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EDITORIAL

The Power of the Gospel

We are living in a most powerful world today. Everything is being made for power and speed. Cars, Scooters, Trains, Aeroplanes, Machines, Music systems, Kitchen equipments; you name it, and nothing is advertised without power and speed. Men love speed and power. No longer we have to wait for the reply of a letter, but we can simply dial a number on the telephone and talk to a person in any city of the world. We can go anywhere in the world within a few hours by an Aeroplane. Man has also increased the power of his vision, and through a powerful telescope he can see things up in the sky which cannot be seen by naked eyes. Television has made things more simpler. We can now see things happening anywhere in the world, in our own sitting rooms. How amazing! A friend of mine from U.S.A. recently wanted to send me an urgent written message, which I received in Delhi promptly through the FAX machine! Most offices are now using computers everywhere in the world, which tells them the right position of the situation they want to know. Then, also think about the power of the nuclear warheads, missiles and atomic power, which exists and if used, can eliminate all life from the face of the earth within a few hours!

Almost two thousand years ago, when Christ walked on this earth, He had put this great question before men: "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36,37.) There is a great lesson for all of us to learn from these words of Christ. The Master Teacher.

was saying that man can become a great scholar, or a great scientist and he can have money and fame; or he might become a great ruler on earth; but when the time of his leaving the earth would come, nothing would be able to stop him from going or death. A man can become as powerful on earth that he could say that "I can do anything I want to do." But he cannot prevent his own death. He cannot escape the judgment of God. Because the Bible says, "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27.) Through his power man can achieve many goals on earth, but there is nothing he can do to save himself from his own sins, and from going into hell because of his sins. Job rightly pointed out when he said, "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he may gain much, if God takes away his life?" (Job 27:8.)

However powerful man might become on earth, he cannot boast of his power, because all man's power is limited. Man has discovered medicine and surgery and has been able to save people from diseases and early death for some time, but all the doctors and medicines of the world put together cannot stop one man from dying when death actually comes. If all ammunitions and explosives of the earth be brought together in one place and ignited, it might destroy all life on earth, but it does not have the power to harm one soul which is made in the image and after the likeness of God. Like God, we all are eternal beings. As souls or spirits we will always live. But we can lose our souls, said Christ, and there is nothing that we can give in exchange for the soul, or for saving the soul. There is no power on earth or of the earth that can save a soul from the destruction of hell because of sin.

But God did that which man was unable to do. He sent His powerful Word as Christ from heaven. (John 1:1-3, 14.) Christ, therefore, was called the Son of God. (John 3:16.) To prove that Christ truly was the Son of God, He allowed Him to be born of a virgin whose name was Mary. When Christ grew up to be a young man, He did so many wonderful works and taught such great lessons that men had to admit that He truly was the Son of God. (John 3:2; 6:14; Matthew 27:54.) Then by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, He became the object of ridicule and envy for men; therefore He was betrayed; falsely accused; and was put to death on a cross as a common criminal. (Acts 2:23.) When He was raised from the dead on the third day by the power of God, even His enemies, who had crucified Him, had to admit that He was not a mere man. After His resurrection Christ Jesus remained on earth for forty days, and then He was taken into heaven by His Father. But just before His ascension into heaven, Christ gave this great

command to His followers: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:15,16). The death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ for our sins is the Gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4.) The Gospel is the Good News! God saves us from our sins and gives us hope to go to heaven as righteous people, because of the death of Christ on the cross for sinners. Paul, in the Bible wrote, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved: **IT IS THE POWER OF GOD**". (1 Corinthians 1:18). He also said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, **FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION** for every one who believes..." (Romans 1:16).

Indeed there is no power like the Gospel power. It is the power of the Almighty God unto salvation for every one who believes in God and in His Son Christ, and obeys His Commandments to be Saved. (Mark 16:15,16)

Who is a Christian?

J.C. CHOATE

There are many people in the world who claim to be Christian. There are also many definitions of a Christian. Let's take a little time to see if we can find out what that name means and who that person is. We might be surprised with the answers we learn.

One is not a Christian just because he makes that claim. He may believe in God, and in Christ as being the Son of God, but that doesn't make him a Christian. He may have been "baptized" and "joined" some church, but that doesn't make him a Christian. He may be very religious, a liberal giver, a doer of good works, even a preacher, but that doesn't mean that he belongs to the Lord and that he can rightly wear the name of Christ. He may pray often, go to worship every Sunday, refrain from the works of the flesh, be well thought of and spoken of, with a good name, but still that does not necessarily make him a child of God and a Christian.

Now you may be surprised to hear such statements. You may conclude that I am judging and even condemning a lot of people, even people you know, and perhaps even you. If a person has done such things, most would emphatically declare that individual to be a Christian, and a very faithful Christian at that. But what you have overlooked, and

what most people overlook, is the fact that such a person might *have been deceived*, that he may and do all of the things mentioned, but if it is based on false teachings and false assumptions; it does not make him a Christian. The scriptures warn again and again that we be not deceived. In 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Paul warned, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, 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."

So, we come again to the question: Who is a Christian? As with any such question, we need to go to the scriptures for the answer. To look elsewhere would be a waste of time and we would not get the correct answer. According to God's word, then, a Christian is one who knows the will of God, believes in him, and believes in Christ as being the Son of God. (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6; John 14:1,2.) A Christian is one who has repented of his sins and confessed that Christ is the Son of God. (Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32,33.) He is one who has been baptized—immersed in water—for the remission of his sins. (Acts 2:38.) He is one who has been added to the Lord's church, the church which belongs to Christ and the one which wears the Lord's name. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 4:12; Romans 16:16.) The Christian is one who worships the Lord each first day of the week in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24; Acts 20:7.) He is one who abstains from the things of the world, lives a pure and godly life, does good to others, and is faithful to the Lord. (1 John 2:15,17; Titus 2:11,12; Revelation 2:10.) Of course in stating these things, we are going by the outward signs while the Lord knows the heart, and He will be the final judge. But when one obeys the Lord in these ways, and commits himself to God to this extent, the evidence would be as conclusive as possible to suggest that this person truly is a Christian, a follower of Christ.

What about you? How do you measure up to the things that have been said here? Have you obeyed the Lord? Are you a member of his church? Are you living daily for him? If not, we pray that you will obey Christ and be what he would have you to be. Show from the heart and by your life that you are a Christian. Remember that the Lord has promised that if you will confess him both with your mouth and by your life, then one day he will confess you before the Father in heaven. (Matthew 10:32,33; Colossians 3:17.) What greater acknowledgement could you hope for than that if you are truly a Christian?

"Women's Rights"

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

This is the age of change. World-wide communication through television, radio, magazines, and newspapers means that people from all part of the globe are learning about each other and are being influenced by each other.

Particularly has this been true of women in the past few years. We hear about "equal rights", "women's rights", and "freedom for women". In every nation, women are seems to be speaking out, sometimes in defiance and anger, demanding a change in the women's role.

Yes, it is a fact that often, often individually and in entire societies and cultures, women have been deprived. There are several reasons for this:

(1) Physically, women are not as strong as men. This can result in one of two things. Ideally, it will cause men to feel protective toward women, to bear the heavier load, to take the greater risks, to be responsible. 1 Peter 3:7 says, "Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel . . ." In Ephesians 5:25,28,29, Christian men are taught: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it . . . So ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church."

But customs, cultures, and religions differ. Often, because the woman has not been strong enough to defend herself, she has been mistreated by men. Sometimes husbands may regard their wives as servants, showing no love for them and no concern for their feelings.

(2) Women bear the children, so their role in life has differed greatly from men. Again, ideally, the husband will be the responsible person standing between his family and the world. While the wife takes care of the home and the children, the husband works at his job, earning money for his family's needs.

The scriptures teach us concerning a man's responsibility, in 1 Timothy 5:8, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an

unbeliever." A few verses further down (in 1 Timothy 5:14) we read about the role of women, that they marry, "... bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully." Peter described the godly woman as having a "gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (1 Peter 3:4) He said also that women should be submissive to their own husbands, and that their husbands, in turn, should, "... dwell with them with understanding."

But this has not always held true. In many cases and in many parts of the world, girls have been valued less than boys, and therefore their education has been inferior. In such cases, the girls who were forced by circumstances to work outside the home could not get skilled jobs with good wages. Often this task have been menial and hard. Sometimes they must take their children to the job site and be responsible for them even while they work. At the end of a long day of hard labour, they may be expected to prepare food, wash clothes, and do other tasks in the home. This kind of existence is far from the ideal God teaches in the Bible.

(3) Because men have filled the role of natural leaders, and because they have expected women to be more gentle, protected, and less aggressive, many jobs have not traditionally open to women. Seldom in history have women been national leaders. They have not usually gone into battle as soldiers. It was not customary for women to have jobs of authority over men, or to be put in positions where they would be embarrassed or threatened by men.

The Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians 11:3, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

This is the ideal. In the beginning God created woman to fit with man as his "help meet", or in other words, as the one who completed man. Concerning Adam, God said, "... It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him ... And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs; and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.'"

Sin brought about the change in their side-by-side relationship. When Satan tempted Eve, she listened to his logic and disobeyed God. Then she caused Adam to sin. As punishment for her disobedience, and also to protect her from being led astray by her trusting nature, God

placed her under the oversight and care of husband. Genesis 3:16 says, "... Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you."

In part because some men have abused their God-given privilege of leadership in the world, and in part because of general defiance of woman's God-given role in human society, women around the world are rising up to make new demands for themselves.

Some good changes are being made. Education for women has been beneficial for the family. There is a greater degree of mental and emotional sharing between the wife and husband. An educated woman can be a better mother for her children, filling their needs and helping them to develop.

Women have made great contributions in many areas. They have led the way in humanitarian services, in nursing, a volunteer work for the betterment of the needy and the aid of the sick. They have made great contributions in the fields of writing, art, research, education, and countless other areas.

But as "Women's Right" movements have pushed beyond God's ideal for women, serious problems have developed in many areas. The first area affected been the home. As large numbers of women work at public and professional jobs, marriage itself has been weakened. Competitiveness often develops between husbands and wives concerning income and the use of it. Women who work 8 to 10 hours each day outside do not have enough time to nurture the husband-wife relationship, or to make home life what it should be in marriage. In addition, having a separate income causes many women to feel an independence that creates barriers in marriage. Because of these factors, 1/4 to 1/2 of the marriages fail in many countries, ending in divorce. Adults and children suffer greatly as a result, victims of emotional problems, alcohol and drug abuse, child abuse, and many other wrongs.

Nations are destroyed in the destruction of the home. Women need to realize their supreme importance to the world, particularly as they discharge well their responsibilities in the home and family, as God planned.

The Author of Eternal Salvation!

DILLARD THURMAN

Of the multiplied millions who compose the denizens of earth, few realize the desperate need of a Saviour! Not only are they unaware of the need, they know nothing of their spiritual needs, nor of eternal

values. There exists the abysmal ignorance of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus! Even among many who claim to preach Christ, there is not a knowledge of God's clear, simple terms of salvation, and where His blessings are to be obtained. False teachers and spurious doctrines of men have muddled the waters of salvation, and have polluted God's fountain of truth! Lost men seek in vain for the salvation in Christ, but are often beguiled by sectarian creeds and dogmas! Yet the pure gospel of Christ, preached by men inspired of God, can be found by turning from the troubled waters of denominationalism, and going back to the original fountain opened in the days of the apostles; by accepting the terms set forth by men inspired of God!

THE KIND OF WORLD JESUS FOUND

Jesus came into a world steeped in sin and degradation! "As it is written, There is none righteous no, not one." (Rom. 3:10.) The terrible plight of the Gentile world was shown in Paul's charge: "*Yes were . . . without hope, and without God in the world.*" (Eph. 2:12.) The lurid catalogue of sins is listed in Rom. 1:18-32, and those sins still plague the sin-cursed world today! Jesus found this world hopelessly lost in iniquity. Paul states: "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" (Rom. 3:23.) Yet despite wickedness and degeneracy, God still loved man, and planned his salvation. "*But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Rom. 5:8.) This inimitable love is emblazoned in that which men call the Golden Text of the Bible: "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" (Jno. 3:16.) Here salvation is offered unto all men! However, it must still be recognized this salvation was circumscribed clearly: "*And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*" (1 Jno. 5:11.)

WHY ARE NOT ALL MEN SAVED?

Possibly the most hopeless and forlorn words in Holy Writ are: "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved*" (Jer. 8:22.) But why are people lost today? First, let us recognize that men are not lost because they have not believed in Christ! They were lost because of sin before He came! It is by faith in Christ that they may be saved; but they were in a lost state before faith came! Nor is one lost because he has not repented of sin! It was sin that condemned him (Isa. 59:1-2; Jas. 1:14-15): it is in repenting that one turns from sin. Too, it

should be known that no man is lost because he is not baptized. He is lost because of sin, but baptism is for remission of those sins! The whole principle of faith is pointedly shown in the words of *Jesus*: "*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*" (Jno. 3:17.)

Thus Jesus Christ came to save a world from its sins, and extend eternal salvation unto man. An angel promised: "*And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*" (Mt. 1:21.) It was because of this lost condition that He came into the world; "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*" (Lk. 19:10.) This moved Paul to write: "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*" (1 Tim. 1:15.) Here is the One who brought salvation down—and it is found from no other source! "*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" Only Jesus Christ can offer eternal salvation to the world that is now engulfed in sin!

MAKING OF A PERFECT SAVIOUR!

Jesus was pure, holy and apart from sin from the time He came into the world: but He was not a perfect Saviour! This perfection was to be gained, and at great cost! "*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man . . . to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*" (Heb. 2:9-10.) To be our perfect highpriest and captain of our salvation, it was necessary for Jesus Christ to attain perfection by the shameful death of the cross! Therefore Christ "*made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*" (Phil. 2:6-8.) How difficult it is for mortal man to grasp this voluntary condescension! But it was vitally essential in God's plan of salvation! "*Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*" (Heb. 5:8-9.) It was through His submissive obedience to the will of the Father that He could offer salvation to lost men!

His filial obedience is shown in His words, "*For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*" And at the close of His earthly stay, he could say: "*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*" (Jno.

17:4.) When on the cross. He said, *"It is finished,"* He had completed a perfect life of obedient service to His Father! At no time was there a wavering, or turning back!

VIEW THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION!

The culmination of His mission to earth is manifest in the **Death, Burial and Resurrection** of the Son of God! Our hope and trust is in God, *"if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead: who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."* (Rom. 4:24-25.) Here was the crowning glory of our redemption! *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."* (Rom. 5:10.) This great sacrifice epitomized the fulness of divine love! And this was Paul's unction in proclaiming the story! *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures."* (1 Cor. 15:3-4.) It was by this sacrifice that He *"by the grace of God should taste death for every man!"*

Never should we forget that an example of self renunciation has been left for us! *"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps."* (1 Pet. 2:21.) Do you know what that example binds upon us?

OBEYING THE FORM OF DOCTRINE DELIVERED

As Paul referred to the **Death, Burial and Resurrection** of Jesus Christ, there is a form of doctrine that lists the same for us. Paul wrote, *"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."* (Rom. 6:17-18.) Paul says they were made free by obeying the same form of doctrine he delivered; namely, death, burial and resurrection! How was this done? Read closely the first part of the chapter. *"How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection."* (Rom. 6:3-5.) Now, run that by

again and notice how graphically the **Death, Burial and Resurrection** is stated! Christ's death must color and mold our lives; *"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* (Rom. 5:15.) Obeying the form of doctrine (death, burial and resurrection of Christ) demands that we give our lives into His cause! Paul was to write. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* (Gal. 2:20.) Do you see what obedience embraces?

WHAT OUR OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST OBTAINS

It is in baptism that one comes into Christ and into His death (Rom. 6:3), where His blood was shed! This obtains for us forgiveness of sins. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."* (Col. 1:14.) It is by baptism into Christ that one becomes a child of God (Gal. 3:26-27); and is born into God's family. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* (2 Cor. 5:17.) One cannot enter into Christ, reach the saving blood shed in His death, become a new creature, nor enter the body (which is the church), but by being baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13.) Mark it carefully: no one has entered into Christ but by baptism, and no one is saved **OUTSIDE** of Christ (2 Tim. 2:10.)

Even yet, Jesus is crying, *"Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say."* (Lk. 6:46.) Jesus is the author of eternal salvation unto all who obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9.) Who will be blessed with His eternal salvation? Let his last words be heard again: *"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."* (Rev. 22:14.) Has your obedience made Him your Saviour?

Kangaroos And Koala Bears Cry Out: There Is A God!

SHARON SHEPHERD

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made

them all: the earth is full of thy riches." (Psalm 104:24.)

Indeed the earth is full of God's glorious creation. Let us look at some important traits of the kangaroo and the koala bear to show the creation of God.

KANGAROO

The Kangaroo is a remarkable animal. It is a native of Australia. A full grown kangaroo is as tall as a man and weighs about 200 pounds. The female has a big, deep pocket at the lower part of her body, this pouch or pocket has a circular ribbon of muscle around its mouth so that she can either draw it almost completely closed or open it wide. If it wasn't for this furry receptacle in which her baby can be stored after birth, the mother kangaroo could not possibly succeed in rearing her young. A baby kangaroo called a Joey is born about five weeks after being conceived, and is then a good deal less than one inch long. In fact, the incompletely formed little infant is so tiny that two or three like him could be put together in a teaspoon!

The pink, blind and totally helpless newborn kangaroo is such a "premature" baby that its body is actually semi-transparent. The only part of the baby kangaroo that is well developed and strong are its front feet. Just as soon as the tiny "Joey" is brought into life, it grips its mother's fur and by instinct starts heading towards the mother's pouch, which she has moistened to allow the Joey to slide easily down the abdomen. As soon as the young Joey is secured in the pouch, it takes hold of the mother's milk gland and hangs on to it, yet the infant kangaroo has no power to feed itself by sucking; the mother kangaroo actually pumps milk into the baby by using a special set of muscles.

We may wonder how the young kangaroo breathes and avoids choking, with milk continually being pumped into its gullet as it jounces along in its nursery. The explanation is that the mother has a specially adapted breathing apparatus, by which air can pass directly into the lungs through a passage having no direct connection with the mouth.

Four months after birth a kangaroo youngster grows a coat of fur and detaches itself from the constant milk supply. It starts peeping out the mother's now. When the Joey's mother stops to graze, it hops out to the ground and starts some nibbling on its own; but at any sign of danger, the Joey makes a rush for the pouch and dives in head-first; then it must scramble around in order to get right-side-up again.

When the Joey has grown more, it starts hopping along side of the mother for longer and longer periods of time, strengthening its legs in the leaping skill that enables a grown kangaroo to make a thirty foot

broad jump over ten feet high. The Joey only takes refuge in the mother's pouch again when serious danger occurs. If the mother should be run down and captured, the Joey is very unlikely to be captured too, because the mother's strategy when she finds herself hard pressed is to lift her baby out of her pouch and tumble it into a hiding place as she races and leaps along. If she finally manages to escape her enemies she will quietly return to retrieve her waiting offspring. (H.S. Stuttman Co., The Illustrated Library of Nature, pages 68-70.)

The stages of an infant to a full-grown kangaroo is indeed great. The stages fit together perfectly. There was a perfect God who created the kangaroo.

KOALA BEAR

Now let us look at the koala bear. The koala bear is a native of Australia. It is a slow, gentle, woolly-coated animal that climbs around in eucalyptus trees. The mother koala has a baby, as a rule, at intervals of two years, and only a single baby. The little koala stays in its fur-lined cradle only a short time, until the mother transfers it to her furry back. There the young koala spends its whole childhood, riding and climbing. The young koala continues to cling to its mother until it is almost half as big as she is. When it comes time for the baby to be weaned from a milk diet to eucalyptus leaves; the food which full-grown koalas eat exclusively, the mother helps it through the transition by one of the strangest features in any animal childhood. Her body develops a temporary power to make eucalyptus "pap." This "vegetable soup" is produced only for a month or so, every two or three days, and only at a special time in the afternoon. (H.S. Stuttman Co., The Illustrated Library of Nature, pages 70-72.)

The koala bear stages are indeed extraordinary also. The changes of the bear's body is unexplainable. God's creation is glorious in everything!

Through these two remarkable animals, God's craftsmanship and creation is very much seen. The traits of such animals as these could not come from nothing. There had to be a beginning of these perfectly fitted together traits and bodies of the kangaroo and the koala bear. The Bible concludes the matter in Psalm 72:19 which says "And let the whole earth be filled with his glory." In Jeremiah 51:15, "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding hath he stretched out the heavens."

"Drop Our Traditions? Impossible!"

RAY RODENBECK

Shortly after I had become a member of the church of Christ, my brother-in-law and I attended a special meeting in which the highest official of one of the world's larger denominations was speaking. He had just returned from the Vatican, and he was relaying information about an audience he had with the Pope. The subject of their meeting was ecumenism, or world-wide religious unity. He was acquainting us with the steps his denomination had made in their effort to unite with the Roman Catholic Church. As a young Christian, I was intrigued by the subject, and I was especially awed by such "important people." However, this man soon changed my opinion of him and his subject.

Immediately following his speech, the speaker granted time for anyone to ask questions. My brother-in-law ventured this question. "In all your conversations with the Pope, and in your own religious organization, has anyone ever made the suggestion that you drop all man-made organization, has anyone ever made the suggestion that you drop all man-made traditions and merely return to the simplicity of the New Testament church as told about in the Bible?" His answer so deeply impressed me that I shall never forget it. This great denominational leader replied, "Let me see now if I understand your question. Are you suggesting that we return to the archaic church of the first century and drop all of our traditions? Impossible!"

The chief problem of the Jewish church at the time of Jesus was also binding man-made traditions. They placed so much emphasis on their own commandments that they forgot what religion and God were all about! As a result, they could not identify the Messiah when he stood right in front of them. Jesus said of them, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:8-9.) Were the traditions of the Jews acceptable to God? Did God just overlook them? The fact was that God was not at all pleased when they elevated and bound man-made traditions. As a result, Jesus said their religion was in vain. **IT WAS WORTHLESS!!!**

This denominational leader my brother-in-law and I listened to stated that his group could not drop its many hundred years of accumulated man-made customs and traditions, he spoke the truth. They were so bound by those things that they knew no other way.

Everything about his church revolved around traditions which had little or no scriptural basis. Besides all that, they could not afford financially or pride-wise to make such a radical change and to just follow God's word. In truth though, spiritually, they could not afford to not drop those things.

God's word says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16,17.) The Bible is our God-given authority and guide for all that the church teaches and does. There is no other authority we can put our confidence in: not tradition, not emotion, not "I think", and not the words of "Powerful" men.

Jeremiah had the answer 2600 years ago. He said, "Ask for the old paths." He said to ask for God's way. (Jeremiah 6:16) Jude pleaded, "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) What? Drop man-made traditions and return only to the Bible way? God's way? Absolutely!! Let us restore New Testament Christianity!

Man-made traditions are a problem that blocks man's worship of God, and according to Christ's words, makes such worship unacceptable. Any commandment of men bound as law violates God's command. Let's restore the New Testament church. Let's do it God's way. Man's way just does not work.

The Heart Breaking Of Sin

JOSEPH AMPORFUL

"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 his heart." (Genesis 6:5-6.)

The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1.) After God had worked for six days, he crowned his effort with a beautiful woman for Adam. And the Bible says, "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. (Genesis 1:31.)

It was not long until man whom God had created in "his own image" began to sin against his Creator. When the sin of man became so grievous, the scripture says "it repented the Lord that he had made man." God punished man with the flood.

God sent King Saul to ". . . go and smite Amalek and utterly

destroy all that they have and spare not." (1 Samuel 15:3.) But in the same chapter we are told that he brought back to Israel King Agag. He also brought some fattings of the land to be sacrificed unto the Lord. "Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel saying, it repented me that I have set up Saul to be the King: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night." (1 Samuel 15:10-11.)

In both instances above, the offender refused to repent. When Noah preached during one hundred and twenty years and the people failed to give heed to his preaching (1 Peter 3:20) God destroyed them with water, saving only eight souls. In the second instance Saul justified himself saying, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." (1 Samuel 15:13.) But he did just the opposite. Such acts always break the heart of many godly men.

When Ezra learned that many of the Israelites had married heathen women (a practice strictly forbidden by God), he rent his clothes, pulled hair from his head and wept and prayed. Many people were so moved by this that they wept with him. And, well, they should! Sin is a terrible thing! It offends the Lord, it grieves spiritual sensitive people, and it brings untold misery to those who transgress God's commandments. In this very instance the men of Israel had to send their foreign wives and their children back to their home land, which must have caused great pain. But this drastic step was necessary to keep the nation of Israel from spiritual disaster.

Some husbands are breaking the hearts of their wives and children for continuous indulgence in drinking, failing to provide for them, etc. (1 Timothy 5:8.) Many wives are causing the same mess by nagging, fretting and sulking. Some children are disobeying their parents to break their hearts. In these instances, the church is no exemption. Many members are breaking the hearts of elders and preachers, when they sin grievously. Some elders and preachers do the same.

If you have not obeyed the gospel to become a Christian you are breaking the heart of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. You can make God happy today. (Luke 15:7.) Repent of your sins, confess your faith in Christ and be immersed into Christ to save yourself from this disaster. (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27.) God does not treat sin lightly.

Friend, whether you be a Christian or not, you and all of us need to have a deep sense of grief over our sins. People caught in the snare of sin subject themselves to great burden. Let us never underestimate the heartbreaking of sin! For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:31.)

Is The Message Being Sounded Forth?

KEVIN L. JENKINS

The way in which we hear music today has changed quite a bit from the way we heard music years ago. Most all music these days is amplified, made louder and broadcast further than the original sound of the instrument. If it were not for these amplifiers, many of these sounds would never be heard by most of the audience.

The Bible speaks about amplification, or the sounding forth of the gospel. In 1 Thessalonians Paul wrote to a church who he says had "sounded forth" the word of the Lord throughout Europe, especially Macedonia and Achaia. Let us look for a moment at this great church.

They were a working church. (1:3.) Their faith created inside of them a desire to do great works for the Lord.

They considered the work they were doing to be a labor of love. They needed no constant badgering or threatenings in order for them to carry out their task. A labor of love will be done willingly; gladly, and effectively.

The church of Thessalonica became imitators of both the apostles and of Christ. It would be hard for a person to live the life of Christ and do the work of Christ if he were not able to imitate the lifestyle of Christ.

For these reasons, and perhaps more, the message of Christ was "sounded forth" throughout Macedonia and Achaia by the church at Thessalonica.

As we look at the example of this great church, we must look at ourselves to determine if the same things could be said about us. Does our faith cause us to work? Do we consider our labor a labor of love? Are we doing all in our power to see that the message is "sounded forth?"

He Gave Thanks!

J. ROY VAUGHAN

For a long time some brethren who were asked to offer thanks for the bread and the fruit of the vine when serving at the Lord's table failed to do this. They often prayed a beautiful prayer but they failed to give thanks for the bread and the fruit of the vine. Is it carelessness or

ignorance? In either case it is bad and should be corrected. Men who lead the church in worship should be thoughtful and serious minded and whatever they do they should think soberly, lest they turn the worship into a meaningless performance, displeasing to God and the worshippers.

Paul said, "The Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you; this do in remembrance of me." (1 Corinthians 11:23-24.)

Luke wrote, "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19.)

Matthew recorded, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28.)

Mark said, "And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he break it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye; this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them; and they all drank of it." (Mark 14:22, 23.)

From these scriptures we understand that the Lord Jesus gave thanks both for the bread and the cup. And this is what we should do when we are asked to serve at the Lord's table. It is not an occasion for us to pray a long prayer, expressing our gratitude to God for his wonderful love manifested in the gift of his Son who died for us, etc., etc. Which no one would contend that it is a sin to include such words in our prayer at the Lord's table, we should certainly not leave the impression that this is what we should do on this occasion to the neglect of giving thanks for the bread and the fruit of the vine.

Some prayers at the Lord's table remind us of the man who at the dinner table thanked God for the rain and the sunshine, for the harvest and the reaping and the reapers, for those who have prepared the good dinner for us, and never offers thanks for the dinner!

Occasionally we hear a brother ask God to "bless this bread," as though God would shower some special blessing upon it. But when we read the records it is easy to understand that when Jesus blessed the bread he simply gave thanks for the bread. To contend that he did more than this is to contend that he did two things, "blessed it and gave thanks. The Scriptures teach us to give thanks for the bread and the cup, not to ask God to bless it.

I recall hearing a grand old preacher say many years ago that he had rather hear a brother say at the Lord's table, "Heavenly Father, we thank thee for this bread. In Jesus' name, Amen," than to hear him pray a beautiful prayer and never thank the Lord for the bread and the fruit of the vine. We would therefore emphasize that at the Lord's table we are to give thanks. There are other occasions during the worship period when we have opportunity to pray for, and about, other things.

If you are guilty of this error, have the courage and good sense to admit and correct it. The Lord will be pleased and you will grow in the knowledge of the truth. But, if you try to justify yourself in your error, then please excuse yourself when asked to lead the brethren in giving thanks at the Lord's table and let someone serve who will follow the Lord's example.

Victory In Gethsemane

THOMAS R. BOLEY

This was really a trying hour for the Lord. His agony in the garden could foreshadow his suffering on the cross. (Luke 22:7-15.) He asked Peter, James and John to watch with him while he prayed. Jesus told them "my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." (Mark 14:34.) Jesus was facing a crucial hour.

Jesus went a little farther and fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible the hour might pass from him. (35.) This prayer he prayed three times, saying the same thing. But his disciples were heavy with sleep. He said to them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Even while Jesus spake, Judas came with a "great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people." (Matthew 26:47.) Verse 38 tells us that Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss. (For more emphasis read John 18:2-14.)

Some one said that Satan is glad to rock the cradle of the sleeping saint. Would I have slept if I had been there? Did they think that Jesus with his small band of disciples would be able to fight against the multitude? Jesus could have called twelve legions of angels. (Matthew 26:53.)

Jesus felt pain just as you and I. As a human being he may have thought that God would change his plan. In John 5:30 Jesus said, "I can

of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." This was his aim throughout his life. But as he approached his final hour, the flesh cried out in agony for a possible change. Yet he was submissive to his Father's will. (Matthew 26:39.) "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (Luke 22:44.) Verse 43 tells us that "there appeared an angel from heaven, strengthening him."

When Judas came to identify Jesus to his enemies. Jesus said, "Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him." (Matthew 26:50.) "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled." (56.) They who took Jesus, led him to the high priest, Caiaphas, "where the scribes and the elders were assembled." (57.) Judas is said to have betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, but he really sold himself into suicidal death. (Matthew 27:3-7.) God came to the rescue of his Son, even though he died.

Victory Through The Cross

DOWELL FLATT

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30.) This is the completion of the Son loving his own to the end. (John 13:1.) It is related to his accomplished work. (John 17:4.) In this loving work, the Son became engaged in a comprehensive, victorious, and voluntary completion of the will of the Father.

1. A COMPREHENSIVE COMPLETION

Matthew, Mark, and Luke mention that Jesus died with a shout on his lips. (Matthew 27:50, Mark 15:37, Luke 23:46.) Though John does not mention the shout, he gives the content of the last words of Jesus on the cross: "It is finished." (Translated from Greek, *telelestai*.) This usage of the perfect passive indicates that the work has been finished and remains finished. This completed state denotes an action which has been brought to its termination.

A number of key things were finished in this comprehensive completion. All of his sufferings were over. The multitude of prophecies which had been spoken concerning these events had been fulfilled. (John 19:28-29.) The will of the Father had been obeyed. This is similar

to the "It is done" of Revelation 16:17. The power of sin had been broken; the world had been overcome. (John 16:33.)

2. A VICTORIOUS COMPLETION

"It is finished. Did Jesus say this in a sense of defeat or victory? The loudness of the cry seems to indicate the latter view. Different from the world, Jesus looked upon death as a victory. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32; compare 16:33.) In contrast to the medieval concentration on the physical sufferings of the crucifixion, the inspired New Testament writers looked upon his death as a trophy, good medal, sign of victory, and demonstration of the very "power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18.) "It is accomplished" is close to the literal meaning of this victorious shout.

3. A VOLUNTARY COMPLETION

Two final actions of the Son completed the scene. "And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30b.) This same expression was used to describe going to bed. Though the Son of man had nowhere to lay his head in life (Matthew 8:20), he found a place on a wooden beam in his death.

It is important to note the voluntary aspect involved in the Son bowing his head (Greek *paradidomi*—really meaning "giving over"). He expressed his willingness to die, demonstrating that "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (John 10:11.) This attitude was demonstrated in the actions of the Son. He had gone to Judea knowing that the Jews were seeking to stone him. (John 11:7-8.) With death staring in full view (John 11:16), Jesus chose to go to Judea.

The statement of John 19:30 notes the completion of the Son loving his own to the end. It was a comprehensive, victorious, and voluntary completion. With full knowledge of the coming results, the Good Shepherd had gone to Judea to "lay down his life for the sheep."

Christian Soldiers Must Endure

KYLE MCWHORTER

A Christian is a soldier in the army of the Lord. This army is an all volunteer army. The conditions of induction are obedience to the commands of the gospel of Christ. (Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.) Having obeyed the Lord in these matters, one has

entered the church or the Lord's army. One then must be sure he puts on the whole armour of God. (Ephesians 6:10-20.)

having put on the Christian soldier's armour, one is ready to endure the hardships as a good soldier of Christ. Paul said to Timothy, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:3-4.)

Yes, one who is a soldier of Christ must be able and willing to endure many hardships in the great fight of faith. Christians are engaged in a great struggle of life and death. The battle will be long and difficult. One must be prepared to endure!

MUST ENDURE THE RIGORS OF TRAINING

One who would become a good soldier in the Lord's army must undergo rigorous training to properly prepare himself for the great battle for truth. Preparation is essential in every undertaking that is worthwhile. The Army calls its preparation programmes as Basic Training. One cannot be a successful fighter without proper preparation.

Moses, the great law giver, spent eighty years in preparation for forty years of work as the leader of the people of Israel. Jesus spent thirty years of his life preparing for the three years of work he did during his personal ministry. Jesus prepared his apostles by teaching them the principles of the kingdom of heaven while he was with them. He then promised them that the Holy Spirit would come and guide them into all truth, and bring to their remembrance what he had said to them. (John 14:26; John 16:13.)

The man who is to become a successful fighter in the Lord's army must spend many strenuous hours in careful and prayerful Bible study. (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:13-16.) Not only must one study the Bible, but he should also study books written by the brethren. He must be an avid reader, and be able to assimilate the truths and great principles that the men of God in the past and present have written concerning God, Christ, the Bible, and the church. Only by having prepared himself thusly, can he win the battles of the future for the Lord. "Christian soldier, prepare yourself for the fight!" Anyone who is not willing to endure the rigors of preparation is not fit to be a soldier in the great army of Prince Emanuel!

MUST ENDURE THE HEAT OF THE BATTLE

The Christian soldier is never on furlough. The battle lines between truth and error have been drawn. There is no neutral ground.

upon which one can stand. The soldier of the Lord must fight. Paul said, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called and has professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:12.)

The fight must be waged against every form of error, both in the church and without. Every sin must be exposed and denounced by the faithful soldier. The heat of the battle or battles may be awesome. One may lose friends whom he had cherished for years. His own kinfolks may turn against him. There may be times, after a great battle has been fought, when sleep may flee from his eyes. These things come as a result of the heat of the battle for truth and right. The Christian soldier may, and will feel the heat, but he must endure it.

MUST ENDURE PERSECUTION

Jesus Christ came into the world as a great teacher come from God. (John 3:1-2.) He taught and spake as never man spake. (John 7:46.) Through his teaching he sought to reach the Jewish leaders of his day, with the great truths about the coming Kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14-15; Mark 9:1.) Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, calmed the raging sea, and raised the dead. Jesus was a man who went about doing good. (Acts 10:38.) Yet, the world hated him. (John 16:18.) The religious leaders of that day were so filled with hatred and envy toward Jesus they had him put to death on a cross.

The apostles of Christ were given the Great Commission by the Lord. That commission was to take the gospel to the whole creation. (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:19-20.) These apostles were faithful to the charge given to them by the Lord. In about twenty-five years these stalwart men of faith had preached the gospel to every creature under heaven. (Colossians 1:23.) However, they had to face fierce opposition and persecution from many quarters. Some of them were slain, others were severely beaten, and driven from city to city. One of them was banished to the lonely Island of Patmos. (Acts 12:2; Acts 14:19-20; Acts 16:19-24; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28; Revelation 1:9.)

Since our Lord was crucified on the cross of Calvary, and his apostles were so sorely mistreated and persecuted, one need not think today that the Christian soldier's life will be easy. Paul said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12.) If the battle is to be won for truth and right, the Christian soldier must endure persecution. It will surely come.

MUST ENDURE DISCOURAGEMENT

The Christian soldier who fights bravely for the cause of the Lord will sometimes become discouraged. The Lord himself must have become discouraged when he found Peter, James, and John sleeping after he had asked them to watch with him in the garden of Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:40.) The peerless apostle to the Gentiles was in the cold damp prison in the city of Rome. He expected to die at the hands of the executioner. The disciples had all forsaken him except Luke. (2 Timothy 4:6-11.) This must have been a very discouraging thing for this old soldier of the cross. However, Paul did not complain.

There are many things that cause one to become discouraged today.

1. So many people are so unconcerned about the salvation of their souls. The preacher can teach and preach his heart out, and people will just look at him with that "so what" attitude. This lack of concern is seen also in the lives of members of the church. Indifference was a characteristic of the church at Laodicea. (Revelation 3:14-20.) Perhaps, more souls are going to be lost eternally because of this indifferent attitude than any other single thing.

2. Churches seem to be plagued with so many problems. One can hardly find a congregation of the Lord's people that doesn't have some kind of special problem. Most of the time it is not over false doctrine, but rather personal differences. Many times an entire generation has to die before the problem is solved.

3. It is difficult to get some Christian to attend the services faithfully. A lot of the energy that could be used to convert the alien sinner must be expended in being "nursemaids" to weak church members. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:8.)

4. Sometimes those who have been faithful for years drift away from the faith. (Hebrews 2:1-4.) It is a sad and discouraging thing to see members of the church make shipwreck of their faith. (1 Timothy 1:19.) Yes, these things and more are discouraging to the soldier of the cross. However, the valiant soldier will always look to Jesus. (Hebrews 12:1-3.) He will endure any hardship to gain the glorious victory through Jesus our Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58.) Such a soldier knows that only those that endure unto the end will be saved. (Matthew 24:13.)