

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

Imputed Righteousness

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 16:14).

I want to speak concerning the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. I want to study this subject from the perspective of the need



that man has for an imputed righteousness; the record and the account of the perfection and the righteousness of the Saviour

of men, Jesus Christ; and the glorious grace of God in the imputation of that perfect
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God in Tears

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

This is the shortest verse in the Bible, and it may very well be the greatest. It contains volumes of information. This short sentence is a sun in a spark, a universe in an atom, an ocean in a drop of water. What a world of grace and love is contained in this verse. There is much here for our spiritual edification.

This verse is almost unbelievable. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is seen here in tears.



What? God in tears? What made Him weep? Who is the delight of Heaven, and Who ever sets its golden harps to the tune of happiness and joy? What could bring tears to the eyes of Him Who wipes away the tears of thousands and hushes the sighs of millions of His children? How could the eternal Son of God weep over a man who was
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The Golden Age

By Arthur W. Pink (1886 - 1952)
& Luther C. Peak (1908 - 2004)

(Continued from last issue)

THE GOLDEN AGE IN RELATION TO THE WORLD

The Millennium will be the time when, instead of Satan being the world's "Prince," Christ shall be its King. Then it is that the government shall be upon His shoulder. When He was on earth before, the Devil had the effrontery to offer Him all the kingdoms of the world, but not

from the great Adversary would He receive them. And again we read, **"When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone"** (John 6:15) - the time for this had not arrived. But when He comes back again then shall God say to Him, **"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession"** (Psa.

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Saved or Lost?

By Tom Ross
of South Point, Ohio

"A prudent man forseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Prov. 27:12).

This verse is identical to Proverbs 22:3. Why would the Holy Spirit move Solomon to repeat these words of wisdom? First, because God is Sovereign. He does as He pleases and does not have to answer to man as to why He does what He does. Second, because God does everything on purpose according to His Divine decree and will. Thirdly, there must be something extremely important contained in the verses that require



repetition.

The prudent man in our text was made aware of evil and its consequences. He was careful to take heed to the warning that he received and made preparations to hide himself from the evil. In contrast, the simple man neglected the warning and continued on the broad road that led to his own punishment and destruction. This verse clearly divides the entire human race into two simple categories: those who see the evil of sin, repent of it, and

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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 fellow-ship 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.

The Golden Age

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2:8). Then it is **"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever"** (Rev. 11:15). This Kingdom of Christ will be a literal and external one. From Zion shall He reign in visible majesty, and not unseen in the hearts of men.

Perhaps at this point it would be well if we endeavored to meet a difficulty which many inquirers experience in connection with the Millennium. It may be stated thus: If the saints are all caught up to meet the Lord at His descent into the air, and the wicked are all destroyed during the Tribulation period, who will be left to inhabit the earth during the Kingdom Age? The answer is simple. It is a mistake to suppose that all who are left behind at the Rapture will be subsequently destroyed by God's judgments. It is true that **"the slain of the Lord shall be many,"** yet the earth will not be entirely depopulated. This is evident from Matt. 25:31, where we read that at our Lord's return to the earth and when He is seated upon the throne of His glory that then shall be gathered all nations before Him. It is also true that **"all"** who now believe not the truth will **"perish"** during the Day of God's vengeance (see II Thess. 2:10-12), yet many of the children of these unbelievers will be spared. Not all of those who will be gathered together for the battle of the great day of God Almighty will be slain, as is clear from Isa. 66:19, where we read of **"those that escape."** The slaughter at Armageddon will be inconceivably dreadful, for from that battlefield will flow a river of blood two hundred miles in length and several feet in depth, yet we

know from Zechariah 14:18 that a **"remnant"** will be spared - **"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts."** Finally; there will be a Jewish remnant miraculously preserved by God (Rev. 12) and these, together with their resurrected brethren who were slain by the Antichrist (Rev. 20:4) will form the nucleus from which will spring the Millennial Israel.

The Form of Government

The form of Christ's government will be theocratic, not democratic - **"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one"** (Zech. 14:9). Many have been the experiments of politicians and reformers for the establishing of a government that should be equitable, stable, and pure; but all have been in vain. Ever since the flood, four thousand five hundred years ago, God has allowed man every opportunity to develop his schemes, but ancient and modern, Oriental and Occidental, monarchies and republics, all have served only to demonstrate that man is a colossal failure. The record of human government is tyranny and oppression, greed and discontentment, war and bloodshed. How all this serves to show the crying need for One who has all power and yet all compassion, One who is God and yet Man. Under the rule of Christ shall be solved every problem of capital and labor, wealth and poverty, war and peace.

The Scope of His Government

The scope or range of Christ's government will be worldwide. Mankind will still be divided into nations, each having their own

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The Golden Age

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separate and responsible heads, but all the Gentile rulers shall be directly subject to the King of kings - **"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him"** (Psa. 72:8-11).

The Seat of His Government

The seat of Christ's government will be Jerusalem, not London or New York or Paris - **"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem"** (Isa. 2:2-3). And again we read concerning the capital of Palestine, **"The name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there"** (Ezek. 48:35).

The Character of His Government

The character of Christ's government is brought before us in Isaiah 11:3-5, **"...and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity**

the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Think of a Kingdom under the absolute control of a Monarch so wise as never to make a mistake, so righteous as never to dispense, impartially, strict justice to all; so holy and benevolent that He will seek no other object than the glory of God and the blessing of His creatures; so powerful as to secure the complete and prompt submission of every subject in His dominions! Ah, what a Kingdom that will be!

The Results of His Reign

We turn now to consider some of the results of Christ's government. During the Millennium our Lord will rule as the Prince of Peace. For the first time since the Flood the earth will be completely delivered from the horrors of war. Then it will be seen that **"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth"** (Psa. 46:9). The Kingdom age will be a time of universal peace - **"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"** (Isa. 2:4).

During the Millennium there shall also be universal blessing. An exceedingly sublime picture of the conditions that we will then obtain is to be found in Isaiah 35:5-10, **"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool,**

and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

And again we read, **"And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it"** (Isa. 25:6-8).

At the beginning of the Millennium there shall be a universal worship of Christ - **"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts..."** (Zech. 14:16). Then shall idolatry be made to cease entirely - **"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend,**

and them which do iniquity. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire..." (Matt. 13:41-42). And again we read, **"And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish"** (Isa. 2:17-18). In the Millennium God alone shall be worshipped - **"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD"** (Zech. 8:22).

What a glorious time the Millennium will be for our poor sin-cursed earth! Universal righteousness, universal peace, universal blessing, and universal worship! Surely we have reason to pray **"Thy Kingdom come."**

THE GOLDEN AGE IN RELATION TO CREATION

The Millennium will witness not only great and blessed changes in the government of the world, but it will also bring innumerable blessings to the individual. The span of human life will be immeasurably increased. There will be a return to the conditions which prevailed during the early days of human history. The longevity which was obtained among the patriarchs will be granted unto many who live during the Kingdom Age. And every death will then be the exception rather than the rule. A verse in Isaiah brings this out clearly, **"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for a child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred**

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years old shall be accursed" (Isa. 65:19-20). The continuation of this same passage gives us a beautiful prophetic picture which describes the happy conditions that we will obtain on earth in the days to come: **"And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord"** (vss. 21-25).

And again we read, **"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert"** (Isa. 35:5-6).

But the blessings which will be brought to the world upon the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom will not be confined to the human family, but will be extended to all creation. The Curse which was pronounced by God upon the ground in the day of Adam's fall, and which has issued in a creation that has groaned and

travailed ever since, is yet to be revoked. Creation is not to remain in bondage forever. God has set a hope before it, a hope which, like ours, centers in the personal return of Christ. Mention of this is made in Romans 8:19-21, "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (R.V.). A passage closely connected with the one just quoted is found in Psalm 96 - **"Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth"** (vss. 11-13). This Scripture portrays the joy of all nature consequent upon the Advent of its Creator to the earth. No longer shall the earth bring forth thistles and thorns, but **"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off"** (Isa. 55:13). And again we read, **"Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us"** (Psa. 67:6). How far these conditions apply to all the earth is difficult to say, most noticeably will they prevail in Palestine. Of Israel's land it is said, **"For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the**

heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things" (Zech. 8:12). And once more we are told, **"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt"** (Amos 9:13). A further hint of the botanical conditions which will be enjoyed in the Millennium is found in Ezekiel 47:12, **"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."** During the Millennium in the Holy Land at least, there will be no fading leaf, no killing frost, no withering blight, and no cessation of fruit.

Another illustration of the Curse being removed from the ground is found in Isaiah 35:1-2, **"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God."** This is further amplified in Isaiah 41:17-20, **"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in**

the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

Not the least of the beneficent changes introduced during the Millennium will be the restoration of the animal kingdom to its Edenic state. The present ferocity of the wild beast is abnormal and due to the fall of man. It is very clear from Genesis 2 that, originally, man had full dominion over all the animal kingdom, but this was forfeited when he rebelled against his Maker. In the Kingdom Age the fierce nature of the beast will be subdued, for in that day: **"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea"** (Isa. 11:6-9).

Not only shall there be great physical changes in the earth, the removal of the curse from the animal creation, but there will be wonderful astronomical

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



Acquaint Now Thyself With Him #3

THE GRACE OF GOD

As we begin our “**examination of the Lord**” we have to concede that it is by the grace of God that we know anything of our Lord. Yet, even more so, that the Nature, Being, Attributes, Works and Doings of the Lord pertaining to His people all funnel through the filter of His marvelous and matchless grace!

GRACE DEFINED

It is important that we define our terms so that all of us are on the same page. **“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD”** (Gen 6:8). Here the word “**grace**” may be rendered as “kindness, favor” (Strong’s). So often we hear of “**grace**” as “the unmerited favor of God”. Certainly, that is so. For we find that Noah did not merit this kindness or favor. Observe, Genesis 6:5, **“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.”** The word “**man**” includes Noah. Noah was greatly wicked. Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. God stated that it repented Him that He had made man on the earth; that man grieved Him in His heart. This was to the extent that God was going to remove man from the face of the earth through destruction (Genesis 6:5-7). Noah was included in the wickedness. He deserved the very same adjudication

(formal judgment on a disputed matter). Yet, by God’s grace, by God’s kindness, and favor, but God’s unmerited favor, **“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”** Noah was saved. Not because he deserved it, but because of the kindness and favor of God.

I want you to take notice of Genesis 6:8. This is the first time in all of Scripture that “**grace**” is clearly mentioned. It has been insinuated already; but here it is clearly mentioned. In the study of the Scriptures, in Hermeneutics, is a law. It is called the law of first mention. The law of first mention is the concept that a word, or doctrine when first presented is the foundation of that word or doctrine, and that all other Scriptures are built upon that “first mention.” This being the case, all aspects of grace will be built upon the truth revealed in Genesis 6:8.

Abraham Booth defined God’s Grace as, “...the eternal and absolute free favor of God, manifested in the vouchsafement of spiritual and eternal blessings to the guilty and the unworthy” (*The Attributes of God*, Pink, A.W.; Chapter 13).

A.W. Pink stated, “...it [Grace] is the favor of God shown to those who not only have no positive deserts of their own, but who are thoroughly ill-deserving and hell-deserving. It is completely unmerited and unsought, and is altogether unattracted by anything in or from or by the objects upon which it is bestowed” (Ibid.).

GRACE DIFFERENT FROM MERCY

The Lord Himself differs the two. **“The LORD is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works”** (Ps. 145:9). God’s mercy extends to all of His creation. A.W. Pink stated, “Grace is the sole source from which flows the goodwill, love, and salvation of God unto His chosen people.” (Ibid.)

Whereas the grace of God is solely assigned and exercised solely to the objects of His elect. The Scriptures plainly teach this great truth. It is seen clearly in that the Lord stated, **“I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious”** (Ex. 33:19).

EVERYTHING GOD DOES FOR HIS OWN STARTS WITH GRACE

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein which he hath made us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:5-6).

Without the grace of God, salvation and all aspects of salvation extend from God’s favor. Observe, salvation (a general term referring to the whole of His work upon His own, redemption, justification, sanctification, glorification, etc.) is all based upon the grace of God (Eph. 2:8—**“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”** Look there! **“by grace.”** The word “**by**” means “according to” (*Webster’s Elementary Dictionary*, copyright 1962). So “according to grace ye are saved through faith.” “According to God’s favor and kindness” we are saved. Justification, sanctification, glorification are all due unto His favor and kindness. **“Even so**

then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5). Many are lauding the doctrine of election. Election has its place. But it must be noted that election is a work of God which is based upon His grace: **“... of grace.”** It is the grace of God that enabled Him to choose the “chief of sinners” unto salvation. It is the grace of God that enabled God to choose you and me unto eternal life. Let us do as God would have us to do: praise and glorify His grace (Ephesians 1:6). **THE GRACE AND BEING OF GOD**

As we are studying the Being of God, His works and doings, the attributes of God, the nature of God—all of His person that we will note, we must understand that He uses it for His people because of grace.

We are going to begin with “The Being of God.” By that we said that we mean His eyes, nose, mouth, hands, legs, feet, etc. When we examine the Being of God, we must first realize that we know anything about The Being of God because of His grace and secondly, that all of His Being has been put into work for our good, because of the grace of God. Observe, Genesis 6:5-9; 7:1, 9-19. Look there in Genesis 6:5, **“God saw.”** God looked with His eyes upon the earth and what did He see but wickedness and only wickedness. As we stated earlier, this included every man. But, then we read in Genesis 6:8, **“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”** Noah was wicked before God just as everyone else was. As it says in Ephesians 2:3, **“... even as others;”** Romans 3:22-23, **“...for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”** But we read

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Little Hills

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of Noah! And it says here **"But Noah"** distinguishing Noah from all others. Beloved, I tell you that God's grace is the distinguishing quality and characteristic in my life. And what about Noah. We are told that he found something. **"found grace."** He found kindness and favor. He found that which he did not deserve, that which he had not earned. Where did He find it? **"In the eyes of the Lord."** When God looked at Noah, instead of seeing that wickedness and evil contents of Noah's heart, the Lord saw the obedience of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ the righteous.

CLOSING

Have you found grace in the eyes of the Lord? Or does He see you without His favor? Without kindness? Does He see you in all of your sins, or does He see you by His grace in the perfect righteousness of His Son?



The Golden Age

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changes as well. In Isaiah 30:26 we read, **"Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound:"** note it does not say the heat of the sun shall be increased, but its **"light;"** thus the night at full moon would be almost as bright as our day now is. And again we are told, **"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night:**

but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light" (Zech. 14:6-7).

By comparing Scripture with Scripture it would appear that during the Millennium there will be no earthquakes, nor tornadoes, no storms at sea, but all nature will be at rest and shall share in the general blessing which the personal presence of Christ will bring. And yet, there will be droughts and plagues on the rebellious and disobedient (see Zechariah 14:18-19), which brings us to the next division of our subject, namely, the Millennium in relation to Sin.

THE GOLDEN AGE IN RELATION TO SIN

In spite of the fact that Satan will have been removed from the earth, and that Christ reigns in person over it, yet conditions here will not be perfect even in the Millennium. Unregenerate human nature will remain unchanged. Sin will still be present, though much of its outward manifestation will be restrained. Discontent and wickedness will not be eradicated from the hearts of men, but will be kept beneath the surface by means of the **"rod of iron."** Multitudes will yield to Christ nothing but a "feigned obedience" (Psa. 18:44, margin). This "feigned obedience" will be the product of power, not of grace; it will be the fruit of fear, not of love. In Psalm 72, which gives a graphic picture of millennial conditions, we read, **"They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust"** (v.9). Again, we are told in Psalm 149, wherein the children of Zion are bidden to **"be joyful in their King."** We are told that His saints shall **"execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with**

chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD" (vss. 7-9). In Micah 5, where we have another description of the judgments which the remnant of Jacob will execute upon the Gentiles, we are told, **"And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he can go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off"** (vss. 8-10). These verses do not conflict with those Scriptures which speak of great blessings, spiritual as well as temporal, coming upon the Gentiles during the Millennium, but warn us that the Kingdom age is not the perfect state, and that while most if not all will worship outwardly, yet at heart many are still the enemies of the Lord.

In perfect accord with the above Scriptures - and in what striking harmony! - we read that though in the Millennium the curse will be removed from the animal creation, **"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: ...They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord,"** yet we are also told **"and dust shall be the serpent's meat"** (Isa. 65:25). Thus does God leave before the eyes of men a perpetual reminder of that which introduced sin, namely, yielding to the Serpent; as well as a symbolic warning that the Kingdom Age will end with the liberation and manifestation of Satan on earth again.

At the close of the Millennium,

Satan will be temporarily released from his prison in order to test humanity: **"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city"** (Rev. 20:7-9).

Thus will be fully and finally demonstrated the incurable evil of the human heart. Even a thousand years of millennial blessedness, with Satan away from the earth, will not effect any change in man. Let Satan be loosed and allowed to go forth once more and deceive the nations, and it shall be seen that the carnal mind is still at enmity against God, and prefers a murderer to the Lord Jesus. Nothing avails short of a new creation. Miracles, a beneficent environment, temporal blessings - nothing without, can alter fallen and depraved human nature. **"Except a man be born of water (the Word) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"** (John 3:5).

The final revolt of man under the leadership of the Devil will meet with swift judgment - **"And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them"** (Rev. 20:9). What follows is told us in few words. Satan himself is cast into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and False Prophet are, and all of the unsaved dead from Cain onwards will be raised from their graves, to stand before the Great White Throne and be judged according to their works. The purpose of this judgment is to determine their respective

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The Golden Age

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sentences, for there will be degrees of punishment among the lost, as there will be degrees of glory among the redeemed. **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire"** (Rev. 20:15). Oh, my reader, is your name written in the book of life? If it is not, there is nothing before you but a hopeless and endless eternity of suffering, so fearful that no human pen or tongue can adequately depict it.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the Lake of Fire." Unsaved reader, what an awful prospect is thine! The day of reckoning fast hastens on. God is yet going to call you to account and take full satisfaction to His justice. Long have you defied Him, but soon He will put forth His power and deal with you in judgment. What He has threatened, that He will most surely perform. The Lake of Fire! Eternal suffering! Tormented day and night, forever and ever! Such a portion will be unendurable, and yet it will have to be endured by every Christ-rejecter, and endured forever and ever. **"Can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it"** (Ezek. 22:14).

Following the Great White Throne judgment and the casting of the lost into the Lake of Fire, Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, **"when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject**

unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:24-25, 28; and see further Rev. 21:1-5).



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righteousness of Jesus Christ, to each and every one of those saints of God who are ordained to inhabit Heaven.

God is holy, and men are not. And yet, God has ordained to save some, and He has ordained that those whom He would rescue and save, He will bring unto Himself. How can this be, when we are not worthy to stand in His presence? Of course, our sins must be atoned for, but we must be made better than what we now are, and we must be made fit to live in Heaven, in the presence of God and the angels. In our natural condition, we are not worthy, we are not fit, we are too miserable, small, despicable, and loathsome to ever attain to a place of honor in the presence of our Holy God. And yet, we must somehow be made fit for His presence. He loves us, and desires us in His presence. He has ordained to save us. He must also make us fit to be put on display as the trophies of His grace, and fit to praise Him in Heaven itself.

Well, the miracle of salvation is made up of many miracles, one of which is the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ to those who are the elect children of God. What a miracle that beauty and righteousness, truth and loveliness, can be imparted unto us, so that we are fit to be called the children of God. What a miracle, that those who were rebels and enemies of God, are made His friends, and He can look upon us, not in judgment,

violence, and wrath, but in love, tenderness, and compassion. He looks upon us and He sees us through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. What a miracle, that filthy sinners can be made righteous and just and called into the presence of God in Heaven.

HUMAN ATTEMPTS AT RIGHTEOUSNESS

The true Gospel of the Scriptures, the genuine proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is firmly established upon the wickedness and the depravity of men. What I mean is this: all men are sinners, and not one of us can save himself. If we are to be saved, we must be saved by another. If we are to be saved, we must admit our own helplessness and sinfulness. This is the true Gospel which must be preached to the wicked world in which we live. And yet, being the sinners that we are, natural and depraved men are consistent in seeking out our own salvation, and expressing a fierce determination to manufacture our own good works and our own righteousnesses, so that we can present them as reason, or the cause, for our salvation. This has been the pursuit and aim of religious men since the time of Cain.

In our text passage, we read these words that the Lord had for wicked Jerusalem, which trusted in works, merit, and personal beauty: **"But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was"** (Ezek. 16:15). Though they trusted in themselves, the people of Jerusalem found that their own righteousness, and their former favor with God, and their historical relationship with the Lord God of the Old Testament,

and their present confidence in the position which they held in the land of Israel, would not be sufficient to save them, either mortally, or spiritually. They trusted in mortal strength and beauty, and these are not enough to save any of us in the sight of Holy God.

Previously, God had warned the nation of Judah and the City of Jerusalem of the danger of trusting in personal works and mortal righteousness. However, they had not listened, and Isaiah had pronounced this sad doom as their fate: **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities"** (Isa. 64:6-7). What depraved and fallen man considers good and right even beautiful and lovely are only unclean and filthy when lifted up as an offering to God. Those words, works, and deeds which men highly esteem and value as goodness and righteousness, are only sinful and even putrid when compared to the requirements of God's justice. Instead of saving us, our iniquities performed in the guise of religion, will only consume us.

Actually, looked at in an objective manner, it is not in a man's best interests to be judged according to his or her own works, however righteous, good, or commendable these works might appear unto men. Our sin-cursed eyes are blind to true goodness and righteousness. Our estimations of good and right are

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flawed from the very beginning of our lives. As fallen human beings, we cannot properly esteem the holy and the pure, though we know the existence of these things on a basic level; and though our own consciences and the Word of God are effective in giving us a very basic understanding of good and evil, we cannot, and we do not have the inherent ability, to truly see the evil of men, nor truly see the goodness of God. From a strictly human perspective, we do not really fathom just how wicked evil is; nor do we comprehend just how righteous good should be. Considering our own depravity and feeble understanding, it is not in our best interests to be judged by God based upon our own knowledge of good and evil, and our own righteous deeds which we perform; which are, in turn, based on our own very limited and flawed recognition of God's expectations for holiness and righteousness. We might think that we have sinned very little; when, in fact, we have sinned greatly. We might think we have done some great good; when, in fact, we have done very little or none at all. We actually stand in need of the leadership and guidance of God, so that we can be shown the Heavenly perspective of the right and the wrong, and the good and the evil.

So, without the help of God, it is a frightful thing when God later threatens judgment upon these same Children of Israel. **"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from**

you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezek. 18:30-32). Iniquity is the ruin of all men. As each generation of men is born into this world, sin and iniquity will rise up and slay us all. And yet, foolishly, we continue on, somehow imagining that we can do better than those who have gone before; better, even, than those amongst whom we live. As a consequence, each generation of men has failed. And, each of us as individuals have made the attempt, perhaps, to turn from evil unto God, and to present a righteousness of our own devising to our Creator Who has made us; and we, too, have fallen to ruin. We are not capable of making a new heart and a new spirit. Ours are broken and dead and a new heart and spirit are required in order to please God so that we can live. There must be a new man within us, this is our only hope for salvation. All of the righteousnesses of men are not sufficient to remove the blot of sin upon our souls, nor to give life to the dead spirit within us.

These are the simple truths that men need to hear and know. Salvation and the Gospel cannot be real unto a man who will not first recognize the futility of trying to save himself, and of trying to make himself fit for God and Heaven.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST

Though all natural born men are sinners, and our attempts at righteousness fall far short of the standards of God's justice, there is a Man Who walked the face of this earth in holiness, goodness, and

perfect righteousness: His name is Jesus Christ. Born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sinful nature of Adam. Endued with power from on high, He never indulged in sin or corruption. As God, manifest in the flesh, He never even hinted at sin. He did not have to resist sin, it was simply impossible for Him to sin.

Let us read the account known as "The Temptation of Christ." **"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him"** (Matt.

4:1-11). These Scriptures serve as an example of the perfection and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This is not a record of His resistance unto temptation. Rather, this passage serves as an account of the immutable truth that Jesus Christ cannot sin. It is not that He overcame or resisted the temptation to sin; He simply could not be tempted to sin. He is incapable of sin. He is totally adverse to it. The possibility that Jesus Christ could sin, does not exist. The fact that Satan had no success in tempting Him, is proof that not only could He not be tempted to sin, He also cannot sin at all.

We often refer to this quality or character of Jesus Christ as His impeccable nature. The word "impeccable" is defined this way in Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of American English: "Not liable to sin; not subject to sin; exempt from the possibility of sinning. No mere man is impeccable." We read in the Book of Acts, a description of the way in which Jesus Christ lived His life on this earth: **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him"** (Acts 10:38). I often use this passage as proof of the inherent goodness of Jesus Christ, and as a model for our behavior to go about doing good. And yet, in the case of Jesus Christ, it was all that He could do. There was nothing else that He could do, except good. He could not help but do good, because He was and is good. There is none good but God, and Jesus Christ is God. He is the embodiment of good. The implication is, then, that He cannot do evil, and He cannot sin.

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In regards to the salvation of men, Someone had to live a life that measured up to the Law of God, and Jesus Christ is that Man. **“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt. 5:17-20). Of course, Jesus Christ fulfilled all of the prophecies concerning His first coming and His earthly ministry. Of course, Jesus Christ fulfilled the requirements of the justice of God in the sacrificial offering of His body and soul to the end that the children of God would be saved. But, Jesus Christ also fulfilled all of the requirements of the Law of God, in the sense that He lived a perfect life without sin so that He was and is without fault, flaw, or shortcoming. His life is the only life ever lived, that cannot be indicted by the justice of God, nor be held in account by the Law of God. It is this perfect life that was laid down as an offering for the sins of the people of God. When He hung on the Cross, He was without sin, except for the sin that He took upon Him, the sins, the curse, the guilt of each and

every one of the chosen of God, from every age, every place, and every measure of guilt.

Our sins would still be ours – and our condemnation would be just – were they not imputed to the Perfect Person, Jesus Christ. **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”** (Rom. 8:1-4). This passage teaches us about the Son of God, the righteousness of God, and how that He is necessary and His perfect life is necessary in the salvation of the souls of men. With this thought in consideration, let us move on to my final point.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS GRANTED TO REDEEMED MEN

If the Lord did not have mercy on Israel and Jerusalem, none of them would ever have been saved. If the Lord had not clothed them with His righteousness, they could have never been preserved, lifted up, or useful in the service of God. Let us read the verses that precede our text verse. **“And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments:**

thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badgers’ skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek. 16:6-14). Jerusalem would have remained in her idolatrous ways, and would have been only a wicked and despicable city of men, if the Lord had not intervened, and rescued her, and cleaned her up, and made her beautiful and glorious unto God.

I think it is fair to apply the same principle to each and every one of the elect sinners of Adam’s race. If God did not take pity on us, if He did not show His grace unto us, we should never be saved. If

He did not look upon us and say, “Live,” we would never be alive. If He did not see us in our miserable and naked condition and then grant unto us repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, then we would never be saved. If He did not have a consideration for us in our natural ugliness and our inherent filthiness and then grant unto us the righteousness of Jesus Christ, then we would never be wonderfully saved, beautifully clothed upon, and marvelously glorious in the Kingdom and service of God.

In the New Testament, we find out much about the necessity of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ in the lives of those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Without His righteousness, we could never be saved. Without His perfection, we could not properly stand before God. Paul’s desire was this: **“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith”** (Phil. 3:9). Certainly, the blood of Jesus Christ is necessary and effective in the atonement for our sins, so that our sins are washed away, and we are made spotless and clean. However, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God without the garments of salvation. It is a part of the miracle of salvation that we are both cleansed from our sins, and then we are clothed upon with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are, in fact, unfit to stand in the presence of the thrice holy God, without the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Our only hope is to trust in the righteousness of the One Who was and is All-Righteous. Without Him and His accomplishments,

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we can never be saved, nor can we ever be righteous before God. **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain"** (Gal. 2:20-21). Your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour, must include a faith and a belief in His righteousness, and in the imputation of His righteousness to your account. You may not understand, in literal terms, the Impeccable Nature of Christ and the doctrine of imputation when you are first saved; but you must and will see Jesus Christ as the holy, beautiful, righteous, and worthy Son of God. The only One Who is able and worthy to save men. Just as your sins were imputed unto Him and He was crucified, bled, and died for your sins, even so, His righteousness must be imputed unto you, in order for you to be saved. The salvation that God has provided for His people is utterly magnificent, glorious, and complete in every way. The salvation that He has accomplished, and then delivered to us, is full of miracles. He did not leave any of it to us. He will both cleanse us, and He will clothe us. He will both grant us faith to repent and believe, and will make us worthy to stand in His presence. From this perspective, and based upon the abundance of His grace manifest unto us, your and my salvation is not confined to the washing away of sins by the blood of Christ. He would also, in this salvation, which He has

accomplished, provide clothing for you and for me. We put on Jesus Christ, and we are made to stand before God based on the merit and the righteousness of the One Who has saved us. The righteousness of salvation does not come by the Law, nor by the works and deeds of men; but, our righteousness comes by Jesus Christ, the One Who died for us, and now lives for us.

The result of a salvation accomplished by God alone, is that God alone is worthy of the praise and adoration of those who are saved, and of those who bear witness to the miracles of the grace of God. Paul told the Corinthians, **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord"** (I Cor. 1:30-31). If you contributed somewhat to your righteousness, or to the garments of salvation which you wear; might you not have somewhat to glory of, and might not others have somewhat for which to exalt you and your works? However, this is not the case. All the glory for your and my salvation, must go to the One Who has saved us, the One Who has imputed His righteousness unto us. We have naught to glory of! As in all of God's works and deeds, the salvation of men redounds to the glory of God! We stand before God justified, based on the works of Jesus Christ on our behalf, and because of the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed unto us. We are in Christ Jesus, and He is made unto us **"wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."** Our own wisdom was not enough. Our own righteousnesses were only as filthy rags. Our

sanctification was impure, based on our own inherent depravity. Our own feeble attempts to save ourselves, though our entire lives might have been devoted to an attempt at redemption, was not enough; the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved, if we are counting on ourselves.

And yet, Jesus Christ is merciful and the grace of God is great indeed! He has agreed to save us, and to impart unto us His righteousness unto salvation! Let me refer you to one more passage concerning the grace of God in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ: **"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 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. 3:19-26). I hope and pray that your salvation and mine, will be an ongoing declaration of the

righteousness of Jesus Christ. Let the world know that you did not save yourself, your faith is in the Righteous One, Jesus Christ! Let the world know that no man can save himself, for no man can attain to the righteousness required by the justice and the law of God. And yet, as we declare the truth of man's depravity and guilt before God, and of his inability to save himself; let us joyfully and loudly proclaim the merit and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is perfectly qualified to save the souls of sinful men. In fact, His is the only blood that can atone for our sins, and His is the only righteousness which is able to present us, spotless, before the Holy God of justice.



God In Tears

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merely a saved sinner? Why did He weep on the very eve when He would raise Lazarus from the dead? These are some of the vital questions I want to answer in this message.

Christ wept on three occasions in the Scriptures, and in all three cases His tears were connected with the consequences of sin. First, He wept on the way to the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35). Second, He wept over the doomed city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Third, He wept in the garden of Gethsemane (Heb. 5:7).

AN EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY

I believe that Christ wept on the way to the grave of Lazarus as an expression of sympathy. He had often visited the home of Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary. Now Lazarus has departed this life. Christ wishes to show His sympathy to

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God In Tears

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the two survivors that He loved so dearly. Therefore, our Lord and His disciples go to visit in the home of the two sorrowful sisters. After a brief conversation they go to visit the grave of the deceased. As they travel down the dusty road from the house to the grave of Lazarus, Christ silently weeps out of sympathy to Martha and Mary.

These sisters are sorrowing because they have lost, not a friend or a neighbor, but a beloved brother. He was their only brother. Now they would have no one to help or protect them. It would be hard to make a go in the world without Lazarus. He was a model brother. He was not a common criminal or some immoral person. A very kind and good brother had been buried. He would be missed in their home and his seat would be empty.

The heart of Jesus was moved by the genuine grief of the two sisters whom He viewed with much regard. Christ sorrowed that death should have such power, to break up homes, to sunder friends, to chill hearts, and to make life dark and dreary. These things moved His eyes to tears.

AN EXPRESSION OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

Lazarus was a special friend of Jesus. When Christ knew that Lazarus was dead He told the disciples: **"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth"** (John 11:11). This implies that the friendship expressed by our Lord was reciprocated. His use of the words "our friend" suggests that Lazarus was a good friend of Christ and His disciples as well. Christ was no paid mourner. He weeps because His good friend is gone. Lazarus

must have been a valuable friend to Christ. He had no doubt often shown Him kindness and spoken encouraging words. Now Lazarus is no more. Jesus weeps because His friend has departed the land of the living. Even the Jews said: **"Behold how he loved him!"** (John 11:36).

Here we can learn an important lesson. It is natural and right to weep over departed friends or family. Jesus knew Lazarus was happy in Paradise, but still He weeps! He knew that in a few moments He would raise Lazarus to life again, but still he weeps! We are not to weep over our departed friends as those who have no hope of a resurrection (I Thess. 4:13), but this implies that we can weep. Such sorrow is not sinful sorrow, for even the Son of God wept over the death of Lazarus. To be cold and unmoved in the sight of sorrow is no sign of grace in the heart. There is nothing wrong with a child of God weeping over a departed friend. When he does so he is merely following the example of Christ.

AS PROOF OF HIS TRUE HUMANITY

The Greek word (dakruo) rendered **"wept"** is found only here in the New Testament. It is not the same as that used for **"weeping"** in verse 33 of this 11th chapter of John. In verse 33 the Greek word means to weep aloud. In verse 33 it means that Christ wept silently. The word expresses a calm and gentle grief. The words would more literally and accurately be rendered "shed tears."

Weeping is a characteristic of humanity. No other being weeps but man. The birds sing, but they do not weep. The elect angels have no need to weep as they are without sin. Fallen angels have a need to weep but no desire to

weep. John 11:35 proves that Jesus Christ was really and truly a man subject to like passions as we are. He had a human soul that could experience sorrow and tears. In the text He is seen as a man who expresses His sympathy in truly human fashion. Verily the Word was made flesh, and He partook of our flesh and blood.

Liberal critics of the Gospel of John contend that it presents an unhistorical picture of Jesus, a being with nothing about Him except His outward appearance, being all Logos, all deity. It is certainly true that in the Gospel of John there are many verses that affirm the divinity of Christ, but, as my text indicates, it also presents the humanity of Christ as well. **"Jesus wept"** is an eternal refutation of the theory that the incarnate Logos was without a human nature.

AN EXPRESSION OF DIVINE COMPASSION

"Jesus wept." These were the tears of incarnate deity. Here we see God in tears. Strictly speaking, God, as such, cannot shed tears, but He can sympathize, pity, and sorrow. The God-man can shed tears. The tears in John 11:35 express Divine emotion in human language. Here we see a Divine revelation of the very heart of God. It is unscriptural to represent God as unfeeling. He is susceptible to some kind of painless sympathy with pain. He grieves over sorrow. He nevertheless in wisdom and love permits.

To say such is not idle theological chatter. The Bible emphatically declares that such is true. **"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" (Gen. 6:5-6). It is written of God with reference to the nation of Israel: **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old"** (Isa. 63:9). Ephesians 4:30 reads: **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."**

"Jesus wept." Oh, we have in the Divine-human Christ a feeling Friend Who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. The writer of Hebrews so well said: **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"** (Heb. 4:15). When we are burdened down with sorrow we have the privilege of coming to a tender and compassionate High Priest. He knows, He loves, He feels, He cares!

The song writer has written:

*The great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer,*

Oh, hear the voice of Jesus.

Still another has penned these words:

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained

Too deeply for mirth or song;

As the burdens press,

And the cares distress,

And the way grows weary and long?

Oh, yes, He cares,

I know He cares,

His heart is touched with my grief;

When the days are weary,

The long nights dreary,

I know my Savior cares.

♦ (Continued on page 16)


The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Do we have reference to the first "Bible Conference" in Scripture?

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Well I do not know if we have any references for a "Bible Conference" or not, if there is one in Scripture I am not aware of one. But with that said, there are references to "Revivals." I will assume the questioner will know the difference. But just so we can give a fairly decent answer, the word conference for what we are looking for concerning religion would be Ecclesiastical: 1. an official assembly of clergy or of clergy and laity, customary in many Christian denominations. 2. A group of churches whose representatives regularly meet in such an assembly.

On the other hand a revival is a restoration to life, consciousness, vigor, strength, etc. An awakening, in a church or community, of interest in and care for matters relating to personal religion. An evangelistic service or a series of services for the purpose of effecting a religious awakening: to hold a revival.

Usually, at least most of the "Bible Conferences" I have been to; the preachers are assigned a topic to preach. I am not saying I disagree with that, I really do not have a problem with receiving a topic or subject to preach on, but I do not believe there is evidence of that in the Bible. On the other hand, revivals are left up to how

the Holy Spirit leads the speaker.

There are many revivals in Holy Writ. Probably the most popular one that many would relate was the one in Nineveh. You know the one Jonah first refused to go. There are many in the book of Acts. My favorite is the one in Acts 8 that Philip was involved in at Samaria until the Spirit called him away to give the gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch. You may notice that before Philip left, the apostles which were at Jerusalem sent Peter and John, I believe, so the revival could continue on.

Some of the other revivals in the Bible were led by Joshua (Josh. 5:2-9), Samuel (I Sam. 7:1-6), Elijah (I Kings 18:17-40), and many others.

I suppose there is nothing wrong with a "Bible Conference," I am not a huge fan of them per se, but I really enjoy a great revival, whether or not I am preaching. God Bless!

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The word "conference" occurs one time in our English Bible. It is found in Galatians 2:6 where Paul is explaining to the Galatian churches the circumstances and substance of his meeting with the apostles in what many label the Jerusalem council. Basically this "conference" was a formal declaration against salvation

by works of the law or legalism, especially with regards to the ritual of circumcision. A sect of the Pharisees insisted that those Gentiles who believed on Christ must also keep the law and observe the rite of circumcision to be really saved. This was one of the first heresies that had to be dealt with in the early churches. Two Scriptures that relate to this meeting may suffice to prove that the conclusion the apostles came to on the matter was that salvation is by grace through faith without the deeds of the law, and that man in no way could be justified by the works of the law. Peter explained it this way: **"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they"** (Acts 15:7-11). Later when Peter came to Antioch, Paul had to rebuke him for compromising with the Judaizers because he feared those of the circumcision. Paul had to remind Peter of the truth of justification by faith alone. Galatians 2:16 states: **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of**

Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Unfortunately, the heresy of legalism, or salvation by works, still persists today in many circles.

Technically speaking, the events of Acts 15 may have constituted the first "Bible Conference." Like minded Baptist brethren met together to settle an issue that was harming the doctrinal unity of the early churches. They very clearly established the foundational truth that justification by faith in the Gospel of Christ is the only way to be saved, whether you were a Jew or a Gentile, apart from the works of the law. However, to compare what they did back then to what we do today at "Bible Conferences" would be a huge stretch. Most Bible Conferences I have attended in my 38 years of Christian life have consisted of lots of preaching, singing, worship, exhortation, fellowship, and eating. In light of what goes on at many modern day Bible Conferences, would The Sermon on the Mount likewise qualify as a Bible Conference?

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"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). I would define a "modern Bible conference" as a special event where members from several or

◇ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Are we to believe that the author of Proverbs 11:30 (Solomon?) was involved in evangelism?

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If you carefully examine the contents of the Book of Proverbs, then certainly you must conclude that the life and writings of the wise man were geared toward evangelism. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Solomon understood that Jesus Christ was the ultimate personification of Wisdom (chapter 8), and the thrust of the entire book of Proverbs is an exhortation to hearken to wisdom, embrace it, keep it, cherish it, live by its principles, etc. Proverbs 1:7-9 states: **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."** It appears that Solomon's work of evangelism began in his own family as he instructed his children in the things of God. Over and over again he exhorts his son to hearken to and embrace the principles of wisdom as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Proverbs 23:22-26 declares: **"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and**

instruction, and understanding. The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice. My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

In Proverbs chapter 1, Solomon warns against refusing the message of salvation and shows the consequences of unbelief by contrasting the judgment of unbelievers with the peace of believers: **"For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil"** (Prov. 1:29-33; cf. Matt. 11:28-30).

Proverbs 3:5-7 is definitely an exhortation to trust in the Lord: **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."** Proverbs 8:32-36 records the words of Wisdom personified in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ: **"Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my**

ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

Many of the exhortations in Proverbs also stress the importance of a righteous testimony by the bearer of the good news as expressed in Proverbs 11:30, our text under consideration: **"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise."**

Solomon even has words of warning for those who fail to engage in the work of evangelism in Proverbs 24:10-12: **"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"** I am sure that we could look at several other passages in Proverbs that are definitely evangelistic in nature.

The more I pondered the question, I came to the conclusion that all the writers of Scripture in some form or fashion are evangelistic in their thrust. The Spirit of God inspired them to reveal the truth about God and His salvation. All of Scripture converges in some way upon the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation. Interestingly enough, the very last chapter of Holy Scripture contains one of the strongest

proclamations of evangelistic fervor: **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"** (Rev. 22:17).

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Evangelism! The good news of Jesus Christ! Probably the purest definition of the Gospel is Mark.1:1, **"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."** The good news of evangelism is not just the news of Jesus Christ, but the person of Jesus Christ. You need to know Him! All sinners need to know Him! Otherwise, all is lost and darkness.

As to the nuts and bolts of evangelism, the next text tells it all. **"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters"** (Rev. 14:6-7). Repent and believe the gospel. Fear God, repent because of His judgment and then worship and trust Him alone. That is the form and shape of the gospel, as the Holy Ghost, Himself, imparts faith, repentance and life unto the afore-chosen children of God. Selah! Think about it!

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Forum #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

many churches gather together to fellowship over God's Word being preached. It can be an all-day meeting, or several days. Typically, several pastors are invited, but sometimes it might just be one speaker, as in our text verse in Acts the Apostle Paul. (...which by the way, validates that I am not the only long-winded conference speaker!) Selah! Think about it!

A major Bible conference occurs in Acts 15, where the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem hosted a meeting to hammer out a doctrinal response to current events that were then shaping the polity of the early churches concerning Gentile membership. **"And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep**

the law of Moses" (Acts 15:1-5).

Not to be distracted by the doctrinal teachings here, it is interesting to note the logistics of this early Bible conference. The church at Antioch **"determined"** to send a delegation to the Bible conference in Jerusalem and **"brought them"** on their way, with both authority and financial means. Upon the apostles' arrival, they were **"received"** by the Jerusalem church with proper hospitality and sustenance. Then we see that there were various speakers, in this case, so that both sides of the disagreement were heard, comprehended, and weighed in the balance of Holy Writ. I LOVE Bible conferences!

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, sets Bible conferences' guidelines in order. An extensive study of the entire text (which I have excerpted following) is very enlightening! **"..when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; ...Let the prophets speak two or three, ...For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. ...For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: ...Let all things be done decently and in order"** (I Cor. 14:26-40). I LOVE Bible conferences!

I have been to Bible conferences with excellent Scriptural precedent, where eminent pastors are invited to fortify the

local pastor's teachings when heresy is making inroads. **"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: ...Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. ...Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth"** (Titus 1:5, 9-14). I LOVE Bible conferences! Selah! Think about it!

God supernaturally instigated a Bible conference in Cornelius' house by picking the keynote speaker, Simon Peter, and even preparing his sermon for him! **"...an angel of God ...saying unto him, Cornelius. ...now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: ...Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God"** (Acts 10:1-48).

I LOVE Bible conferences! And so do the Scriptures! **"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do"** (Acts 15:36). Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

Evangelism is truly the purpose and scope of the entire Bible, because the revelation of God to man is to reveal the Son of God as Saviour, Judge and King. The book of Proverbs is no exception. **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge..."** (Prov. 1:7). In a nutshell this is the gospel. Just as the "everlasting gospel" was preached by the flying angel to all the earth, so too, does Solomon promote this most evangelistic of all verses in the Bible. FEAR GOD! Thus goes the commandment of the Apostle Paul. **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent"** (Acts 17:30). Thus preaches the evangelist John the Baptist. **"..Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"** (Matt. 3:2). Noah preached this seminal truth of the gospel. **"And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly"** (II Peter 2:5). Possibly the greatest revival the world has ever seen in number, had this same gospel of "fear God" preached efficaciously by a mere man through the power of the Holy Ghost: **"And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God..."** (Jonah 3:4-5). Fear God! Throw yourselves on the mercy of the great God that created this world. Selah! Think about it!

This is the battle cry of the Lord's Baptist churches in 2018, too. **"..All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye**

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Forum #2

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therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matt. 28:18-20). Our message? Jesus has all power! Go and tell all nations to fear Him. Tell them to submit to His baptism. Teach them to observe whatever I have commanded. Fear God! Reverence and worship the Creator and Saviour; the Judge and King.

What a beautiful gospel. I surrender all. Lord, save me. The book of Proverbs does more to evangelize than first glance might appear. Solomon's core theme is to contrast the righteous and the wicked, and it all pivots on this crucial evangelistic message of God's existence and His blessed salvation of transforming some of the wicked into the righteous. You must believe! You must repent! You must fear this great God that has the power to kill or save. But let us let Solomon speak for himself.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7). **"For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD"** (Prov. 1:29). **"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God"** (Prov. 2:5). **"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil"** (Prov. 3:7). **"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate"** (Prov. 8:13). **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding"** (Prov.

9:10). **"The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened"** (Prov. 10:27). **"In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death"** (Prov. 14:26-27). **"Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith"** (Prov. 15:16). **"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility"** (Prov. 15:33). **"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil"** (Prov. 16:6). **"The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil"** (Prov. 19:23). **"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life"** (Prov. 22:4). **"Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long"** (Prov. 23:17). **"My son, fear thou the LORD"** (Prov. 24:21).

The reason the gospel appears to be ineffectual today is because most people are not being evangelistic like Solomon anymore. They think that telling people that "God loves you" is the message of God. Where is that in the Bible? God hates sin and wickedness with a Hellish passion. And until the world (we/us) understands that we are sinful and, in reality, the enemy of God, we will have no hope. We need an evangelist to stride into our towns and goat-filled churches and proclaim the gospel message of "fear God! Repent and believe! Fall down in fear and worship the true God of all power." Lordship salvation. That is what Solomon the evangelist preaches. **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole**

matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). Selah! Think about it!

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The answer to the question would be yes! I would offer three verses of Scripture to prove the point.

1. **"The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel"** (Prov. 1:1).

2. **"The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem"** (Eccl. 1:1).

3. **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher"** (Rom. 10:14)?

Proverbs 1:1 tells us who the writer of Proverbs is. Ecclesiastes 1:1 tells us that the son of David is a preacher who is Solomon. So Solomon is the writer of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and yes he is a preacher, ordained of God to be the King of Israel as well.

A study of the word **"vanity"** as seen in Ecclesiastes 1:2, **"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity"** will reveal that the preacher (Solomon) is preaching that without Christ in our lives, or what we have or do is **"vanity"**, which means, without Jesus Christ, in everything we do is a big fat zero (**"vanity"**) and it is not worth anything at all. So without Jesus, you have

and are nothing. I believe that is a very good and powerful evangelistic message as far as I am concerned.

Romans 10:14 affirms that one of the duties (main duty) of a preacher is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. I believe King Solomon was fulfilling that duty as a preacher and king.

Again, a close study of Ecclesiastes will reveal that King Solomon had it all and did it all and that is what brought him to the understanding, that even though he had and did everything, if God was not in it, it was worth absolutely nothing (zero). How many preachers are preaching that message today? Not many I would suppose. Most are afraid to because it may chase their people away... So what! is what I would say to that. I would rather have one or two who believed and wanted to hear the truth than fifty that just wanted to play church and not get their toes stepped on now and then.

I was not ordained to be a people pleaser or win a popularity contest. I remember teaching Ecclesiastes once and one of the members said that Ecclesiastes was boring. Ecclesiastes may be repetitive but I believe it is far from boring. Maybe they meant the preacher (me) was boring!?! No, they just did not like to be told that everything they did without God was worthless, which it is. Oh the depravity of man, how sour the sound, that can not save a wretch like me!!

We would be wise to adhere to the **"preacher's"** advice. God Bless!

ROGER REED



God In Tears

(Continued from page 11) ♦

*Does Jesus care when I've said
"good-by"*

*To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches*

*Till it nearly breaks,
Is it aught to Him?*

Does He care?

O yes, He cares,

I know He cares,

His heart is touched with my grief;

When the days are weary,

The long night dreary,

I know my Savior cares.

Our compassion begins and ends in tears. We are helpless and can do nothing. We weep over our departed friends and family, for we can do nothing else. Our rivers of tears cannot bring them back to life. But this was not the case with the tears of Jesus. The tears of Jesus moved His divine power, and Lazarus was restored to life by a miracle. The tears of Christ were divinely practical and practically Divine.

TO VINDICATE THE PROPHET

Some 700 years before the scene at Bethany Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, declared of the coming Messiah: **"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"** (Isa. 53:3-4). How well these words describe the Savior whose life was one continued series of grief from the cradle to the cross. The words: **"Jesus wept,"** show Christ to be the one Isaiah spoke about.

The Baptist hymnwriter, P. P.

Bliss, put it like this:

*"Man of Sorrows," what a name
For the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!*

Hallelujah! what a Savior!

BECAUSE OF THE EVIL WROUGHT BY SIN

As Jesus walked the road to the grave of Lazarus, He saw world-wide grief--the sorrow and tears which had followed sin and death in their hateful course on earth. The thought of all the sorrow and suffering caused by sin and death to humankind touched the Savior's heart. The pressure of His grief found relief in tears.

There were no doubt many other graves in the vicinity of the tomb of Lazarus. Christ knew that all these tombs were memorials to the fact that the wages of sin are death. Behind each tomb was a horrible tale of woe. Disease and death had wretched and ruined man's joy. The scene around Christ was anything but what God intended. How awful is the reign of sin and death! How terrible would be in the future the pangs of dissolution which His friends must endure---faithful martyrs and faithful followers to the end of time! As He considered the woes of the past and the woes of the future He is moved by a mighty wave of feeling and pity. **"Jesus wept."**

In a few moments Christ would raise His friend, Lazarus, from the grave. But it would only be a short time until Lazarus would again have to die, for he would not be raised incorruptible. One day His friend would once again be subjected to the pains of death. By returning him to this sinful world He would again have to face sorrow and death. For this reason those eyes that could see the end from the beginning were blurred with tears. The Creator

Who gave songs to all the birds choked with grief! **"Jesus wept."**

AS AN EXAMPLE TO US

In every way Jesus Christ is our example. **"...because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps"** (I Pet. 2:21). Christ wept on the way to the grave of Lazarus. He was moved by the grief of the two sisters. In John 11:35 we see Him weeping with them who weep. We never read where He laughed, and only once where He rejoiced (Luke 10:21). The lesson in all of this to us is seen in the words of Ecclesiastes 7:2-4: **"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."**

In Romans 12:15 we are commanded: **"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."** We, like Christ, ought to sympathize with our fellow creatures in their joys and sorrows. The blessings of others should cause us to rejoice. The sorrow of others ought to affect us with sorrow. This will have a beneficial influence, heightening joys and lessening sorrows.

CONCLUSION

1. Divine sympathy is the forerunner of Divine help. Jesus Christ raised Lazarus from the dead by a miracle of Divine power. This brought an end to the sorrow of Martha and Mary. But this act was a pledge and prophecy of the coming time when sin, sorrow, and death will pass away. Oh, happy day when **"God shall wipe away all tears**

from their eyes" (Rev. 21:4).

2. Christ and the Father are one (John 10:30). The tears of Bethany are the visible expression of the Father's heart. In the words: **"Jesus wept,"** is the love of God, the bowels of compassion of the Eternal, condescending to appear as we are capable of receiving it, in the form of human nature.

3. Tears shed when a loved one is removed from us by death are Christlike and not wrong. There is nothing unmanly, unwise, dishonorable, or feeble in such grief. Such tears make us resemble Christ Who wept on the way to the grave of Lazarus!

4. The Savior who invites sinners to come to Him for salvation is as able to feel as to save. Be assured you have in Him a feeling Friend, a Friend to sinners. Come to Him for salvation and assurance.

Just as thou art---without one trace

*Of love, or joy, or inward grace,
Or meetness for the heavenly
place,*

O guilty sinner come!

Thy sins I bore on Calvary's tree,

*The stripes, thy due, were laid on Me,
That peace and pardon might be free--
O wretched sinner, come!*

Come, leave thy burden at the cross;

*Count all thy gains but empty
dross;*

*My grace repays all earthly loss---
O needy sinner, come.*

Come, hither bring thy boding fears,

*Thy aching heart, thy bursting tears;
'Tis mercy's voice salutes thine ears;
O trembling sinner, come!*

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"

*Rejoicing saints re-echo, "Come!"
Who faints, who thirst, who will, may come---
Thy Savior bids thee come!*



Saved or Lost?

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trust fully in the only One who can hide them from the wrath to come, and those who continue on in their wickedness to suffer the consequences, ultimately in the Lake of Fire for all eternity. You can identify the two categories in a number of ways but it always boils down to two simple groups of people. Saved and lost. Wise and ignorant. Believers and unbelievers. Penitent and impenitent. You will notice that the two categories do not include gender, race, education, wealth, nationality, religion, political party, etc. These are the very things that men concern themselves with in our world. Satan has been extremely successful in getting men to keep their eyes and desires on things of little importance. God is much more direct and precise as to how He sees men!

How is it that some men see the evil of sin and repent of it, and others go blindly on in their wickedness? Every man is equally dead in trespasses and in sins. All are spiritually blind and ignorant. All men have a perverted will that is bent toward evil and sin. All men have a heart that is deceitful, wicked, and rebellious. These statements are incontrovertible facts supported not only by Scripture but also by the history of the human race. Recorded in Genesis 6:5 is God's first comment on human depravity: **"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."**

To answer the question of how some men are brought to an end of themselves, acknowledging their

sinful rebellion, and repenting of it is simple and profound. God's grace must intervene in a life deadened and darkened by sin. God the Holy Spirit must give spiritual life in regenerating power, followed immediately by gracing the poor sinner with the ability to repent and believe the Gospel. This is how a man is made prudent with regard to the spiritual truth of sin and its consequences. God must give light to his darkened mind, open his corrupt heart, and change his perverted will all by the power of sovereign, invincible grace. Oh, glorious day when God opened my blinded eyes to see the glory of the crucified, buried, and risen Christ! For the first time in my life I saw what I really was in the sight of God, a broken, corrupt, depraved rebel deserving eternal retribution in Hell for my sinful life. By God's enlightening grace I saw I could no longer travel on the broad road that leads to destruction. I was brought to an end of myself, all my visions of self righteousness were blasted away. I not only was made to see my sin and its just punishment, I was also made to see that Jesus Christ was my only hope. My eyes were opened to see the love of Jesus Christ who is full of grace and truth. I was made to see there was a definite way to be made right in the sight of God, to be forgiven of my wicked sins, and to have my life forever changed by the power of God's grace. God miraculously gave me the grace to believe that Jesus Christ had died in my place, that He was punished for my sins, that He shed His precious blood to put my sins away. The death of Christ was made real to my soul. The One who was perfect, pure, sinless, loving, and gracious was willing to take my place and

pay for my sins and satisfy every claim of God's justice on my behalf. The Spirit of God opened my heart to believe that Jesus not only died for my sins, but that He also rose again from the dead to give me eternal life. I was made to be a prudent man by the power of God. With enlightened eyes I saw the deserved destruction that was coming upon my soul and I ran to the only refuge from the evil, the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe the eternal purpose of God orchestrated everything that brought me to the place where I trusted Jesus Christ alone for salvation. My life is now hid with Christ in God. I am safe for all eternity as a partaker of Christ and the eternal life that flows from Him. Proverbs 18:10 states: **"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."** Jesus stated this truth in a similar way when He said: **"...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** There is only one place to experience peace with God, safety, and eternal life. Its not found in religious systems, rituals, ordinances, denominations, or man's works. Salvation from the evil to come is found only in Jesus Christ according to His own words and those of 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."** Acts 10:43 declares: **"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."** Acts 13:38-39 states it another way: **"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this**

man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This message of deliverance and grace has been preached in every corner of the world. Multitudes have believed the truth as it is in Jesus and have been saved from the wrath to come.

I love the words of the old hymn written by Edward Mote titled The Solid Rock:

*My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
but wholly lean on Jesus's name*

*When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the vale*

*His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay*

*When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne*

*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.*

We must now turn our attention to the second part of this verse. There are those who are identified as simple. I was once in this condition so I know whereof I speak. The simple pass on, they continue on in their spiritual ignorance thinking they will be alright in the end. They are warned of sin and its consequences. They are plainly warned to repent and believe the

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Gospel. The simple rebel against the goodness of God. They determine to go their own way and follow their own opinions or feelings. They deliberately and willfully shun God's way of salvation and choose their own way. Often times their way is the way of religious rituals like baptism or in trusting that their supposed "good works" will save them in the end. Some think they will be saved by observing the rules and regulations of some religious leader like the Pope, or Mohammed, or Joseph Smith who established the Mormon religion. They pass on the simple truth as it is in Jesus to willfully embrace the convoluted religious systems of depraved men. Still there are others who vociferously declare there is no God, that it is all a delusion. They want to believe they, in fact are their own God and whatever suits them will be fine. **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"** (Psa. 14:1). It is the height of folly and ignorant simplicity to deny the existence of God and His way of salvation. Many who are spiritually simple convince themselves and others that they are sincere in their beliefs. Proverbs 14:12 warns of their plight: **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."** Jesus put it this way when He was addressing the issue of religious sincerity and self trust: **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?**

and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). Jesus makes it clear that delusions of religious sincerity will not save any sinner who clings to a false hope.

Dear reader, I urge you in the strongest possible way to consider which category you find yourself in. You cannot afford to be wrong in the end. Are you completely trusting only in Jesus Christ, relying entirely upon His death, burial and resurrection to save you from sin and its eternal consequences? Or are you simple, passing on the warnings of Scripture, choosing instead to willfully trust in yourself and your religious opinions? Eternity will reveal whether God saved you by His grace or you willfully died in your sins. Jesus Christ plainly said: **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God...He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** (John 3:18-21, 36).



THE

BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

WHAT'S AUSCHWITZ? 2/3 OF MILLENNIALS DON'T KNOW IT WAS A NAZI DEATH CAMP, SURVEY REPORTS

(CH)-- A survey commissioned by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany found that 66 percent of Americans ages 18 to 34 "cannot identify what Auschwitz was." The figure for all adults was 41 percent. The survey also found that 31 percent of all Americans and more than 4-in-10 millennials believe that 2 million Jews or fewer were killed during the Holocaust, substantially less than the historically accepted figure, which is closer to 6 million.

TIGHTEST ABORTION LAW IN US ON HOLD FOR SEVERAL MORE MONTHS

(AP) — The most restrictive abortion law in the United States will remain on hold for at least several more months. The Mississippi law bans abortion after 15 weeks. It took effect when Republican Gov. Phil Bryant signed it March 19, but the state's only abortion clinic immediately sued and U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves put it on hold the next day. Reeves extended his temporary restraining order until at least October 24. He also set a September 24 hearing on the clinic's request to keep the law on hold even longer.

CALIFORNIA BILL THREATENS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE HOMOSEXUALITY

(CH)--A bill quickly moving through

the California state legislature may threaten the religious freedom of those who object to homosexuality. Jim Daly, the president of Focus on the Family, wrote a blog post alerting Christians to the implications of this bill, which is known as Assembly Bill 2943. The bill amends California's "Consumer Legal Remedies Act" to include "sexual orientation change efforts." Daly breaks down the implications of this bill and how it could adversely affect Christians. "For example, a simple monetary transaction – buying a book about overcoming homosexuality, or paying a counselor for help with gender confusion – would trigger AB 2943." Thus, those who believe homosexuality is a sin could face legal repercussions from monetary transactions having to do with this belief. "To put it simply," writes Daley, "Christian schools, churches and others who hold to a traditional understanding of marriage and sexuality would be open to lawsuits for teaching Biblical truth about homosexuality or transgenderism."

ANCHORAGE, AK VOTES IN FAVOR OF ALLOWING TRANS INDIVIDUALS TO USE BATHROOM OF THEIR CHOICE

(CP)--Voters in Anchorage, Alaska have cast their ballots in favor of allowing transgender individuals to use the bathroom of their gender choice, regardless of the individual's biological sex. Voters were faced with a proposition which would have

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maintained the requirement for city facilities to offer separate bathrooms and changing areas for biological males and females, but this current ordinance was narrowly voted down. The ordinance, known as Proposition 1, would have made it a law that all individuals must use the bathroom facilities which correspond to their biological gender, except in cases of maintenance and when parents are helping young children in the restroom. This bill would have been similar to the controversial North Carolina "bathroom bill." It also would have allowed individual private businesses to implement the bathroom policy of their choice.

INDIANA ADOPTS LAW THAT COUNTS UNBORN CHILDREN AS PERSONS

(RM)--Relevant Magazine reports the state of Indiana has adopted a new law that essentially grants personhood to unborn children and Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb has signed a bill into law that allows suspects to be charged with murder if they harm a pregnant woman who then loses her unborn child. Pro-life supporters are championing this bill, as it acknowledges the personhood of unborn children. The law, however, does not apply to legally obtained abortions. This law was brought to the attention of the state's lawmakers by a woman whose pregnant daughter was shot and killed. The woman felt it was unjust that the killer could not be tried for the death of the unborn child as well as the death of her daughter. The law will go into effect in July 2018.

NAVY HOSPITAL UNDER FIRE FOR BIBLE ON POW/MIA TABLE

(RNS)--The Military Religious Freedom Foundation filed a

complaint on April 5th over a Bible and other religious language on a display table at the Naval Hospital in Okinawa, Japan. At issue is a POW/MIA display table in a public portion of the hospital. The table includes a Bible and a placard written in both Japanese and English. One portion of the placard reads, "The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded one nation under God." The foundation, based in New Mexico, filed the complaint on behalf of twenty-six of their members who are stationed in Okinawa. They expressed concern over the inclusion of the Bible in the "command-endorsed" display because it is, "endorsing Christianity (versus other major religions or non-religious beliefs) as expressed in the Christian Bible to the total exclusion of any other belief systems or non-belief traditions." In addition, the complaint summarizes the foundation's issue with the placard, saying, "Anyone with a modicum knowledge of American history should know that this is false – the very purpose of the Establishment Clause in the First Amendment was to make it clear, to any and all, that the United States was conceived as religiously neutral, viz., that there was absolutely no religious component to our Founding. Nowhere in our Constitution does the word "God" appear even once." The vice chairman of the National League of POW/MIA Families, Mark Stevenson, says the fault is with the complainants rather than the display. "The POWs held in Hanoi vehemently turned to God for comfort and safety and persistence... I do not see where the harm is. If somebody's going to take offense to it, they're making a conscious effort to be offended." The complaint outlined three actions the group would like for the Rear Admiral in charge of the hospital to take. They want the

Bible removed from the display, the language removed from the placard, and an independent investigation to be launched to determine who was ultimately responsible for the display. In addition, they want "appropriate disciplinary measures administered to those responsible."

IRELAND: ABORTED BABIES POINTEDLY IGNORED IN PRO-CHOICE EMPTY SHOES CAMPAIGN

(CH)--The citizens of Ireland will vote on May 25 on whether or not to repeal the Eighth Amendment to their Constitution. This amendment protects the lives of the unborn and makes abortion illegal. A recent campaign aimed to sway opinion in favor of repealing the amendment, called "In Her Shoes: Women of the Eighth," involved posts of shoes by Irish women who had been forced to leave the country to get abortions elsewhere where abortion is legal. The campaign was an attempt to show that Irish women have suffered physically and emotionally due to the country's Eighth Amendment, but many of the testimonies from women in the "In Her Shoes" campaign reveal that the true pain came from going through with the abortion. It's also worth noting that the campaign seems tone-deaf in that it did not post any empty shoes of the babies who would have been but were aborted. It is a common practice for couples to post pictures of baby shoes in their pregnancy announcements, and this campaign seems to ignore this tradition.

AIR FORCE REVERSES SUSPENSION OF COLONEL WHO REFUSED TO SUPPORT SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

(CP)--According to The Christian Post, Colonel Leland Bohannon, a US Air Force colonel was suspended last year after he refused to sign a certificate in support of gay marriage.

Now, that decision has been reversed. The Air Force has now reversed its decision and stated that Bohannon "had the right to exercise his sincerely held religious beliefs and did not unlawfully discriminate when he declined to sign the certificate." "The Air Force has a duty to treat people fairly and without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, or sexual orientation and [Bohannon] met that duty by having a more senior officer sign the certificate."

PLANNED PARENTHOOD CALLS FOR DISNEY PRINCESS WHO'S 'HAD AN ABORTION'

Life News reported Planned Parenthood recently drew criticism for tweeting that there should be a Disney princess who has had an abortion. "We need a Disney princess who's had an abortion. We need a Disney princess who's pro-choice." They criticized the abortion provider for targeting young girls who are Disney fans with their extreme pro-choice agenda. "Impressionable, idealistic little girls often adore the strength, bravery and compassion of the princesses displayed in Disney films. They dress like them, sing their songs, look up to them and imagine being them because they portray something good, something noble." "Planned Parenthood would utterly corrupt their idealistic young minds by pushing little girls to accept death and destruction in the name of 'choice' and 'empowerment.'" In the same tweet Planned Parenthood also wrote, "We need a disney princess who's an undocumented immigrant. We need a disney princess who's actually a union worker. We need a disney princess who's trans." The Twitter post received ample criticism, even from those who identify as pro-choice.

KENTUCKY CONSIDERS LAW

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INSTITUTING ANNUAL DAY OF STUDENT PRAYER

(CH)--The Kentucky Legislature is considering mandating an annual day of student prayer. House Bill 40 would make the last Wednesday in September "A Day of Prayer for Kentucky's Students" and would require the state's governor to proclaim it as such every year. The bill passed the Kentucky House last week by a broad margin and is now in the state Senate. Regina Huff, a Republican representative from Williamsburg, Ky., who is one of five Republican sponsors of the bill, told a local news outlet that the proposed law is nondiscriminatory because it does not mention a specific religion but allows students to pray or meditate "in accordance with their own faith and consciences."

CALIFORNIA CITY TO REMOVE DECADES-OLD CHURCH DIRECTORY SIGN TO AVOID APPEARANCE OF PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY

(CH)-- According to the Los Angeles Times the city of Coronado, California, will be removing a church directory sign from city property. The sign has been on the property since the 60s, and its removal is being prompted by "First Amendment concerns." The concerns first arose when Ryan Meoni, a 20-year-old who grew up in Coronado, complained to the Freedom From Religion Foundation about the sign's use of the word "church." Meoni later explained that he didn't like the word "because, in his opinion, it excludes religious institutions that meet in temples or mosques." As his intention was simply to get the one word replaced, Meoni was surprised when his complaint brought even farther-reaching consequences. According to the Freedom From Religion

Foundation, the inclusion of only Christian churches on the list "could give the appearance that Coronado promotes Christianity over other faiths." And, as the organization expressed in a letter to the city, this raises "serious constitutional concerns under the Establishment Clause." University of San Diego Law Professors cited in the article shared their concerns that taking no action to change or remove the sign could lead to serious social and political issues in the future. Coronado Mayor Richard Bailey even "cited possible 1st Amendment lawsuits." One San Diego attorney, Charles LiMandri, had a different take on the issue. "I'm not sure at this point why they need to do anything," he stated. "Removing it could be a violation by showing hostility toward a religion." This hostility toward Christian groups, he suggested, could open up a whole new can of worms, soliciting lawsuits from the churches affected by the sign's removal. In an attempt to avoid the appearance of discrimination, however, the city intends to install "a new directory ... [that is] inclusive of all organizations, including our faith-based ones" once the current directory is removed. If this is true, the people of Coronado will have to prepare themselves for a pretty large sign since Coronado has around 90 "community organizations." And that's just the ones listed in Facebook search results.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS TEACHER IS FIRED FOR SHARING BIBLICAL VIEW ON HOMOSEXUALITY WITH STUDENT

(CBN)--A teacher in the UK was fired for answering honestly when a student questioned her about her beliefs about homosexuality. According to CBN News, Svetlana Powell had been a teacher for 17 years. She was dismissed from her position at T2 Apprenticeship

Academy in Bristol, England and even reported as a "radicalization threat" to an anti-terrorist government watchdog group. The controversy began when Powell was asked by one of her students about her views on homosexuality. The student reportedly identified as a lesbian. Powell responded that, as a Christian, she believes that the Bible makes it clear that homosexuality is against God's will. However, she went on to tell the student that God loves her. Shortly following this conversation, Powell was terminated for "gross misconduct."

BIBLE BURNING IN SOUTHERN INDIA SHOWS DEPTH OF HOSTILITY TOWARD CHRISTIANS

According to Morning Star News, Hindu extremists in southern India issued harsh threats to Christians distributing Bibles before snatching their car keys, taking Bibles out of their vehicle and setting the Scripture on fire. "From now on, if any of you distribute Bibles, we will attack you brutally," one of the Hindus warned the Christians. "How dare you promote Christianity?" One of the assailants then poured fuel as his colleagues instructed him to pour it on the copies; he then lit a matchstick and set the Bibles on fire.



Watching, Waiting, Working

(This article is taken from *Watching and Waiting*, Nos 2 and 3, 1919. The author's name has not been given.)

On all hands we hear much about "Watching for the Lord;" and there are also many periodicals of a religious character which continually insist upon the necessity there is for watching.

But one seldom hears, or reads of, the way in which this is to be done, and the consequences is that for want of an intelligent apprehension of the truth about it, many true Christians are not "watching," in the Scriptural sense, at all. The object of this brief article is to show, if possible, from the Lord's own words, what He Himself intended when again and again He bid His disciples "**Watch.**"

"Watching" (Mark 13:33,37), "Waiting" (Luke 12:36), and "Working" (Luke 19:13; I Cor. 15:58) are correlated, and together comprise the right attitude of "**all**" (Mark 13:37) believers towards the Lord, the Church, and the World in this dispensation, the whole being the subject of constant prayer (Mark 13:33), without which they will be vain.

As a starting point we may note that in Mark 13:37, the Master, speaking to the twelve, says, "**And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.**" So it is clear that His teaching, as it relates to watching for His return, is meant not only for the Lord's disciples in the days of His flesh, but also for "all believers" during the interval between His departure and His coming again. This fact puts upon every child of God a definite responsibility which it would be wrong to ignore. Included in the "**all**," we ought to be among those who "**Watch.**"

Now watching is not a mere attitude of expectant waiting. Many believers make it so because of failure to appreciate the clear and definite teaching of Christ in all His prophetic utterances. Taking verse 35 of Mark 13 into consideration for a moment, we cannot but see how the "**therefore**" of that verse throws

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us back upon the Lord's teaching in the whole of the chapter.

It will be noticed that for the encouragement of **"all"** (v. 37) true watchers, the Lord tenderly and graciously says (v. 7) **"be not troubled."** Mr. B. W. Newton says that "the word translated 'troubled' means not so much the trouble or anxiety or fear, as that tumult of disorder of mind which arises from wrong and excited expectation" (*Notes on Matthew 24*). But it also means that there need be no care-full anxiety, since all is under Divine control.

How can we better have a "right expectation" than by receiving the very clear and definite testimony of our Lord Himself as to what constitutes real "watching"? This is given in response to the natural enquiry of the disciples as to "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming?"

In His reply Christ makes it plain that His disciples had to be (1) Watching against deception (vs. 5 and 6). Our Lord was making special reference in verses 5-8 to events which should occur soon after His departure, and which might lead them (and others who should **"believe on me (Him) through their word;"** (John 17:20) to think that His return was imminent, so He clearly tells them that **"the end shall not be yet"** (v. 7). In order that we too may be upon our guard, we have not only the Lord's warning in verses 22 and 23, but that of the Apostle Paul as well: **"Let no man deceive you by any means"** (II Thess. 2:3). Our one defense against deception, either as to men or matters, is found in what **"is written."**

In His reply to His disciples

Christ makes at plain that (2) Watching involves Testimony for truth (vs. 9-13) and that this would lead to suffering. That suffering was by no means confined to the apostles or to their days, and if there has been less of suffering to our time it is surely because God's people have been lacking in faithfulness. It is well also to note in passing that Christ did not promise a triumphant progress for the Gospel in this dispensation, but says that it "must first be preached among all nations." It is clear, therefore, that from the day of His departure until He comes again those who watch will seek also to obey this call to evangelize the nations, and thus give proof of their watchful obedience. This world-wide testimony for Truth---Gospel Truth, doctrinal and prophetic truth **"all things,"** (Matt. 28:20) would, and will, take time. But **"the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation"** (II Pet. 3:15), and for this reason among others we need to pray that we too may **"suffer with long patience unto the coming of the Lord"** (James 5:7, margin).

Addressing Himself to all believers (Mark 13:37) the Lord Jesus says in verse 14 of the same chapter **"when ye shall see."** It is obvious that only those who **"see"** in a literal sense who are on the spot. It is quite certain, however, that such an event as the Lord declares will fulfill Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27; 11:31) cannot take place without tidings of it reaching the whole world. This will be waiting and watching believers one of the **"signs"** which the Lord bids them to expect. Another is found in the **"affliction"** (v. 19) referred to as **"tribulation"** in verse 24--- In verse 23 the Lord says, **"I have foretold you all things."** Why, if

it is not that His people should be prepared and watching for their occurrence? Further, He foretells them in their order of happening and distinctly says that it will be **"after that tribulation"** (v. 24) that the **"Son of Man"** shall be seen **"coming in the clouds with great power and glory"** (v. 26).

So far from leading His disciples, and those who should believe on Him through their word, to look for His return at any moment, the Lord speaks of Himself **"as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work"** (v. 34). His people are to be careful in His absence to maintain a consistent testimony for Truth by word and deed, by life and lip, being engaged always in caring for **"whatsoever I (He) has commanded"** (Matt. 28:20). Thus will the interval of waiting be filled up with happy service for Him, and His people will know in that service His unfailing help and guidance since He has promised to be with them **"all the days, even unto the end of the age."** If, as some say, they will not then be here, we fail to understand what meaning can be given to such a promise, since it can only apply to believers.

Surely the words of verse 29, **"when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it (He) is nigh,"** should have all due weight with every child of God who is seeking to walk in the light of Truth! No one can watch intelligently for the return of our Lord and yet neglect His Own clear teaching as to the signs which are to precede it. Let us pray for grace and guidance that in this matter we may be faithful to Him Whose witnesses we are to be **"in these last days."**



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

WALKING WITH GOD

It is possible to walk with God. Examples of individuals walking with God are given in the Bible. God gives a qualification: **"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. Can two walk together, except they be agreed"** (Amos 3:2-3)? Speaking to the Jews, God tells why He dealt harshly with them at times. They were the only nation He had **"known."** Obviously God knows about all peoples, but this speaks of a special relationship. God's purpose in chastening the Jewish nation was to bring about their agreement with Him. Only when in agreement can two individuals or nations walk together. That is also true of those who would walk with God.

How does a sinner come to agree with God? He can do nothing of himself that will even please God. Proof: Paul wrote, **"... they that are in the flesh cannot please God"** (Romans 8:8). It must be that God has a way of bringing sinners into agreement with Him. He has given us His Word, the Bible, **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"** (I Cor. 2:14). So then the lost sinner will not and cannot receive Bible truth in a spiritually profitable way. He may know certain facts, but that is

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the extent of his experience. Until the Holy Spirit makes the sinner alive, the sinner has no ability to understand the Bible because it is **“spiritually discerned.”**

If we would walk with God we must be made to agree with what God says. Truth is what God says about a thing: not what some man says or thinks regardless of his appearance. The Bible warns us of men who go about, **“...transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works”** (II Cor. 11:13-15). That preacher who claims to be teaching the Bible may in fact be one of Satan’s ministers for they have the ability to look like **“ministers of righteousness.”** Beware!

The acid test of any man’s religion and teaching is this: is it in agreement with the Bible? In the last few hundred years many men and women have come upon the scene who have successfully fabricated their own doctrines. We say successfully because some of them have large followings. **“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of”** (II Pet. 2:1-2). Believe only what the Bible teaches!

THREE THINGS ABOUT THE LOVE OF GOD

One thing God has made known to us is that He loves. But that is only one facet of His character. We also read, **“For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God”** (Deut. 4:24).

The love of God is not infatuation. It is not based upon anything attractive or desirable in those He loves. God’s love is His determination to do good to its object, regardless of what it costs Him. Because of this Paul wrote to one church: **“But God commendeth his love toward us [His children], in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”** (Rom. 5:8). God did not wait until sinners repented or reformed or did anything to love them.

Three things need to be remembered about God’s love. First: it is an everlasting love and that love causes God to draw lost sinners to Himself. Proof: **“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee”** (Jer. 31:3). This never-ending love results in men and women being drawn by God’s power to Christ for Jesus 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”** (John 6:44). In other words, those whom God loves He saves by bringing them to Christ.

The second thing is that nothing can separate those He loves from that love. Paul wrote: **“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us [God’s children]**

from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39). God **“...hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”** (Heb. 13:5). If God is always with you you cannot get away from Him!

The third thing about God’s love is that it results in the rebuke and chastening of those whom He loves. The message of Jesus to one of His churches was, **“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent”** (Rev 3:19). Nothing here about God rebuking and chastening everyone. Nothing here about God loving everyone, but rather that those whom He loves He continues to deal with, rebuking and child-training them, even “spanking” them when they sin. The words of Hebrews 12:6-8 are plain: **“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards [illegitimate children not cared for by their father], and not sons.”** The people who are loved by God are continually dealt with by Him. God’s children are ever His and He never ceases to deal with them as Sons.

TWO CLASSES OF EXTREME ANGER

Extreme anger is often called wrath in the Bible. Anger often motivates humans to say and do hurtful things to others. Sometimes it even leads to murder and other horrendous crimes.

The Bible says: **“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain”** (Ps. 76:10). We

notice in this verse that the two statements made are sure and certain. **“Surely”** is the first word. Used here it tells us there is no doubt about the matter. The teaching of this verse is sure and settled.

The first statement tells us that man’s wrath is not out of God’s control. God allows extreme anger at times and places that suit Him and His purpose. Even the cruel and bloody murder of Christ happened because God determined beforehand to allow men to commit this sin. It suited His purpose. The Bible speaks of Christ and His murderers saying, **“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain”** (Acts 2:23). And again in Acts 4:27-29 we read these words addressed to God in prayer: **“For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”** We may be certain that God allows extreme anger if it accomplishes His purpose. It is sometimes permitted for good. This is true of all evil, both natural evil and moral evil.

The second statement is this: **“the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”** Any and all of the extreme anger of men that does not suit God’s purpose is kept from happening by Almighty God. He sometimes restrains the creature’s anger for good. This statement is also true of all evil, both natural and moral evil. By natural evil we mean diseases, earthquakes, tornadoes, famines,

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plagues and such things. God says, **“...shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it”** (Amos 3:6)? God does not cause moral evil, but does send and allow bad things to happen in the natural realm just as He allows sin.

From our text: **“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain,”** we are told anew what is demonstrated throughout the Bible – and that is this great truth: God is in absolute control of all things and all beings. He always has been and always shall be. We may be sure that if God is not in control of all things, He is not really in control of anything. No created being can do anything or cause anything to be done that the Creator has not by His “determinate counsel” planned and permitted. Men do **“whatsoever”** God’s hand and **“counsel determined before to be done.”** We may have absolute confidence in God who has all things in His absolute control.

WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

Division exists over this question. Many professing Christians say that certain outward acts result in salvation: “be baptized,” or “be baptized and take communion and you will be saved.” Others say sprinkling can be substituted for baptism and that will do. Many say “make a decision for Christ.” Do this! Do that! Work! Work! Work!

A jailer once asked Paul and Silas, **“...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”** (Acts 16:30-31). Both the

jailer and every individual in his household would be saved if each one believed.

The meaning of “believe” here does not mean just to believe about the Lord Jesus. James makes that clear. He wrote: **“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble”** (James 2:19). That kind of “faith” is just head-belief: the same kind of faith demons have. It does not save. This is the kind of faith that natural or unregenerate people are able to produce. Saving faith is different from that.

The kind of faith Paul and Silas told the jailer about is called, **“the faith of God’s elect”** in Titus 1:1. This is the kind of faith he wrote about when he said that sinners are saved **“...through faith; and that [faith is] not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”** (Eph. 2:8). Salvation by grace (undeserved love and favor) means that God does all and provides all in saving those whom He has chosen for salvation. Even the faith which connects a sinner to Christ is a gift worked in people by God.

Generally, when a preacher mentions “the elect” and similar words that point to the fact that it is God that does the choosing rather than man choosing God, people object. They disagree. But the Bible says: **“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”** (Eph. 1:4). So if you believe the Bible you must believe that those who are given saving faith were **“chosen” “before the foundation of the world.”** This is a humbling doctrine hated by the flesh. People want to believe that their salvation is in their hands.

The Bible says, **“Salvation is of the LORD”** (Jonah 2:9). God determined to save some. He

does it according to His plan. He provided all necessary to it. He initiates it in the sinner. And He completes it in each one whom He regenerates by His Spirit. In Philippians 1:6 Paul said so to the church in Philippi. He wrote: **“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”** God finishes everything He starts in those in whom He saves. The Lord Jesus is called both **“the author and finisher of our faith”** (Heb. 12:2). Have you **“the faith of God’s elect?”**

FLEE FROM IDOLATRY

Besides other terms, the Bible contains the words “idol,” “idols” and “idolatry” a total of 128 times. In I Corinthians 10:14, Paul wrote saying, **“Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.”** Idolatry was then and continues now to be a problem among professing Christians and in their churches. Because of this the children of God are instructed to run from idolatry in whatever form it raises its ugly head.

We often think that idols are made of wood or stone or metal and indeed often they are. But there are mental gods as well as metal ones. That which is venerated or worshiped in place of the true God of the Bible is idolatry. So, then, idolatry is not limited to bowing or kneeling or kissing or venerating statues or relics or so-called holy objects. It is first of all a mental attitude springing from a sinful heart.

Idolatry is the honoring of nature or natural, physical things or mental imaginations rather than the worship of God. The Bible says about sinful men: **“Who changed the truth of**

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

3-1-2018 to 3-31-2018

Beginning Balance \$1,804.25

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX 50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL 60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV 200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 300.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
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Faith B. C., Lynn, AR 12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME 20.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC 50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL 50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
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New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 100.00
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Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
Subscriptions 54.00
Anonymous 210.00
Dividing checks 300.00
Sub Total \$2,396.50
TOTAL \$4,200.75

EXPENDITURES:

Printing 490.00
Postage 574.69
Wages 2,300.00
FICA 175.96
Supplies 0.00
Dividing checks 300.00
Bank Charge 13.00
Total Expenditures \$3,853.65
ENDING BALANCE \$347.10



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

3-1-2018 to 3-31-2018

Beginning Balance \$913.06

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 200.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA 100.00
..... 525.00
TOTAL 1,438.06

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 451.00
Bank charge 0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 451.00
Interest +.01
ENDING BALANCE \$987.07

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Harmony Baptist Church of Godfrey, IL is seeking God's man to lead us forward. We are not a large congregation, but we have unity and a love for God and His truth. We are seeking a full time Pastor to lead us. You can learn more about us on our website: hbcgodfrey.com.

Interested candidates can contact Brother Dave Gaworski: davemaryb1@yahoo.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Wake Forest, NC is in need of a pastor. For more information, please contact Titus Dickerson at (919) 570-6178 or email info@sgbc-wakeforest.org.

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA is in search of a pastor.

For a statement of faith you can visit the church website at <http://GraceBibleBaptist.webhop.org> or <http://gracebbc.dyndns.org:81/>.

You may contact any of the following for more information: Keith Laurence (225) 664-3557, Lucien LeSage (225) 803-9710, Charlie Andrews (225) 200-1171, or Joey Newell (225) 772-9158.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is seeking a pastor. Please contact Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228 for more information.

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.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

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God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen (Rom. 1:25). Instead of worshiping the Creator, Jesus Christ, men and women often worship this or that created thing. Most pagan religions embrace the sun as an object of worship and engage in observance of solstices, etc. Basically such worship is connected with fertility rites – hence bunnies and eggs in the

springtime and evergreen trees in mid-winter, etc.

One test as to whether worship is idolatry is found in the manner in which worship is carried on. Again the Bible tells us, **“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing...”** (Acts 17:24-25). Whenever worship involves **“men's hands”** that is a sign of idolatry. After all, the Lord Jesus said, **“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him”** (John 4:23). Worship is one thing while service to God is another. Service may involve men's hands, but worship is first of all a spiritual matter. It can be accomplished only by a person who has been regenerated or made alive by the Holy Spirit in the new birth.

The second thing about worship is that it must be according to truth: not according to men's ideas or to what someone may sincerely believe is truth. This means that if we would worship God we must first of all have been

born from above: born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then we must know the truth and worship God according to it. John wrote, **“...no lie is of the truth”** (1 John 2:21). Any untruth we hold to makes our worship unacceptable. Flee idolatry!

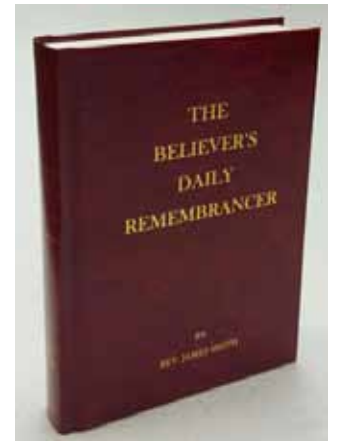


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