paid by our faithful Saviour and His perfect obedience to that call to service. Vs. 3-5-
"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

When we examine the life of Jesus Christ it is purely a life that is meant for service! **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"** (Matt. 20:28). I know that Christ was not created for this purpose. He is God the Son! It was not "robbery" for Him to be called God, but He submitted Himself for an allotted amount of "time" unto this great call to become 100% human and subject Himself to the indignities of the world and its flesh. And thereby the Father is glorified! **"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him**

a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:6-11). That is the last and ultimate phrase of this expansive passage. To God be the Glory! Selah! Think about it!

CREATED FOR HIS PURPOSES!

So, what about us? Certainly we are indeed created beings. What for? Why did God create Adam and Eve? As we start to study the answer for them, I want to make sure that the beloved reader knows that we were created in Adam. The Bible phrases this inherent knowledge of posterity, thusly: **"And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him"** (Heb. 7:9-10). In this particular passage, Jacob's son Levi (Abraham's great-grandson) payed tithes to Melchisedec, as surely as Abraham did. And in Adam, we all died: **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"** (I Cor. 15:22).

Perhaps I did not make that point as clearly as I ought, but what I am saying, is that God created you and me on the sixth day, when He created our parents, Adam and Eve. Why did He create them? Important question, but even more pertinent to us is "why did He create us?"

If I may infer from our text in John 6:38, **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."** Could that be our purpose, as well? Were we created to do

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).

A PICTURE OF SALVATION (Psalm 40:1-3)

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry" (Ps. 40:1).

I waited patiently: This speaks of someone who will not be turned away. They are not making demands of God, but they will not leave until they have heard from Him. When the LORD is breathing life into a lost sinner He puts in them a desire to seek God. To be born again and to be saved are almost, but not quite, synonymous. The Holy Spirit breathes life into the sinner so that they will seek God for salvation. They cry out as the text says. The first cry of a newborn Christian is a cry for mercy from their Heavenly Father. They were born from above to seek God. So the day you were saved is quite often the same day you were born again, but I believe by the Scriptures that they are separate events. **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44).**

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Ps. 40:2).

He brought me out: The scriptures over and over show God as Savior, and man as

helpless. I can not find my choices or decisions rescuing myself from my situation. I do not see it in this text either. He brought me out. I did not climb out. I could not climb out. Now if man finds himself in a horrible pit and miry clay he will exhaust every invention he can conjure up to save himself. He will try to self extricate by religion and good works. But sin is a horrible pit that will not let us free and it is a miry clay that like quicksand sucks us deeper and deeper the more we struggle. Finally the psalmist in his desperation cries out to the only One who can rescue him. But He did not bring me out to risk me falling into another pit or sinking in more miry clay. He set me upon a solid foundation. The Rock of Scripture which is Christ. And established my goings. The Lord is my shepherd. He leads, He guides, He directs my steps. He left the ninety and nine to recover this one sheep, He will not leave it to its own wanderings again, He will guide its steps. **"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Ps. 23:1-3).**

"And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD" (Ps. 40:3).

He put a new song in my

mouth: He that the Lord rescues has abundant songs of praise on his lips. It is the theme song of the redeemed Christian. The Christian life has a soundtrack if you will, the praises of God. What was once foreign to the individual is now natural speech. He used to revel in the songs of man's pride and what stirred his flesh. Now his songs are to the glory of God. Many shall see it, and fear: There is nothing more troubling to the lost than a Christian that not only talks the talk, but walks the walk. They can cope with religious people. People who live like the devil all week and in a very catholic manner go to church on Sunday to have their sins absolved. This does not trouble the lost, but the one who has been truly saved shakes the lost to their very core. It is hard to deny the salvation of God when the vilest of sinners now sings the praises of God unabashed. And shall trust in the Lord: the lost hate it, they try and hide from it, but many will be brought to the Lord by this very thing. They will have to ask questions within themselves that must be answered. "If that guy can come out of that vile life he lived, God must be real." "If God is real, I have many sins to answer for." "Does Jesus really save?" **"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him" (Ex. 15:1-2).**

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



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the will of Him that created us? I think very surely that is going to be the answer. How could it not be? Every question as to our existence must come back to the One that propelled us into existence. Why did you make us, God?

If God sent His only begotten Son to this earth for the sole purpose of executing His perfect will, then I firmly believe the Bible shows that our mission is the same. We are here for the sole purpose of executing the will of our Creator- our Heavenly Father- God Almighty. **"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. ...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 2:15, 1:27-28).** These positive commandments would fill the days and nights, the years and immortal ages of Adam and Eve without question. The one negative commandment given them, though, was one that also required strict obedience. **"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17).**

What is required penultimately of man (you and me) is obedience. Solomon sums this up nicely in

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Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, **“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”** Whatsoever we do on this Earth of God’s creation, this is ultimately our greatest charge. **“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord”** (Col. 3:17-20). The Bible gives detailed instructions, even in particular: wives submit, husbands love, children obey. Whatsoever ye do: do it for the glory of God. Remember how Philippians 2 started off? **“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”** Be obedient, just like Christ! Selah! Think about it!

So, if we are here primarily and initially to do the will of our Father, then our focus on life might be changed a bit, eh? The jobs and careers we have are only important to do, as we do them for the glory of God and as we utilize the resources that God has given us, to accomplish the purposes of God in our lives. The families and friends we have, by God’s graciousness, are also only important as we turn our motives and desires toward them unto a godly endeavor to see God’s glorious will accomplished. Selah! Think about it!

Our house, our cars, our i-Phones, our pets, our yards, our neighbors, our jobs, our families, our churches, our nations are all to be subject to these absolute conditions of being surrendered unto our God. Right? Was not that the prayer of Jesus Christ, our example? Following this line of thought, can we really even claim our possessions, as our own? David the King, did not. **“Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee”** (I Chro. 29:10-14).

So, in the end, do we really have any possessions in this earth? **“Lay up treasures...in Heaven”** we are exhorted, eh? Do not put down roots in this pilgrimage, Gehazi. Do not look back, always look forward, Mrs. Lot. Our possessions then, we must conclude, are never really for ourselves. Even the food on our plate (mine) is just that we might nourish our bodies, so we can continue serving our God and family.

Now, that was an important

addition that I added to the last sentence. As we serve God, we will along the way be a blessing to others, at least if we serve God correctly. **“..Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”** (Matt. 22:37-40). As selfless as was the life of Christ, so should our goal be to serve the Lord and be a blessing to all that we come into contact with in the world.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG?

With those realizations as our base, I want to Selah, think about it, one more step. What about when things go wrong in our life? The beloved reader surely knows what I mean by that statement. That is when you swing the hammer and hit your “thumbnail” instead of the “steel nail.” When you are late for work, and you get caught behind that slow coal truck. When your best friend betrays you. When the doctor calls and tells you that you have that dreaded disease. When everything seemed just fine and something happens to turn your world upside down.

My question for this article, that we might ask ourselves at this poignant time of impending disaster is “who is it going wrong for?” Me? Family? Neighbors down the street? Is it going “wrong” for God?

Hey, that jolted you, did it not? It sure did me, as I was preparing this message. Hey, nothing goes “wrong” with our sovereign God in complete and total control of both the universe and my life. If something is happening in our life that we might perceive as

“wrong,” then we must be looking at it “wrong.” Remember Romans 8:28: **“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”** Not just “some things” or even “most things,” but “all things” work out good for God’s chosen people. Always! Right?

The crucifixion on the cross at Calvary was certainly a very bad thing for Jesus Christ to have to suffer through, but what a wondrous, though terrible event it was. It was necessary to accomplish the will of the Father, was it not? So there goes our noble and altruistic Saviour Divine. Though it cost Him degradations, humiliations, untold agony, and ultimate anguish He did not say, “Boy, it seems like everything is going wrong, today!” **“All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet...”** (Matt. 21:4). He said instead, **“...Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.”** (Matt. 3:15).

No matter what phone call we receive, what bombshell is dropped on our doorstep, if we are truly “all in” in our service to our omniscient God, then we must realize that our God has a purpose for us today. This day is (also) what we were created for, every day. We must realize that even the bad days where things go “wrong,” events are completely in God’s control and that actually things are not going wrong at all. They are being carefully manipulated by the Architect of our lives to work out “good things” in our character, nature, and ambiance. You see, if we are indeed created by God to serve Him in this world, then many of our actions will be

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Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

I AM PERSUADED

If you grew up with a hymn-book similar to mine, you are familiar with II Timothy 1:12, **"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."** I sang this song so much as a young man, when I read this verse, I usually say, "I know whom I have be-lie-ved..." playing pronunciation gymnastics to make it fit the tune. But what a glorious verse and no wonder the hymn writer, Daniel Whittle took up this theme.

I know whom I have believed. Paul suffered for the gospel because he knew whom he believed. Not "what" he believed, but in "Whom." The object of the believer's faith is the person of Jesus Christ. Paul knew Him. He knew Him savingly. He knows Christ is faithful. He knows Jesus is true. He knows the Lord is wise. He knows Jesus saves to the uttermost.

Because our faith is in the perfect person of Jesus Christ, I am persuaded He is good to His word. Faith includes not only belief but assent to that belief. Knowing Jesus lived and died is a historical fact. But you also must have affiance to the truth. It is having confidence and being persuaded with the truth. Many know Jesus died and rose from the dead, but do not care. A person persuaded that Christ is able to save is one who repents, humbles themselves before God, obeys the Lord, and

loves Him with all of their heart. A persuaded person acts on their true faith and is persuaded of the facts.

Since Paul knows Christ, he know Jesus can keep his soul which he has committed to Him unto the last day. Paul's soul is anchored to the Rock. Christ is able to do what He promised. Jesus is able to save, to cleanse from sin, to keep unto the last day, to raise up this mortal body and change it to a glorified body. The Lord Jesus is able to do all that He promised, so He is trustworthy to believe in and follow after.

When facing persecution, hardships, tribulations, and struggles in serving Christ, the Christian can press on in faith, knowing the Lord will not forsake him. He can live under the reproach of man and not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it is Christ's gospel, and He is able. Samuel Rutherford, whose faith persuaded him to be banished and imprisoned for Christ said, "Forward then, dear brother, and lose not your grips. Hold fast the truth for the world sells not one dram-weight of God's truth, especially now when most men measure truth by time, like young seamen setting their compass by a cloud..." If you know Christ, your faith is in One stronger than you, able to save, true to His Word, and faithful to keep His promises.

YOUNG MEN, STUDY YOUR BIBLE

"Young men likewise exhort to

be sober minded ... in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Titus 2:6-7).

Young men, you need to read and study your Bible. There is much that can and does occupy your time and your mind, but it is vitally important for you to know doctrine and be sound in the faith. Young man, study your Bible because God has commanded it. Doctrine is not something only the preacher needs to know. It is telling that when a young man knows the Word of God and is grounded in doctrine, everyone tells him he ought to be a preacher. The problem with that view, is the assumption that you do not have to know doctrine if you are not a preacher. Whether or not you preach the Word, you may have or will have a young wife, and young children who are going to look to you for spiritual guidance. They will look to you for wisdom, understanding, and advice. As a man, you need to be able to answer and help them truthfully. You will have people looking to you to lead them and how terrible to not know where you are going yourself.

Now is the time to start. **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them"** (Eccl. 12:1). As a young man, you have the time, the energy and the mental capacity to study and remember great amounts of information. You can memorize the names of ball players and statistics, know the genealogies and story arcs of all the Marvel superheroes, or know every lyric to every country song on the radio. But do not let this season of strength and ability pass without studying God's Word and learning true doctrine. Now is the

time to remember your Creator.

Young man, study your Bible to have a pure doctrine. An impure theology will give you a wrong understanding of God, and indeed, perhaps a wrong gospel, which is no gospel at all. To study doctrine should be for the goal of knowing God. And, for God's people, doctrine should inform practice. The child of God should live out what they believe. Knowing about God, salvation, future things, the church should inform how the man lives his life. **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word"** (Ps. 119:9).

Young man, study your Bible with gravity and sincerity. This is God's Word, after all. The Bible is not a text book, nor is it a literature book that you have to cram before the day of your test. So when you read your Bible, you should be sincere and serious about it. Adam Clarke wrote, this type of doctrine would, "[Mix] nothing with the truth; taking nothing from it; adding nothing to it; and exhibiting it in all its connection, energy, and fullness."

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



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for the “good” of others, at the cost of deprivation to ourselves. We might go hungry, that others may be filled. We might suffer pain, that others might escape punishment. We might effect the “mistake,” that others might learn to avoid that damage. Are we willing to do that? Accept the responsibility that God lays upon us in these times of peril and/or shame?

WE ARE GOD’S GIFT TO THIS TROUBLED WORLD

Summatively, we are created as a gift unto this world. Surely the primary gift is seen in John 3:16: **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”** Why in the world would we accept that Christ must come to suffer, be hungry, weary, thirsty, maligned, homeless, and rejected, but never consider that the lot of the Master should be the lot of the servant and disciple? **“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. ...The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord”** (John 15:18, Matt. 10:24).

For a God-known specific amount of time, we are sent into this world, following our Master, to influence a God-known specific number of people. And everything that happens along the way, is going to further that cause of being a God-sent gift to these people. No, it did not go “wrong” for God, or for you. God meant for that to happen. To teach us? Maybe. To remind us? Probably. To turn us back toward what is really important? Certainly. **“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,**

which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10). What a powerful verse. God has already ordained the “good works” we were created for. Our purpose in life is not the carnal, fleshly desires and sentiments of the world. We were created to serve. To be a slave for God and our neighbors. **“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”** (Mark 16:15).

A member of our church told me of a co-worker of his that was unsaved. His wife had suffered through a painful battle with cancer. She was only given a year or two, but had fought it for much longer. As is the case in these matters, though, it was eventually a battle that she lost. The embittered husband responded to the brother’s attempts to comfort him through the power of God’s Word, with a terrible blasphemous reply, “I wish God would get cancer!” As shocking as the words were, the Lord gave our dear brother an answer that the Holy Spirit used to good effect, as he pointed out that the Lord had given him and his wife more years of love together than most victims of this cancer ever had. And beyond that, had saved the wife, by revealing Jesus Christ to her during those dark, yet necessary years. The lost man seemed struck by the words, and admitted the truth in them. What a witness! What an undeniably precious gift!

“I wish God would get cancer!” As I thought on those despairingly, sacrilegious words, I thought of how often, the Lord takes such words and makes them true. You know, beloved reader, God, the Son did get cancer during those terrible three hours on the cross when He took the sins of the world upon His holy and precious

self. **“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses”** (Matt. 8:17) **“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”** (John 8:36). **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (II Cor. 5:21). Selah! Think about it!

When things seem like they are going wrong, we have the opportunity to do a reality check. Instead of blaming God, (Job 2:9, **“Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.”**), look upward and grab hold of the promises of God. **“But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? ...he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. ...For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me”** (Job 2:10, 23:10, 19:25-27).

Some folk, like Mrs. Job, (and me sometimes) tend to think things are going wrong and God is not doing anything about it. If we allow that feeling to persist, we will end up angry with everything in our life, including God. I told a sister one time in such a depressing funk, that she needed to forgive God. She knew that God was in control, but she could not help but feel that she was being persecuted and was

always receiving the short end of the stick. “It is not fair!” we so often cry out. Well, it depends on what is really fair, I suppose. Was it “fair” that Christ must take my place in eternal Hell? Is it “fair” that He purchased an eternity of bliss for me in Heaven, while others with sins just like mine are bound for eternal damnation in Hell? Selah! Think about it! Do not hold a grudge against God that others are seemingly doing better than you. God loves you, dear saint. He gives you the best He has, every day. Anything less would be unworthy of Him.

Beloved reader, we are created to serve. The good things are promised certainly for the future, but not necessarily for now. **“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”** I Cor. 15:19). **“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth”** (Heb. 11:13). We are not here to live a life of luxury or even of Middle-Class exigencies. We are here to glorify the One that Created us and Who places us exactly where we are, from day-to-day.

THE LOST PERSON’S GREATEST SIN

“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day...” (Deut. 11:26-28). Not just a lost person, but Christians are guilty of this greatest sin of living their lives

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Temperance, Michigan

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



AGED BEYOND ALL IMPORTANCE?

I can remember my parents taking me to see my great-grandmother in a nursing home once a week when I was a child. My father had been raised by her, and to show her honor, we would set aside this time for visiting with her. Of course, being young and a bit creeped out by the sterilization and constant beeping of the place, I was a bit restless to say the least. I would sometimes complain about "the smell of old people," as I just could not figure out this place that was so unlike my own home. Every time we would visit, my great-grandmother would sit up from her bed and have my dad get her pocketbook from the cabinet. Once she had it her 90-some year-old hands, she would delicately open the clasps to her coin purse and secure a nickel for me. "Joey, here, go get yourself a candy bar from down the hall... but don't tell your mom and dad," she would whisper.

Job 32:7 says, "**Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.**" Leviticus 19:32 explains, "**Thou shalt rise up before the hoary (gray or aged) head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.**"

In this time in which we have been called to shelter in place, and many of us, even clergy, are not able to visit our elderly family members, I have been thinking a lot about our visits with my

great-grandmother. My dad had the utmost respect and love for her. It was apparent every visit when even his own precious son would not take the spotlight from her. That left an impression upon me.

I pray that we would heed to the Scriptures by honoring our fathers and mothers; the Lord commands it. Those who have come before us are a great source of wisdom. Beloved, Proverbs 17:6 tells us that "**Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.**" While so many are frustrated that they can not go to restaurants, movies, or to hang out with friends, we can conveniently blame the pandemic for our lonely days. However, we young people are greatly missed by those who, even before COVID-19, have been unable to just drop by our lives for one reason or another. It is heartbreaking to see our nursing homes being ravaged by this virus, and even more sad to remember a time when we could visit regularly...but chose not to.

Looking back on this memory, I can not help but recall that a nickel (even in the 80's) was never going to be enough for a candy bar. Wise to my grandmother's ploy, my mom always had spare change available to add to it before I went down the hallway. But, in her wisdom, and with my adoring appreciation week in and week out, my great-grandmother knew exactly what she was doing.

I was guaranteed exactly enough for a candy bar...as long as she gave me the first nickel.

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Temperance, Michigan.)



Created For ?

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for themselves. When we live our lives for ourselves, we rob God of the glory due His workmanship in our lives. We deny the very purpose we were created for. It is the most selfish of acts, to take time for ourselves to the exclusion of God. Choose ye this day whether you will serve God, or no. "**Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven**" (Matt. 5:16).

Not only are we robbing God when we do not live a sacrificial life on His behalf, but we are also denying our compatriots in this life a true witness of the truth. That newborn child God has given you? You are responsible to be a witness unto the glory of God to them every day. If our friends do not see Christ Jesus our Master in our actions, words and lifestyle, then we have failed them. Our neighbors need to know the hope of Christ or their lives will be totally wasted and in vain. "**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make**

full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:2-8). Do you anticipate His appearing? Are you living your life today, moaning and groaning about circumstances God has allowed to pass your way? Or are you excited to be able to be His witness (Greek for martyr!) today? May His glorious rapture find God's people doing what we were created to do; sacrificially, doing the will of our Father. Selah! Think about it!

(Matthew Stepp is pastor of the Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, West Virginia.)



Humanism and

(Continued from page 1) ♦

causes, or a first cause.

The Manifesto secondly concerns naturalism. Everything is to be considered as natural. This is a constant necessity as the super-natural is denied existence. Humanists are necessarily materialists as well as naturalists. The value of thought and reason must be recognized but may not be found in the camp of materialists. Intangibles then will be found in naturalism (a part of nature) but may be absent in materialism. In humanistic philosophy nature is both cause and effect. It is admitted man is a part of nature. Then in man is both cause and effect. If man is his own first cause, then he of necessity is his own creator! This

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Humanism and

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is more confusing than the old silly song title "I am my own grand paw."

The secular humanist is strictly an evolutionist. He sees every thing in general progress with exception of set backs only minor and temporary. This false view sees man headed with certainty to the summit of success. He may be delayed or detained but never permanently deterred. All this is faith in man. Man will accomplish success within his own inherent strength and human wisdom. The humanist is both optimistic, and egotistic. He believes in science, he believes in the future (perfect attainment ahead).

Many humanists see Christianity and faith in the living God as a deterrent to progress rather than a help and promoter of progress.

Secular humanism permeates communism. Both put together, form the heart of a persecuting Saul of Tarsus bent to persecute and put to death believers in God and His Christ.

Christian culture believing in God, and atheistic Communism will never thrive in the same nation permanently.

A Christian culture will never surrender to Communism willingly and overtly. But a nation may become humanistic in its philosophy and practice. Such may become "a sitting duck" before the guns of the world Marxism. Our nation now is not Christian, at least in practice, even if called Christian in name.

Who can deny that we are now a nation of humanistic permeation? What institutions in our American society today have not been infiltrated and captivated by the tenants of secular humanism?

Humanists are in accord with many other groups and philosophies in various aspects. Hence, let us look at some of the parallels of allied groups which may be called "bed fellows" with humanists in these respects.

To stir up our memory as to the essence of humanism, I quote just a few articles of the *Humanist Manifesto*.

Article I- "Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing, and not created."

Article VII- "The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained."

Article X- "There will be no unequally religious emotions and attitudes of the kind associated with belief of the supernatural."

Also, "We believe that traditional religions, that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. . .no deity will save us; we must save ourselves. Promises of immortal salvation, or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful."

We will now look at some allies of humanism.

1. Existentialism. The doctrine that there is no difference between the external world and the internal world of the mind and that the source and elements of knowledge have their existence in the state of the mind.

It is a recent movement which stresses personal decision in the face of a universe without purpose. Commitment and decisionism of man is its heart. They claim that man must find out for himself what the meaning of life has. Man must rise above nature and society in search of God. Choice is the central fact of human experience. All that we are is the result of the choices

we have made (see *Christianity Confronts Communism Humanism Materialism Existentialism* by David Cook).

2. Communism. The Marxist says, "You believe in God, trust God; we will trust in ourselves" (man). This is the same philosophy as secular humanism.

See Christian philosophy; **"The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD"** (Prov. 21:31).

3. Arminianism. "The will of man is more potent than the will of God." This is contrary to Hebrews 12:2 and also John 15:16. Like the humanist, the Armenian denies total depravity, and sees the potent will of the natural man possessing power to attain desired goals. Both have confidence in the flesh and see the natural man accomplishing desired goals. Cp. Romans 7:18, Phil. 3:3-4; I John 3:2. We have confidence toward God.

4. Liberalism. The liberal cuts the shackles of Bible authority. Inerrancy of the Scriptures is not his philosophy of interpretation. What truths the Scriptures contain is determined by the judgment of man. Not all Scripture is absolute truth, Man must determine absolute truth! The liberal denies all the Bible is absolutely inspired.

5. Modernism. Here we see more recent attempts to evade the fundamentals of the faith. It is seen in the fight over inerrancy of the Bible among Southern Baptists.

6. Romanism. Salvation, eternal life, including all religious life of a person from birth through death is in the hands of the universal visible Roman Catholic Church with the Pope taking temporary charge in place of Christ (God), Christ's vice-regent.

7. Materialism. Reality is in

matter alone. Hence, it is denial of spiritual religion, morals, plus the denial of the soul of man. Reality is matter and there is never one without the other.

8. Empiricism. This is the philosophy or doctrine that all knowledge is derived from experience. (*American College Dictionary*). Experience is the hallmark of the empiricist. The Charismatic movement is strong with this philosophy. Hooray for experience; boo for doctrines. Such would emphasize emotion (love, feeling, etc.) to the exclusion or demotion of doctrine. Rationalism is eliminated at the expense of experience. But herein is a germ of dangerous poison; revelation to man in experience (revelation without the Word of God) over against revelation through faith once delivered. **"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"** (Jude 3).

(*Scripture Notes*, February & March 1984).

END



Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).



IS THE GOSPEL REALLY HIDDEN?

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (II Cor. 4:3-6).

Could it really be that the gospel is hidden to some? It is not only possible, but it is a fact that the gospel is hidden from all the lost. This means it is unrecognizable by the lost people unless the Holy Spirit quickens your spirit and leads you to it. Preachers today teach untruths. They do not understand what they teach because they are lost. God calls them **"blinded."** **"But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matt. 15:13-14). The blinded person mentioned here is a lost person, and these lost people leading the blind as lost ministers that have never trusted Jesus Christ as his Lord. These mega churches

are going nowhere, blind people cannot lead because **"...both shall fall into the ditch."**

Salvation is not available to the world, God never said it was, it is to those that God will give it to. **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day"** (John 6:44). Only God can save a lost sinner and lead him/her to Jesus Christ. These old antics used by the lost churches and preachers are falsely teaching blind man's teachings, just leading people into hell's fiery flames. People have lost the sovereignty of God, but God's sovereignty is still real, and God truly does still save sinners. Who believes it or does not believe it is not my problem, I cannot change a wicked heart and cause them to believe on Jesus Christ. This is the sovereignty of God that people do not believe. **"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"** (Rom. 9:15). John wrote about this same sovereignty. **"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"** (John 1:11-13).

Nowhere in the Scripture (in the context of them) does God leave salvation up to a lost unbeliever who cannot see, hear, nor believe our gospel. Salvation is a gift from God, it is not something people accomplish on their own. Do not be fooled by lost teachers that do not understand that salvation is God's gift to those who believe in Jesus Christ. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"** (Rom. 3:23-26).

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



The Successful

(Continued from page 1) ♦

Bible reveals God as one deserving of a high opinion, well able to do as He pleases.

In the context of His revealed greatness, let us think about God as a gardener: The Successful Gardener. When the Lord Jesus spoke of His Father being a gardener He said: **"...Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up"** (Matt. 15:13). That is a powerful statement. It is one that should immediately get our undivided attention! This is, of course, metaphorical language. Jesus is not talking about natural plants. He is talking about people. In fact, if you read the immediate context – the verses before and after

this one – you will see that He was talking about the Pharisees. These Pharisees were one of two main religious groups among the Jews of that day. Back then they were the conservatives or the fundamentalists among the Jews. They believed all the Scriptures that then existed. Jesus said about them, **"...The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not"** (Matt. 23:2-3). Another place He said, **"...Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy"** (Luke 12:1). These people talked the talk, so to speak, but did not walk the walk. They believed all the right things, but all they had was an intellectual knowledge of the Old Testament. They had not been planted by God. Probably they had planted themselves. They did not know the God of the Bible nor did they know His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

By using these words, **"...Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"** God is presented to us as a gardener. In a well maintained garden – the kind you would expect God to have – there may spring up two kinds of plants. One kind has been planted by the gardener. And there are other plants – plants that God did not plant. For our thinking we will say the plants that God did not plant fall into two classes. There are the weeds, of course. These are immediately and easily identified for the most part. These will produce no fruit. We would expect God to "weed" His garden. When He does so, these shall most certainly be rooted up and tossed aside. There may also be another kind of plants that God did not

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plant. These we will call “volunteer” plants. One botanist wrote this: “In gardening and agronomic terminology, a volunteer is a plant that grows on its own, rather than being deliberately planted by a farmer or gardener.” In a natural garden these volunteer plants may spring up from seeds left in the ground from the previous year or may have been blown in from a neighbor’s garden – or they may have been brought in by a bird of one sort or another. The point is that the gardener did not plant them. They were not a part of his plan for his garden. Jesus made it clear that both the weeds and the volunteer plants in His Father’s garden **“...shall be rooted up.”** **“... Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up”**: Those are His exact words! If the Father did not plant what grows in His garden, He shall root it up, be it a weed or a vegetable plant that just came up all on its own. One old preacher titled his sermon on this verse: “Are You Planted or Just Set Out?”

We urge the reader to forget about trying to figure out whether or not neighbors, friends, or fellow professing Christians were planted by God. You and I do not have the ability to know of a certainty about that. What we ought to be concerned about is ourselves. Am I one that God has planted? That is the question each of us should be asking. Paul wrote these words to the congregation in Corinth: **“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith...”** (II Cor. 13:5). These words set us on the right path. Self-examination is commanded.

In other words, are you a spiritual weed? We should liken weeds to those who do not profess faith in

Christ. Or did you just volunteer to be a Christian? Or did God plant you? Those plants planted by God are the only ones that shall not be rooted up. The others – weeds and volunteer plants of all sorts – shall be rooted up. We say this because Jesus said it. He also said, **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** Again He said, **“...that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father”** (John 6:44, 65). The Bible makes it clear that God is the cause of men and women coming to Christ. He initiates the salvation of those who shall be saved. He does not leave it up to the individual to take the first step. He plants in His garden those plants He wants to grow there! The natural mind and the untaught believer will object to such a Sovereign Who does as He pleases with His own creatures. Human beings have a will that they like to think is free. But in reality the will of an unsaved person is bound by their carnal nature. Because of their depravity and the spiritual deadness of their condition, they lack the ability to come in a saving way to Christ. The last-quoted verses are clear on that matter. God must first work in men and women enabling them to repent and believe the gospel in a saving way. God must do the planting!

Do not look around at others. Look at yourself. Has God planted you? Or did you just set yourself out? Do not be filled with self-confidence. Do not trust in some religious or emotional experience. Do not trust in your own acts such as praying a pray or going forward in a religious service. Do not trust in having made “a decision for Christ”! Do not think you are saved because you set yourself

out! People are headed toward the lake of fire from church pews with a Bible in their hand and a supposed Christian song on their lips. Whether or not they realize it they are singing a song without Bible foundation: they are singing “A Volunteer For Jesus.” Part of the chorus goes, “A volunteer for Jesus, a soldier true: Others have enlisted, why not you?” That song is misleading because God does not accept volunteer enlistment. According to the metaphor on gardening, you cannot plant yourself! God does not accept plants that plant themselves. Someone said that the Lord Jesus turned down every person who ever volunteered to serve Him. The Lord certainly set a standard for the rich young ruler which He knew would dissuade him from following after Him (See Mark 10:21). The reason God does not accept volunteers is that no person in his or her natural state seeks after God. No one volunteers to serve God for the right reason. We freely admit that unsaved people think that they are seeking after God. However, Paul plainly stated in Romans 3:11: **“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”** People may seek after a thousand things associated with God, but they do not, will not, and cannot seek after God. Their motives are ulterior. Their motives are hidden. They may profess to seek after God, but really they want what they think they can get out of Him. Like a “gold digger” they only want Him for His riches! They may want healing, or prosperity, or an escape from the lake of fire. Sometimes they just want a better quality of life and think to find it by professing faith in Christ. The Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples about these natural kinds of things: He said, **“...all these things do the**

nations of the world seek after” (Luke 12:30). Everybody wants to better themselves. Everybody wants a better quality of life. Nobody wants to spend eternity in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Normal, natural people seek these things and many of them try to ingratiate themselves with God thinking that by doing so they will obtain what they seek. Not long ago a young relative asked this preacher, “If I get saved will God give me...” this and that and the other thing. The answer, of course, is that God may let His children suffer under financial distress as well as other trials and tribulations. But these volunteer plants who think to grow in God’s garden do so for wholly selfish reasons. God is not glorified by such selfishness! Covetousness is never blessed or honored by God! These kinds of “seeking” are not seeking after God! To want the perceived benefits of salvation rather than the God Who saves is unacceptable to Him. Dare we think that God rewards such selfish carnality as this? Will He save those who do not want Him and His righteousness, but rather seek after comforts and security – all the things that the nations of the world seek after? God’s blessing is upon those who **“...hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”** (Matt. 5:6). The exhortations in the Bible are to **“seek the LORD”**, not His gifts!

It is so with those whom God plants! They are brought to seek Him and His righteousness! We deny that men can seek God aright in and of themselves because the Bible denies that idea. When God draws a person to Christ He works repentance in them. He does this by showing them both His holiness and their sin. Of his own personal experience, one

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Little Valleys

By Timothy J. Hille of
Ashland, Illinois

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." (Psalms 104:10).



from heaven, used to brew the beer for the drunkard to drink; and the gold used to make the cross worn by the religious hypocrite whose heart has not been made new by the power of God. Your soul belongs to God, and very soon will go back to Him. **"Behold, all souls are mine,"** (Ezek. 18:4). **"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it"** (Eccl. 12:7). Are you ready?

(Timothy J. Hille is pastor of the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church of Pleasant Plains, Illinois.)



The Successful

(Continued from page 10) ♦

Old Testament prophet wrote: **"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts"** (Isa. 6:5). Isaiah was brought to see his sin and hopelessness! Job was brought to a similar place in his experience. He said, **"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"** (Job 42:5-6). Is your experience similar to these? To those whom God plants He shows their helplessness. They can do nothing about either their rotten sin nature or their sinful acts. In this way He shows them their true condition and causes them to take their rightful place before Him. As a result their hearts are broken over their sin and their sins – i.e. their sinful nature and their sinful

acts. This godly sorrow or brokenheartedness is one of the missing ingredients in the experiences of those who only volunteer. Those who merely plant themselves do so by a mere decision. In fact, in most "evangelical" churches people are told to "make a decision for Christ" as if this is what will make them a saved person. A decision is mental. It is made in the mind of man based upon what he thinks are sound reasons. Conversion, on the other hand, is much deeper. It involves the whole soul of man – not just his mental capacity. In reality, by telling folk to make a decision, most Baptist preachers and churches tell folk to plant themselves! They do not believe that God must do the planting for the work to be done right. In this way many are deceived by preachers and religious systems that are deceivers (See II Timothy 3:13). But the Bible still says, **"...godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death"** (II Cor. 7:10). This is true in the life of an unbeliever being brought to Christ and in the lives of believers whose continual repentance is a part of the spiritual life.

Someone said that the emotions are the mainspring of the will. We do not mean that a natural man's emotions can be affected by preaching or the singing of sad songs, etc., in such a way as to cause him to repent. But God Who regenerates the dead spirit in a person uses means to bring those whom He has regenerated to experience conversion. And repentance – along with its ever-present twin, justifying faith – is a part of the conversion of a soul. It is the spirit that is made alive and the soul which is converted. The relationship between the new birth and conversion cannot be

better stated, we think, than in the old New Hampshire Baptist Confession printed in A.D. 1833. That confession says in part: "We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again;¹ that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind;² that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth,³ so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel;⁴ and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life."⁵ Several things were believed by these old Baptist forefathers as evidenced in this statement. We point out three as follows: 1) regeneration or the new birth is a work of the Spirit unobserved by us: 2) this new birth secures our voluntary obedience to the gospel: and 3) repentance, faith and a changed life are the evidences of this new birth. And as we have pointed out before, repentance is worked by "godly sorrow." In our Baptist rush to get folks saved, we very often omit patiently waiting on God to work genuine godly sorrow in them. If we really believe that God is able to save whom He wants to save, let us cease from "pulling them green and spoiling the vines."

NOTES

1. John 3:3, 6-7; Rev. 21:27
2. II Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; I John 4:7
3. John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; I Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13
4. I Pet. 1:22-25; I John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11
5. Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; I John 5:4, 18

(Note: numbering of proof texts is ours and not the numbering of the original confession).



As Creator, all things belong to God: the air that the politician breathes when making his or her false promises in soliciting votes; the tree used to make the paper for the textbook from which the teacher teaches the students that they evolved from monkeys; the grain, watered and nourished

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Could you please comment on Psalm 37:16?

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The first two Scriptures that come to mind when I read Psalm 37:16 is Matthew 6:19-21: **"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."** And I Timothy 6:8: **"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."**

Before I continue, the emphasis is put on the righteous man. There are many that are in our Bibles who have been rich materially, look at Job and Solomon to name a couple. So, it is the righteous man whose little is better than the riches of the wicked. Look at the next verse, Psalms 37:17, **"For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous."** God cares nothing for the wicked but he takes care of His own. There is nothing wrong with being rich as long as you know how you got that way.

Paul told Timothy to be content...why? Because we are heirs with Christ. We are nothing and have nothing if we do not have Christ as our Saviour. We

are rich in Him, and all that we do have, even though it is small, is greater than the richest of the rich, because his riches will perish, but the Lord's elect is everlasting riches in Him. **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"** (Heb. 13:5).

The rich man, if lost, does not stand righteous before God, but we do because we are in Christ Jesus. John Gill says this concerning this verse; "not that a little is better than much, or that poverty is better than riches, or a poor man better than a rich man; but the comparison is between a righteous man and a wicked man; the emphasis lies there; and the sense is, that a "righteous" man's "little" is better than a "wicked" man's "much"; the righteous have a right to what they have, through Christ, who is heir of all things, but not the wicked; they have what they have in love and with a blessing, not so the wicked; they are contented in their state and condition, when the wicked are never satisfied; they possess and enjoy what they have, even all they have, when God oftentimes does not give the wicked an heart to eat and drink of what they are possessed, but a stranger eats it; they have the presence of God with them, and that makes a little sweet, and to go a great way; and they live without any anxious, distressing, burdensome care; not so the wicked; and before long the tables will be turned, and they will have their good things,

and the wicked their evil things; see Proverbs 16:8; wherefore they have no need to fret under present circumstances, nor envy the happiness of wicked men."

What is the tenth commandment? **"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's"** (Ex. 20:17). Again **"lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,"** **"be therewith content."**

We should always remember what happened in II Samuel 11! And then when the Lord sent Nathan to confront David with what he had done in II Samuel 12. David broke the tenth commandment, did he not? Remember the story Nathan told David about the rich man and the poor man? Let us read it here in II Samuel 12:1-4: **"And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."**

I would have to say, other than the Lord's crucifixion, this is the most gut-wrenching story

in the Bible, how could anyone do that...but see the rich do not care, just look at those in power today. Even David was furious. **"And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity"** (II Sam. 12:5-6). David may have had the right idea to **"restore the lamb fourfold"**, but how can you replace something that was so precious. How can you replace the only Son of God, Jesus can not be replaced...can He? But the wicked have tried to replace Him with their riches. I think, if I remember right, does Catholicism not teach you can buy you a place in heaven? I heard Bill O'Reilly say that he hopes he has given enough money to the church to get him into heaven. **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6). Do you know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?

So, back to King David...oops David, **"And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man..."** (II Sam. 12:7). You know what this reminds me of? Oops Peter, **"And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly"** (Luke 22:60-62).

You know who else it reminds me of? You and me, Oops, that is sad is it not? **"For ye have not**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Is God calling a man to preach (evangelist) the same as the call to be pastor of a church?

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First, it should be observed that the office of an evangelist in New Testament times was pretty much what we would today consider as a man called by God and engaged in the work of missions. Barnabas, Paul, and Silas all did the work of an evangelist during their missionary journeys. The idea of a man who claims to be called to preach in special meetings labeled Revival Services is a relatively new invention. An evangelist in the New Testament was a man called of God to preach the Gospel of the grace of God everywhere he went.

All preachers called of God are required to do the work of an evangelist, which would include pastors and elders of churches according to Paul's inspired directive to Timothy: **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine...But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry"** (II Tim. 4:2, 5). If a man says he is called to preach the Word and does not engage in the work of an evangelist it casts serious doubt as to whether he is truly called of God.

There is no doubt that the

work of an evangelist/missionary is somewhat different. An evangelist/missionary is called to go to an area and sent out by an already established church (Acts 13:1-3). He goes with the hope of seeing sinners saved by Gospel preaching, baptized, instructed, and ultimately organized into an autonomous Baptist church. Oftentimes, the evangelist/missionary becomes the pastor of the newly organized church until he is called of God to go elsewhere. This is especially true in the work of home missions. Often times in foreign mission work the evangelist/missionary trains men who are Divinely called to the ministry and then ordains them to do the work of a pastor. He then moves on to another area to start the whole process over again. A pastor/elder is called to minister to a Baptist church already in existence. The pastor/elder is called to have spiritual oversight over an already existing flock, to feed, edify, reprove, and rebuke the members of the church. He is also charged with doing the work of an evangelist which necessitates Gospel preaching and distribution in the community in which he labors. I fear many Baptist pastors are neglecting to do the work of an evangelist. They are failing to personally witness to people in the community where they pastor. Sadly, when preachers do not evangelize, their church members are not trained to do the work either. As a result many churches dissipate and die. There is a real sense in which every member of a Baptist Church

should be committed to doing the work of an evangelist. We have an example from Scripture where the members of the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem were actively engaged in the work of evangelism in Acts 8:4: **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."** This was not a select company of Baptist preachers, but the members of the church who went everywhere preaching the Word. The early churches were so obedient to the commands given by Christ in the Great Commission they were actively engaged in the work of evangelism everywhere, earning the following testimonials from their persecutors: **"...Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine... These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also"** (Acts 5:28; 17:6). The church at Thessalonica was commended by Paul for being fervent in the work of evangelism: **"And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, which joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not the speak any thing"** (I Thes. 1:6-8).

Modern day "evangelists" are usually preachers who are already pastoring one of the Lord's churches. They are called upon to help sister churches in special meetings often called Revival Services. I have no problem with this practice as long as it is not the only time a church engages in

evangelism. That work must be ongoing, not just scheduled one week out of the year.

Can a man claim to be called to preach if he never engages in the work of an evangelist? By extension, can a church claim to be scriptural if it is not actively engaged in the work of evangelism? In light of the terms of the Great Commission as given by the Lord Jesus Christ, the honest answer to both questions is no, especially when the first command listed is **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). May God convict preachers and churches for failing to do the work of evangelism.

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"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (John 1:6). **"Then the word of the LORD came unto me (Jeremiah), saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations"** (Jer. 1:4-5). The call to preach the gospel and everlasting truth of the Word of God is a special gift and calling that comes only from God. No man (or woman) can duplicate this call. No matter what human parents might desire for their prospective and promising protégé, no seminary can produce a genuine preacher. Verily, the airwaves and modern pulpits are filled with false

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Forum Question #1

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received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:15-17). This means, In Jesus Christ we are the richest of the rich!

We are a child of the King! Then we should act like it. "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Tim. 6:8). "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Ps. 37:16). God Bless!

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"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Ps. 37:16).

Psalm 37 is David's prophetic glimpse into the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, which follows the judgment of the nations at the Battle of Armageddon. I always like to point out that man and Satan will "battle," but when Jesus Christ, the King appears on the scene, it is not a battle any longer, but turns immediately into a judgment, as the Lord routs His enemies every time. There has never in this world been a battle between Satan and God, the battles are always between Satan

and us. Some we win, some we lose, but God is so much higher than Satan, that it would be ludicrous to call it a battle. When God shows up to fight, who can even stand upright against Him? "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isa. 45:23). "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). Selah! Think about it! "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

The contrast of the righteous versus the wicked evildoers in Psalm 37 is meant to contrast their end state as being more important than their current state. Sure, we are aware that the wicked are prospering with their riches currently, but David tells us to consider the end state and interspersed throughout this great psalm, we find that considered.

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37:9). Woohoo! This is titillating stuff. Actually the last time it happened on such a great scale is the great deluge of Noah's day. Imagine this "inheritance of the entire earth" when God opened the door of the ark and Noah's family surveyed the wiped clean surface of the Earth. Vs.10-11, **"For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth;**

and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Gives a little deeper consideration of the Lord's beatitudes in Matthew 5, eh? Also prophetic overtones.

"The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied" (Ps. 37:18-19). That there are some dark days leading up to the Millennial Reign is not overlooked. The seven year great tribulation is fraught with danger and darkness, but as we study and compare Scripture, God will preserve His remnant in Petra, a rocky fortress on the other side of the Jordan River (in the modern country of Jordan) and will provide His people with manna and miraculous water, yet again in the latter days. **"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God (Petra!), that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days" (Rev. 12:6).** **"He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks (Heb. Cela/Gr. Petra): bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isa. 33:16).** Wow! God is good to His people. That is the promises of Psalm 37. Selah! Think about it!

"For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. ...Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever" (Ps. 37:22, 27-29). More promises of a future blessing for His people. I guess the question

now, is: Can we be satisfied with just a little, right now? Back to our text in Psalm 37:16: **"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."** What do we really need the riches in this present time for? Comfort, ease, rest? It is not that time, yet, beloved. We have all the promises that we need, to keep us content, waiting for the glory of God. **"Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. ...Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace" (Ps. 37:34, 37).** Selah! Think about it!

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Psalm 37:16 states: **"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."**

It is interesting that the context and message of this entire Psalm is an admonition to acknowledge God's provision and protection of His people in spite of the persecution and opposition of wicked evildoers. God's elect are reminded to trust in the Lord, commit their way unto the Lord, and to delight and rest in Him (37:3-7). If you are truly trusting Christ and have committed your way unto the Lord you have nothing to fear and everything to gain! There is even a promise to those whom God has transformed into meek and humble servants relating to the glories of the Millennial Kingdom: **"But the**

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Forum #1

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meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace...Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it" (37:11, 34). Jesus reiterated this glorious promise in the Beatitudes when He said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:5-6). Thus the Psalmist is clearly demonstrating how much God has enriched His people by way of sovereign grace, imputed righteousness, and a secure future.

If one of God's elect has only food and raiment in this life, he is instructed to be content (I Tim. 6:6-8). The world may scoff at what they consider to be such meager provisions, but the contented child of God meekly delights in God's gracious care. A child of the King is wealthy beyond compare with riches that cannot be measured by man's estimation. Ephesians 1:3-7, 11 declares: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his

blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace...In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." As God's elect, we are children of God, and are also heirs of God: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we may suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of his present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:17-18). Add up all the riches of all wicked men throughout human history and they do not even begin to compare to the riches a child of God has by way of sovereign grace!

One other observation about the statement of Psalm 37:16 is how differently God looks at things compared to how man looks at things. The things that carnal men treasure, God regards as trinkets and abominations according to Jesus: "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). Oh that God would be pleased to open the eyes of men to the glories and riches of Jesus Christ as that which is to be most prized! May God help us to see things as He sees them and to value that which He values. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Mark 8:36-37)?

I like the comment of C.H. Spurgeon on Psalm 37:16: "This

is a fine proverb. The little of one good man is contrasted with the riches of many wicked, and so the expression is rendered the more forcible. There is more happiness in the godly dinner of herbs than in the stalled ox of profane rioters...We would sooner hunger with John than feast with Herod; better feed on scant fare with the prophets in Obadiah's cave than riot with the priest of Baal. A man's happiness consists not in the heaps of gold which he has in store." (Treasury of David, Vol. 1b, pages 174-175).

TOM ROSS



Forum Question #2

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prophets, that God never called. "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Rev. 2:20). Selah! Think about it!

God's men (...not any women, I Timothy 2:12, "But I suffer not a woman to teach [strike #1], nor to usurp authority over the man [strike #2], but to be in silence" [strike #3]), will be like Amos the shepherd, going about their secular vocations, until the Lord Himself comes along and calls them. "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:18-19).

What does God do then, with these called men? "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;

and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12). God's purposes for this man will be made known to him via the leadership and authority of the Holy Ghost. Still not gonna be the man's choice whether to serve in America or Africa; in pastoral pulpit or evangelical missions. God will lead and has predestined the pathways of every man that He calls.

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:1-3). Here in the First Baptist Church of Antioch, God has five men that He has called to preach. Now what? The Holy Ghost separates Barnabas and Saul to a particular work, but uses the authority of the Lord's church to do so. Notice in verse 3, that "they" fasted and prayed; and "they" sent them away. The vote of the church was necessary for them to have their marching orders, as Jesus made clear when He commissioned His Church in Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #14 ABRAHAM

TEXT: Genesis 12:1-4

DEVOTIONAL READING: Hebrews 11:8-19; James 2:23

AIM: An Over-view of the Life of Abraham

SUGGESTED HYMN: Father, Abraham

INTRODUCTION: We now look at Abraham, the Friend of God.

I. ABRAHAM'S BEGINNINGS: Gen. 11:31-32; Josh. 24:2-3—We read in the Scriptures that Abraham was one who “served other gods.” Abraham was a sinner. In serving these other gods, Abraham manifested that he was NOT the friend of the Lord. Rather, Abraham was the enemy of God; a rebel. The Bible clearly tells us that we are enemies of God in need of being reconciled (brought into friendship) with the Lord (Rom. 5:10). Like Abraham, we have served other gods (pleasure, desire, wants, wills of our own nature).

II. ABRAHAM WAS CALLED OF GOD—Gen. 12:1-3; Acts 7:2-3—The call of God came to Abraham while he was in his sinful condition. The call came to separate himself from all that he knew and put complete confidence in the Lord.

God still calls men, women, boys, and girls today—by the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:6, 16). God calls sinners just as they are. He calls them to come unto Him (Matt. 11:28) and be saved.

Although, Abraham was a sinful man and an enemy of God, the Lord called him and received him. He is still doing the same today (Luke 15:1-2; John 6:37).

III. ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD: Rom. 4:1-4; James 2:23—Here beloved we see that the Lord called Abraham unto Him. To forsake those other gods and to come unto the Lord. Abraham's response was one of faith: Gen. 12:4—**“So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him.”** This was all done because **“Abraham believed God.”** **“By faith Abraham”** so says Heb. 11:8, when he was called, obeyed.

Do you believe God? Do you believe that you are lost and in a terrible sinful condition of which the penalty is eternal destruction from the presence of almighty God (II Thess. 1:8-9)? Do you believe that you have rebelled against God and are alienated from Him as the enemy of God? This is God's testimony concerning you! For you have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

But God hath done the work of reconciliation (that is of making so that you can be a friend with the Lord). Rom. 5:10—**“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”** Yes, in the death of Jesus Christ one is reconciled (brought back into friendship) with the Lord. Abraham believed the Word of God concerning this and is called **“the Friend of God”**--James 2:23.

IV. FRIEND OF GOD: Isa. 41:8; James 2:23—take note that God is not called the friend of Abraham, but rather Abraham is called the

friend of God. Abraham was “dear” unto the Lord. Let us observe what things the Lord did for His friend, Abraham:

1. He laid down His life: John 15:13—the Lord God laid down His life for Abraham. There at Calvary Jesus Christ offered Himself, willingly gave Himself for the life of His dear friend, Abraham. This was the only way in which Abraham could be reconciled to the LORD God.

2. He loved him at all times: Prov. 17:17—The Bible teaches us of the Lord's everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). There was never a time when the Lord did not love Abraham. There were times when he was displeased with Abraham, but never a time when He did not love Him.

3. He sticketh closer than a brother: Prov. 18:24—The Lord is a true friend. He is one who is faithful through thick and thin. The Lord had made a covenant/promise unto Abraham and He would fulfill it (Gen. 12:1-3; 18:19—**“...that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him”**). The Lord is one who will never leave, nor forsake His people (Heb. 13:5).

4. He communicated with Abraham: Gen. 12:1,7; 15:1; 17:1—There are many Scriptures where we find that the Lord communicated with Abraham His desire and His will for Abraham. We also find that Abraham communicated with the Lord (Gen. 18:22-33). It is a common occurrence for friends to communicate with one another. Those whom are “the friend of God” mimic that which was done between the Lord and Abraham.

5. Trustworthiness: Heb. 11:17-19—One of the greatest of all attributes of friendship is trustworthiness. The LORD is filled with the ability to be trusted, relied upon, believed upon, depended upon. Here, the Lord called upon Abraham to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice unto the Lord (See Gen. 22). Remember, that Isaac, was the one of whom the Lord had promised unto Abraham (Gen. 17:15-19 (v.19)). God had specifically stated that in Isaac would come Abraham's seed, and to Isaac belonged the covenant agreement between God and Abraham.

Isaac had not yet been married. He had no children. And now the Lord commands Abraham to offer him as a sacrifice before the LORD. Abraham believed God would give him a seed through Isaac. He trusted the Lord was able to do this. Thus, Abraham believed the LORD was able even to raise up Isaac from the dead. Abraham completely trusted the LORD, for He is so worthy of our trust.

V. CLOSING: Question: “Am I the friend of God?” “How does one become the friend of God?” What do God's friends do? John 15:14.

(Nathaniel Hille is pastor of the Bible Baptist Church of Plant City, Florida.)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 15) ♦

to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

The Baptist church at Antioch makes clear God's purpose for His personal calling of preachers, but using the Lord's Baptist churches

to authorize their sending or pastoring. The Apostle Paul and his fellow missionaries returned to Antioch for their mission reports of accountability in Acts 14:26, 15:30 & 18:22. Pastors are also to be accountable to their church membership. The Baptist churches are ordained to be the avenue wherein the Lord

♦ (Continued on page 17)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 16) ♦

will receive glory. **"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"** (Eph. 3:21).

The call to be a pastor will come from both directions (vertical [direct authority from God] and horizontal [earthly chain-link authority through churches]). The Lord's church in need of a pastor will perhaps have several men of God in to preach for them, but then will vote to call the one preacher the Lord leads them (after much fasting and prayer) to call. After that man of God receives the call from the church, he will obediently pray also to the same sovereign God. It may be that the answer is "no" and the church will have to continue to pray and call another man of God. But if the Lord gives the man of God a "yes," then he will humbly accept the church's call into the highest office here on Earth. A duly-called pastor of one of the Lord's Baptist churches. Called vertically by God to pastor, but called horizontally by the authority of the local, New Testament Baptist church. Selah! Think about it!

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First, let me give you an excerpt from my book *My Years As A New Testament Baptist Preacher*, "One thing I have learned along the way as a minister of the gospel is, it is not all about preaching when the church doors are

opened. I have said it and seen it many times, "There is more to pastoring than preaching." Young preachers, remember that. You can be a great orator, but not have the first idea how to take care of the Lord's churches.

When men are called to the ministry, God never gave anybody a money-back guarantee or said it would be easy. We have to remember we are all human first, and then we branch out to other things as God calls.

So I will answer no to this question, God does not call a man the same way to preach (evangelize) the same as he calls a preacher to pastor one of the Lord's true churches. **"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way"** (I Cor. 12:28-31).

Also, I believe, Philip (even though he was a deacon) had the ability to preach (evangelize), but there is no account he ever pastored a church. But he was ordained as would a church call a man and ordain him to pastor a church **"And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them"**

(Acts 6:5-6). **"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people"** (Acts 6:8).

We next see Philip in Samaria preaching Christ unto them and many believed and were baptized. **"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did"** (Acts 8:5-6). **"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women"** (Acts 8:12).

This is a beautiful picture of a God called man to preach the Word of God but never pastored a church. Then we see that Philip was called away from this great revival in Samaria to go to Gaza to preach Jesus to **"a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians."**

"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou

readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:26-35).

If you continue to read, Philip had the authority from the Jerusalem church to baptize him and others, just like I have the authority from Big Creek Baptist Church to baptize at the Mission those that confess Christ as their Saviour.

Then we see that Philip continued to preach (evangelize) everywhere he was led by the Spirit of God. **"And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea"** (Acts 8:39-40).

I believe God has given each man a talent to do that which he was called to do, we are not all the same. But we all have the same desire, and that is to preach and teach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. God Bless!

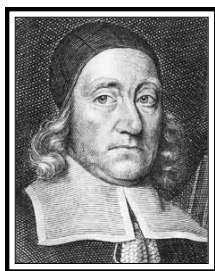
ROGER REED



An Exposition of Job 19:25

Part Two

By Joseph Caryl
(1602 - 1673)



The blood of Christ may be considered two ways in the work of our redemption.

First, As the price of our redemption, **“we have redemption through his blood”**; that is, blood is the price, by which we are redeemed; We are bought with a price (I Cor. 6:20). What that is, we are taught (I Pet. 1:20) **“Not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as a Lamb undefiled and without spot.”**

Secondly, As the blood of Christ may be considered as it is the price of redemption, so also as it carries the right of redemption: Blood implies nearness in relation. God **“made of one blood all nations of men”** (Acts 17:26) that is, the blood of Adam the first man, hath run in the veins of all his posterity; And so there is a natural relation among all mankind, though not a legal or civil. Now as God made all nations of men of one blood, so He hath made Christ and us of one blood. **“Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death...”** (Heb. 2:14). Thus (I say) The blood of Christ and ours being one, and so one that He is our brother and kinsman, He had the right, yea (we may say with reverence) it was His duty to redeem us. Christ as God had power to redeem us, but as being (Immanuel) God with us,

one with us, a kinsman, a brother, He not only had a right, but He was obliged to redeem us.

To clear the point a little further, there are five things concurring to complete the office and service of our Redeemer.

First, The Redeemer must be a kinsman.

Secondly, He must redeem upon that ground, or under that notion, as a kinsman.

Thirdly, He must deliver those who were under restraint or captivity, from the hand of their enemies and oppressors.

Fourthly, He must not pay any price to the oppressor.

Fifthly, He must pay the price to the true Lord, or into his hands, to whom the redeemed originally and of right do belong.

These five considerations meet in Christ our Redeemer; For

First, He is our kinsman.

Secondly, He redeemed us upon that account, as He was a brother or kinsman.

Thirdly, He hath fetched us out of the hands of our oppressor the Devil.

Fourthly, He paid nothing to the Devil in lieu of our redemption.

Fifthly, He paid the price into His hand Who was our first Lord, even into the hands of His Father.

Mankind fallen, may be looked upon two ways.

First, As under the power of sin and Satan.

Secondly, As under the power and justice of God: When Christ came to redeem us, He paid nothing to the Devil but blows;

He **“spoiled principalities and powers”** (Col. 2:15), but He did not make them satisfaction; we owed the Devil nothing, he was only a executioner to vex and afflict us; but He paid the price to His Father, under Whose justice we were fallen; and so He exactly fulfilled all the duties, and sustained all the parts of a Redeemer to the utmost.

To clear up this Title or Office of Christ yet further, we may take notice that Christ is called in Scripture, **“Mediator”** as well as a **“Redeemer,”** yet these titles are not of equal extent. Christ is a Mediator, yea a head for, and to those whose redeemer He is not. The good Angels have Christ for their head and Mediator as well as man; but man only hath Christ for his Redeemer. The evil or fallen angels could not be redeemed, therefore Christ **“took not on him the nature of angels”** (Heb. 2:16). The good angels, or those who stand in obedience, had no need to be redeemed, yet they had need to be confirmed, and therefore Christ took care of the angels, and became their head and Mediator. So that as Christ is Mediator between God and man, to make up the breach that is between them; so He is Mediator between God and the elect angels, to maintain the union that is between them; but He is a Redeemer to man only.

Further, Job doth not only profess faith in a redeemer, but in his redeemer; **“My redeemer liveth,”** every word in this confession is precious and weighty. Here he uses an appropriating word; yet he doth not engross the redeemer to himself excluding others, but he takes his part with others. Those pronouns, mine, thine, his, are words of love, and drop like honey combs with sweetness of affection. Job's heart

was carried out abundantly to Christ in love as well as in faith. The first work of faith is to believe that Christ is a Redeemer; the second is to rest and rely upon Christ as a redeemer; the third is to see an interest in Christ as my Redeemer. When the servants of Ben-hadad (I Kings 20:32) came to Ahab mediating for his life, he no sooner said, **“He is my brother,”** but they took hold of it, as of a comfortable word. The Syrians (as some report them) were soothsayers, who superstitiously observed a good Omen from those words which they called lucky. 'Tis probably Ben-hadad's servants were skilled in such observations, and took it for a good Omen, when Ahab said **“my brother.”** The text implies some such thing, while we read (v. 33) that **“the men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it: and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad”**; They looked upon it as a love token when once he said, **“my brother”** Ben-hadad. Thus here, **“my redeemer,”** shows that Job had much interest in, and love to the Redeemer, his faith did not run upon generals, but was fixed, set down, and resolved to live and by his **“living Redeemer.”**

“My Redeemer liveth.”

To live, implies not only the present being, but the eternity of the Redeemer; As if He had said, though I am mortal and dying, as also you my friends are, yet **“my Redeemer liveth”**; He saith not, hath or shall live, but **“he liveth”**; He speaks of the Redeemer's life, without any distinction of time past or to come, **“he liveth”**; God is for ever, **“I am”**; Christ as God liveth from eternity, Christ as man liveth to eternity. And as Christ God-man was the **“Lamb**

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Job 19:25

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slain from the foundation of the world" in the promise, and from eternity in the purpose and decree of God, so Christ as God-man lived from eternity in the purpose of God, and from the foundation of the world in the promise. Christ is compared in the Gospel to many things without life, to water, to bread, to a tree, to a stone, to a way, yet every one of them hath the addition of life as He is compared to them. He is not called simply, **"water,"** but **"living water,"** nor simply **"bread,"** but **"living bread,"** so also **"a living stone,"** **"a living way,"** and **"the tree of life."**

Secondly, When he saith **"My Redeemer liveth,"** we must look on Christ, not only as having life, but as the Lord and **"Prince of life"** (Acts 3:15). Christ as the Eternal Word "hath life in him (self)" (John 1:4). As He is the Son of man He receiveth life of the Father: **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself"** (John 5:26), and that not as every thing which lives hath life in itself; but by way of Eminency, "as a Prince of life;" for, First he hath his own life in his own dispose. See how like a Prince He speaks of His own life (John 10:18) **"...I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."** Secondly, He gives to others; the Son **"quickeneth whom he will"** (John 5:21). As Christ hath life in Himself, so He hath life to bestow at His pleasure, or upon whom He pleaseth. He came that we **"might have life"** (John 10:10). He "is the life" (John 14:6). And "He is our life" (Col. 3:4). We were all dead, and lay under the shadow or power of death the image of death sat upon us all, yea life itself sat (as

it were) in darkness, till **"Christ, ...brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"** (II Tim. 1:10).

Thirdly, When Job saith, **"my redeemer liveth,"** it notes the strength, activity, and power of Jesus Christ, not a mere being or subsistence only, but might and strength. As if he had said, "Though I am weak, poor, and miserable, though my life be so low, and my body so dispered, that I may more fully be numbered among the dead than among the living; yet my Redeemer liveth, he liveth and is mighty." David said of his enemies, (Psa. 38:19) **"But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong,"** or being living are strong. Many men live who are not strong; and some live who have no strength. But the life of Christ and His might are the same, and shall never be disjoined. The Psalmist indeed prophesying of the sufferings of Christ, represents Him thus complaining, (Psa. 22:15) **"My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."** When Christ died the strength of His body was dried up, yet Christ did not die for want of strength; for **"he gave up the ghost"** (faith the Evangelist) it was not pulled or snatched from Him whether He would or no: Christ did not die because He could live no longer, but because in obedience to His Father's will, and in answer to the design of our salvation, He was willing to lay down His life. And so strong was He in death, that He conquered dying, and "spoiled principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly, and triumphing over them" while He was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:15). The death of Christ had more life and strength in it, than the lives of all men and

angels. Again, though Christ died, as death is the disunion of the two parts of the human nature (soul and body) yet death did not hurt the union between His two natures, the divine and the human, this remained untouched and inviolable. In this union the strength of Christ lay, as the strength of "Samson did in his locks, which were only a figure or an assurance of the nearness and presence of God with him," and therefore it is said after his locks were cut, he (attempting to put forth his strength as he had done before) "wist not that God was departed from him." Now, for as much as God never departed from our Samson, Jesus Christ, no not in death; for then not only was God His Father with Him (though He cried out, **"Why hast thou forsaken me?"**) but the God-head of the Son the second person continued in firmest union with the manhood which He affirmed. And so it may be said of the Redeemer that when He died, He lived, as well as now we say, He liveth Who was dead. Thus He spake to John (Rev. 1:18) **"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."** The keys signify power, and to show that the life of Christ is not a bare subsistence, but clothed with power; therefore, as He saith, "I live for ever; so, I have the keys." And thus while Job said, **"I know that my redeemer liveth,"** he ascribed strength and efficiency to Him as well as life. From this part of Job's confession, **"I know that my redeemer liveth."**

Observe.

First, "Affliction doth not separate from Christ."

When Job could call nothing in, or of the world his, he could call Christ his, though he could not

say, "my health, my strength, my friends, my riches, my beauty," for he had none of all these, all these being departed from him, yet he could say, **"my redeemer";** for Christ was not departed from him. This was Paul's assurance, and the triumph of his faith, (Rom. 8:35, 37) **"Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"** I am persuaded they cannot; **"...Nay in all these things we are more than conquers through him that loved us."** Unless saints were conquered, yea unless Christ Himself were conquered, they cannot be separated from Christ. But all these things, the least of which single do more than conquer worldly men, are more than conquered by holy men; and therefore notwithstanding the united forces of all these, the union between Christ and Satan remains inviolable.

Secondly, Observe.

"That a believer may arrive at an assurance, at the full assurance of his interest in Jesus Christ the Redeemer."

Here are two words of assurance, **"I know,"** there is assurance; **"my redeemer,"** there is assurance again. Faith acts upon a sure ground, 'tis bottomed on the knowledge of a sure word, not upon opinion, and it takes fast hold 'tis not satisfied until it can say; the Redeemer is mine, and I am His, all is mine, and He is my all. I will not insist upon this point, having in the 13th chapter spoken to it, upon those words, "I know that I shall be justified."

Thirdly, Observe.

"That Jesus Christ was the Redeemer from the beginning."

The old fathers who lived before that fullness of time in

♦ (Continued on page 20)

Job 19:25

(Continued from page 19) ♦

which Christ came in the flesh, died in this faith, they waited for the Messiah, they looked for and relied upon the promised seed. Christ speaks of the times as high as "Abraham," "Abraham saw my day, and was glad (John 8). And the Apostle Jude speaks higher of him, that "Enoch" the seventh from "Adam" prophesied of the coming of Jesus Christ to judge the world, therefore certainly he was acquainted with the promise of Jesus Christ to redeem the world. This administers a strong confutation of the "Socinian" heresy; For if Christ Who was manifested in our nature in the latter end of the world, was the Redeemer of those who lived in the first ages of the world; then He was not a Saviour only (as they affirm) by His word and doctrine, or by the example of His life, sufferings and resurrection; but by His sacrifice and satisfaction. For how could either the personal teachings or example of Christ reach to, or be conveyed up to them, who lived before Him.

Fourthly, Learn.

"That, there is but one Redeemer."

"**My redeemer**"; He speaks in the singular number; One is all, as the Apostle testifies (Acts 4:12) "**Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved**", but only by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, Note.

"We have a living Redeemer."

Our Redeemer died for us but He lives for ever. "**...Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him**" (Rom. 6:9). Death never had any absolute

dominion over Christ, for He had no seed of dead, that is, no sin in Him (The Throne of death is founded upon sin, as the Throne of life is founded upon righteousness) Christ submitted Himself to death, but "**it was not possible that he should be holden of it**", or subjected by it (Acts 2:24). But now not only hath sin no absolute dominion over Him, but no dominion over Him; and when the Apostle saith, "**...death hath no dominion over him**"; his meaning is, death hath nothing at all to do with Him. In this life of Christ our comfort lives. We have a twofold comfort in the life of Christ,

First, "In that He liveth, He liveth for us"; that is, He liveth for our good. So the Apostle concludes (Heb. 7:25) "**...he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.**" We are assured of a twofold salvation by the intercession of Christ. First, of a temporal salvation from troubles and outward evils; Secondly, of an eternal salvation from sin and condemnation. "**Therefore**" (saith Paul, I Tim. 4:10) "**...we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.**" "**The living God**" is the Saviour of all men, yea, He saveth man and beast (Psa. 36:6) by His general providence; but He saveth believers by an act of special providence; and therefore they are ready, not only to do their utmost for Him, but to venture the loss of all for Him, "they both labor and suffer reproach, because they trust in the living God," Who saveth them above all other men, because Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them, which He doth not for other men.

Secondly, We have this further comfort in the life of Christ, that we live in Him; For Christ is "**the life**" (John 14:6) so, He is "**our life**" (Col. 3:4). Our life is bound up in Him; Christ is indeed the "**bundle of life**" (I Sam. 25:29) in Whom the lives of all believers are bound up, Hence (which is a spring of everlasting assurance and consolation) Himself infers (Job 14:19) "**...because I live, ye shall live also.**" The life of saints is not in "their private hands, but in Christ their public head." And seeing the Spirit hath taught us to say, that He is our life, we may say (with holy reverence, and in an humble dependence upon Him) "that our life is as safe as His."

From this double comfort (which indeed includes all comforts) issuing out of this great truth, that "**our redeemer liveth,**" I shall only intimate this single duty (which indeed includes all duties) incumbent upon all believers, "Live to Christ," Paul had made out this judgment upon this ground (II Cor. 5:14-15) and so should we, "**...that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.**" If Christ had only died for us, that we might live, yet that had been so great a benefit, and so unspeakable a kindness that it would have obliged us for ever to live to His name and memory; but when, as He died, so He arose or lived again for us, and is thereby enabled to power down benefits upon us, and do us kindnesses every day, how much more doth this oblige us to live unto Him? Some are apt to forget dead friends, yea though they laid down or ventured their lives for them, yet they are soon forgotten. But shall not He live in

our memories, and be the sum of all our lives Who died to redeem us, and yet is our living Redeemer. Though every believer doth not arrive at this clearness and full assurance of faith, to know that the Redeemer is his, yet he that believes cannot but know that He upon Whom his soul resteth, as a "Redeemer, liveth." And therefore, though he doth not yet receive the sweetness of this comfort, "that he shall ever live with Christ," yet he ought with his "all," and in "his ever" to pay the tribute of his duty in living unto Christ. "**I know that my redeemer liveth.**"

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Noah Found Grace

By David M. Green
of Mansfield, Ohio

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the

sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that,

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Gleanings

(Continued from page 20) ♦

when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. **But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD**" (Gen. 6:1-8).

The text before us is a familiar one. Some 1500 years after the fall of man, the corruption of the human race is so bad that God has determined that it is time to wipe man off the face of the earth with a flood. It sure did not take long, did it? And as we look back in history, what was this, something like 4500 years ago, we must remember that our days are not much different. **"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"** (Matt. 24:37-39). So with that thought in mind, let us examine the text to see what the Lord has for us today.

**GOD IS NOT IGNORANT
ABOUT WHAT IS
HAPPENING**

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years...And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:1-3, 5). Note well, God knows what it is that is going on in this world. As He looked down, He saw no Charles Spurgeons, no George Washingtons, no good Samaritans I can assure you. He saw rather types such as Charles Manson, Adolf Hitler, and criminals of all types.

A good description of the world is found in Romans 3:10-18: **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."** Now, a person walking around down here might say, "Ah it is not that bad!" And a person walking around in the world before the flood might have said the same thing. But we sometimes do not see things the

way God sees them.

**MAN'S DEPRAVITY IS
HORRIBLE IN GOD'S EYES**

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them" (Gen. 6:5-7).

The Scripture says **"it grieved him at his heart."** You and I cannot presume to fathom the depth of meaning of such language when spoken of the infinite and all-perfect God. How the guilt and folly of sin affects the divine nature is unknown to us, but this language is here to bring us to a better understanding of what God feels.

Consider the following: **"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation"** (Luke 19:41-44). Jesus wept over the city of the evils that were about to come over it. I think it interesting to study that in the Scriptures we find our Lord

of a great tender spirit, and never read of Him laughing but on more than one occasion we read of Him in tears. When was the last time we wept over sin? When did we weep over a sinner? May God help us to see sin as God does!

NOAH FOUND GRACE

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Gen. 6:8). I love this verse. You have to hear the bad news to get to the good news. Thank the Lord for verse 8. Without a verse 8, without the conjunction, the word "but" there, there would be no hope for the rest of the human race, excepting of course God destroyed all of His original creation and started fresh.

I am often amazed at how many folks think that Noah was a great man among a bunch of sinners. No! Read it again. Genesis 6:5-7. Noah was included in that. He deserved to be wiped off the face of the world just like everyone else. Noah found grace; he obtained mercy and favor. Grace does not mean one thing in the Old Testament and something else in the New Testament. There was no worth or work on his part. Noah was so guilty of the common corruption of human nature that he needed God's grace and mercy to pardon and preserve him from the destruction to come. Were it not for God's grace he would have been swept away in the flood along with the rest of humanity.

Noah found grace; he obtained mercy and favor. Not of any worth or work on his part. He was so guilty of the common corruption of human nature that he needed God's grace and mercy to pardon and preserve him from the destruction to come. You and I also have found grace in God's eyes. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of**

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Gleanings

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yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:8-10).

Mark well, the world is full of sin. And God will destroy the world. But there is grace. And we have been saved by His grace. It is not of our works nor of our worth that we have safety in Christ. Jesus died for the sins of His people because He first loved us. May we serve Him and be a witness in this world we live in.

“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9). Here was a just man, justified before God and perfect, morally mature. He walked with God. The rest of the world was still corrupted and still on the path to destruction, but not Noah. He was on His way to safety. He had work to do and He did it. You and I have a work to do as well. Will we do it?



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

UNFAITHFUL FRIENDS

There can be few things more disappointing than to be betrayed or abandoned by a person whom you thought was a genuine friend. Both the experience and the remembrance of it are painful

for years to come. The Bible says, **“Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint”** (Prov. 25:19). As always, the Bible is right on! And what appropriate pictures this verse presents to us: **“a broken tooth”** and **“a foot out of joint.”** Both are painful!

Not only are broken teeth and dislocated feet painful, the pain of them sometimes goes away for a time causing a person to forget about them and to think they can be depended on – then – all of a sudden, in sometimes the most unexpected situations, pain shoots through the body! And it seems that tooth-pain and foot-pain can be among the worst.

So it is with undependable (unfaithful) friends! Just when you think you can depend on them they fail to be the friend you thought that they were. The experience is painfully sad! Like an arrow piercing the heart or a weight crushing the body is the feeling when supposed friends turn away.

Both King David and the Lord Jesus Christ experienced such pain. David wrote: **“Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me”** (Ps. 41:9). When a trusted friend steps on you – walks on you – it is indeed a time of discouragement and pain. The Lord experienced one of His disciples turning traitor on Him: Judas Iscariot by name. Sold out for thirty pieces of silver: the price of a slave! Knowing all along what Judas was going to do, the Lord treated Judas fairly and with compassion: always. But the Lord’s kindness toward Judas did not deter him from his evil betrayal of his Divine Friend.

Surely the Bible speaks of the

Lord Jesus when it says, **“...there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother”** (Prov. 18:24). Constant and caring in every situation: ready always to stick with you – who is a better friend than the Lord Jesus Christ? At Paul’s first trial in Rome all his supposed friends there deserted him. Paul wrote about that sad experience saying: **“At my first answer [trial] no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me...”** (II Tim. 4:16-17). Ah! There was for Paul a Friend who not only stood with him, but whose presence strengthened him!

With a friend – the Friend – standing with you there can be no defeat! As the song says, “How can I be lonely when I’ve Jesus only, To be my companion and unfailing guide? Why should I be weary, or my path seem dreary, When He’s walking by my side?” I hope He is your friend!



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A Memorable Day

By James Smith
(1802 - 1862)

What Christian, in looking back, cannot call to mind some memorable days in his history? I can recall many. I consider the day of my natural birth a memorable day; but of that, of course, I know nothing--but from others. But there is another day,

and another birth, of which I have been thinking, more memorable to me by far. What a mercy it is to be **“born of God,” “born of the Spirit,” “born from above!”** and it is very blessed, when we can look back, and remember how the Lord met with us, renewed us in the Spirit of our minds, and saved us by His grace.

In my case, grace, and grace alone can be seen. Never was one more unlikely to be saved than me. Never did I appear farther from God, than on the day the Lord came near to me to judgment. O my soul, as I call to mind God’s mercy, I charge you to praise the Lord! And it was distinguishing grace, too, for one was taken and the other left; and it was the worst, and the most unlikely, that was taken. By the grace of God alone, I am what I am! As grace did the work, effected the change, and made me a new creature in Christ Jesus--let grace have all the glory.

At Old Brentford, Middlesex, on the 28th day of February, 1819, in a large room fitted up as a place of worship, might have been, seen two lads, sitting together on the Lord’s day morning; an aged man occupied the little desk, to preach the Word of God. A peculiarity of manner tickled the fancy of the lads, and instead of listening to the Word, with a view to profit by it, they were employed in ridiculing and making sport of this aged servant of Christ. They went from the little sanctuary without remorse, hardened in sin and afar from God.

In the evening of that day, the same lads were in the same place--but the desk was occupied by another, and a younger man. He was evidently from the country--a plain, unlettered man. His manner was solemn, his voice unmusical--but his message was Divine. After

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Gleanings

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reading the Word, he prayed devoutly, and when the second hymn was sung, he arose and gave out for his text, Mark 8:36-37, **“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”** Solemnly did he speak of the value of the soul, of its danger, and the importance of seeking its salvation. The attention of the writer was arrested, the arrow of conviction pierced his conscience, and penetrated his soul. He sighed deeply--but unconsciously. He went home sorely depressed in mind. He went to bed, hoping to fall asleep and forget all; but sleep fled away, and sad and distressing thoughts were his companions. He was filled with tossings to and fro, until the dawning of the day. When exhausted nature fell asleep, the mind found no rest, and in the morning he arose unrefreshed.

That was a gloomy morning, and a distressing day, for the arrows of the Almighty were within me, and the poison thereof was drinking up my spirits. I tried to pray--but could not. I sunk in deep waters where there was no standing. Conviction was attended with temptation, and temptation almost drove me to despair. No human hand could extract that barbed arrow. No works of the creature could satisfy the enlightened conscience. Ignorant of the way of salvation, by simple faith in Jesus, the soul was groping in the dark, like the blind for the wall, until at last it came to the conclusion, **“There is no hope!”**

But as in nature, when the darkness is greatest, the light is nearest, so it was in this case; for when all hope that I should be saved was taken away, then Jesus was revealed, faith was

wrought in the heart by the Spirit, and salvation by free grace was received and enjoyed. Faith in the atonement removed guilt from the conscience; and the application of the Word chased away darkness from the mind. Instead of bitterness, there was now peace; instead of gloom, there was sweet joy; instead of despondency, there was confidence in God. The trumpet of the jubilee was now sounded, the year of release was come. The debtor was freed from his obligations, the prisoner from his chains, and the bondsman from his thralldom. The feast of fat things was made, the table was spread, the head was anointed with oil, and the cup ran over. The darkness was past, and the true light now shined. The tempter fled, and the soul escaped like a bird out of the hand of the fowler.

Oh, how precious was the Savior now! There was music in His name, salvation in His blood, and true freedom in His service. Oh, how sweet was grace now! It was grace that arrested the criminal, and grace that brought the pardon. It was grace that wounded, and grace that healed. All was grace--free, sovereign, distinguishing grace. Never was creature further from God, or sinner less likely to be converted, than I was on that day, when the Word came home with power. Never was soul in a more helpless or hopeless condition than I was, when the Lord passed by me, and in His love bade me, Live. At His word, death and darkness fled from me. At His bidding, I stood up a new creature. Truly, I was His workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before appointed, that I should walk in them.

And now, forty years have passed away, since that memorable day. Many have been the changes I have passed through, and many

the trials I have endured. Satan has thrust sore at me that I might fall, the world has done its worst to lead me astray--but having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day. The life imparted so long ago was immortal. The change effected was permanent. The transformation was divine. The Lord who called me--has kept me. The grace that renewed me--has employed me. And being kept by the power of God, and used in the service of God, I wish to give all the glory of all that has been wrought in me, or done by me--to the grace of God alone.

The Lord sought me--when I did not seek Him. The Lord converted me--when I was mocking and insulting Him. If ever a sinner was unlikely to be saved--I was that sinner. If ever creature was unlikely to be employed in the service of God--I was that creature. If, therefore, others can ascribe their change to free will, I cannot; I must ascribe mine to free grace! If any other man can take credit to himself, for anything that is good, I cannot, for I never had a good thought, or felt a good desire, or did a good deed--but as the effect of God working in me, to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Glory be to God the Father, for choosing me to eternal life in His beloved Son. Glory be to God the Son, for redeeming me by His most precious blood. Glory be to God the Holy Spirit, for quickening me by His divine power, and translating me out of darkness into His marvelous light. Glory, glory be to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, as the author of my salvation, the source of all good, and the giver of every gift and grace!

And now, my soul, I charge you--never let this day pass by without raising an Ebenezer to your God; nor let any day pass without some

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 4-1-2020 to 4-30-2020

Beginning Balance	\$647.97
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Betty Crow, Tampa, FL	20.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	70.00
Citrus M. B. C. Inverness, FL	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	200.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles (will) (With the Lord)	1,000.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C. Tulsa, OK	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	70.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	71.00
Anonymous	2,510.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$5,818.50
TOTAL	\$6,466.47
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	572.05
Supplies	0
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Dividing checks	150.00
Bank charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,700.95
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,765.52



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 4-1-2020 to 4-30-2020

Beginning Balance	\$2,832.13
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	425.00
TOTAL	3,257.13
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	403.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	403.98
.....	2,853.15
Interest	+0.02
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,853.17

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brother Tom Ross is reprinting a revised and enlarged version of *Cultivating Christian Character* which includes 7 new chapters. He is also doing a reprint of *Teachings on the Local Church*.

Both books must be ordered and prepaid by June 30th. *Cultivating Christian Character* is \$14 plus postage. *Teachings on the Local Church* is \$16 plus postage. On orders of 25 books or more there will be free shipping. On orders of 50 books or more there will be a discount of \$2 per book and free shipping.

For more details you may contact Bro. Ross via Facebook Messenger, or email tomross@zoominternet.net; or text message at 304-617-6843 to get an order form with postage rates. Send all checks or money orders payable to Tom Ross to 6339 County Rd. 15; South Point, OH 45680.

The Indore Baptist Church of Indore, WV, and pastor Paul Stepp would like to announce their annual Bible Conference scheduled for June 19th thru 21st.

Services are Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m., and Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

There are two speakers scheduled for Friday evening. Saturday has four speakers in the morning followed by lunch with two in the afternoon. Three speakers are scheduled for Sunday morning service followed by a noon meal that will conclude the conference.

All are invited to attend. For more information contact Pastor Stepp at (304) 807-5069.

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact

Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

The Stephens Branch Baptist Church of Martin, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. They are an Independent, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist church holding to the doctrines of grace and the King James Bible. If you are interested in being considered or would like more information on the church you can call Brother Lonnie Edwards at (859) 629-1413 or write the church at: Stephens Branch Baptist Church, 1025 Stephens Branch Road, Martin, Kentucky 41649.

The Lord's Baptist Church in Tacoma Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a

pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

Gleanings

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effort to bring glory to His holy name, for His most free, powerful, and sovereign grace!

Oh, what evils have been prevented, what blessings have been conferred, and what good has been effected, in my experience, by God's free grace! All that I am, all that I have, Lord--is given to me by your free grace. From You I have received all--and to You, and Your service, I devote all. Before this--oh, awful thought!--before this--but for grace, I had most probably been in Hell! Before this, I had degraded my nature to the lowest, and disgraced my name beyond recovery--but for the grace of God. How can I do otherwise than speak of grace, write of grace, and glory in grace--who am laid under such obligations to grace? It is astonishing that I do not prize it more, praise it more, preach it more, and glory in it more, than I do. But in Heaven, in eternity, when I review all the Lord's dealings with me, and all the

way the Lord has led me--I shall no doubt look back to the little sanctuary where He met with me, and the hallowed day when He called me, and with thrilling pleasure and holy joy--praise, bless, and adore His holy name, for His rich and sovereign grace!

Reader, do you know anything of a change of heart--which always produces a change of life? Have you been arrested, convicted, condemned--and then pardoned, and set to work for God, of His free grace? Can you say, **"I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"** (Ps. 34:4)! You must be born again--or perish. You must seek the Lord--or die in your sins.

Not everyone is drawn suddenly as I was; many are drawn gradually to the Savior. How we are brought to Christ is of little importance; the question is, Are we truly brought to Him? All are not sought out by grace in the exact manner as I was; but no one ever sought the Lord but as the effect of grace; nor did anyone ever seek the grace of God in vain. If you seek the Lord, He will be found by you, reveal Himself to you, and save you with an everlasting salvation.

And, never forget this, for it is a thought as full of comfort as of truth, that the very desire to seek the Lord comes from the Lord, and is a proof that He has favor toward you. Never would we seek Him--if He did not first seek us; and His seeking us--is evidenced by our seeking Him. Having loved us with an everlasting love, with His loving-kindness He draws us to Himself; and as He draws--we run; nor can we rest, until we find rest in Jesus. Oh that the Lord would draw millions more, as He has drawn us, to the praise of the glory of His grace!



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