

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## EDITORIAL

### ***When Christ Comes Again***

After His vicarious death for sinners and His subsequent resurrection from the dead, as Christ had finished giving His Great Commission to the disciples, He was, the Bible says, taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight. "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, men of Galelee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven. This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11). Almost two thousand years have passed since those words of God's messengers were recorded in the Bible, and through the years many theories have evolved concerning Christ's coming. Men have set dates of His second coming, declared the purpose of his coming that He would come to reign on the throne of King David in Jerusalem for one thousand years. A peculiar word "Rapture" is being extensively used to emphasize the coming of Christ. Preachers are telling people "that Christ will soon appear to take the saved from the earth for a seven years rapture. During this seven years the unsaved on earth will face a period of great tribulation, they will suffer. And after seven years Christ will come back on earth with raptured saints, then the righteous dead will be resurrected, and Christ will then reign the world from earthly Jerusalem sitting on King David's literal throne!" But what does the Bible say concerning Christ's second coming and His purpose? We should be interesting in knowing what God has said in the pages of the Bible on

this subject. As Paul said, "Let God be true but every man a liar." (Romans 3:4).

First, no man on earth can ever predict when Christ will come. Because Christ Himself declared, "But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (Mark 13:32).

Second, at Christ's coming all, both righteous and the wicked, will be made alive at the same time, the same hour. Again, we hear Christ say, "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." (John 5:28,29).

Third, Christ will never come back to this earth again, because when He will appear, this earth, and that includes Jerusalem, and the works that are in it everything will be burned up. Listen to this, as we read from 2 Peter 3:9 & 10: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens (sky) will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; BOTH THE EARTH AND THE WORKS THAT ARE IN IT WILL BE BURNED UP." There will be no more earth, as we know it, when Christ comes again.

Fourth, Christ will appear in the clouds, up in the air, just as He went, where His saved people will meet Him. We are reading now from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, and this is what it says: "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."

Fifth, since flesh and blood, the natural body, will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50), the resurrected bodies of both the righteous and wicked will be changed to spiritual and immortal bodies at Christ's coming. Paul said, discussing the resurrection of the

dead, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.....It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.....Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Corinthian 15:42, 44, 50-53).

Sixth, when Christ comes, all people will appear before Him to be judged and rewarded. As Christ Himself revealed, "When the Son of man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him then He will sit on the throne of His glory, and all the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides His sheep from the goats." (Matthew 25:31). The Apostle also said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Seventh, there will be only two category of people before the Lord on that day, the saved and the unsaved. The unsaved will hear Him say to them: "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:46). Time, as we know of, will be no more. There will be the unending eternity for both the wicked and the righteous. Hell is described in the Bible as the lake which burns with fire and brimstones; a place of outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth and it is also called the second death. Christ in His preaching warned His listeners by saying, that if your hand or your foot makes you sin then cut it off because it will be better for you to enter life in heaven maimed or lame than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.(Mark 9:42-45). He also said, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28). Notice, both soul and body will be cast into hell for eternal punishment. And the same will be true of heaven, where both soul and body will enter into the eternal joy of the Lord. Of course, those bodies will be resurrected, changed, spiritual and immortal bodies, as we have already observed.

Eight, Christ is not coming to begin His reign on earth, but to put an end to all rule and all authority and power that was given to Him by the Father after His resurrection. (Matthew 28:18). Listen to this as we read from the fifteenth chapter of the book of first Corinthians: "For as in

Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive..... Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For He (God) has put all things under His (Christ's) feet. But when He (God) says, all things are put under Him (Christ), it is evident that He (God) who put all things under Him (Christ), is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him (God), Then the Son (Christ) Himself will also be subject to Him(God) who put all things under Him (Christ), that God may be all in all." ( 1 Corinthians 15:22, 24-28). Did you notice that it says "He must reign till. . . " and that at His coming He will deliver His kingdom, the church, to God, when He will put an end to all rule, authority and power? How can He put an end to them if He doesn't have them now? When Christ was produced before Pilate and Pilate wanted to know about His kingdom, "Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world...." If He didn't have a kingdom then why did He say "My kingdom is?" When Pilate further asked Jesus if He was a king? Christ didn't deny that, But said, "You say rightly that I am a king." (John 18:36, 37). Christ is the King now. He has a kingdom, all those who follow Him make up His church, they are His subject, ruled by Him through His New Testament will of the Bible.

I hope these things will help you understand the purpose of the Lord's second coming, and that you will no longer be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness. Let me also remind you what the Lord had said at Matthew 24:44, He said, "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him." Are you ready to meet Him?

## ***Dreaming for the Lord's Work***

**J.C. CHOATE**

I have worked for the Lord for many years. I have seen his cause spread to many parts of the world. I have seen it spread in this part of the world. And yet, we have only begun in relation to what we needed to do

I have had many dreams for the Lord's work. When I refer to dreams, I am speaking of hopes and aspirations for it. I have seen many

of my dreams come true. I have longed for many things to come to pass and they have. That's what I mean about dreams coming true.

Still, I have many dreams that I am hoping will become reality in my life time. Maybe you have some dreams too. I hope you do. We can also describe them as goals.

Here are some of my dreams:

1. I am dreaming that the gospel will continue to be preached and that the cause of Christ will spread to every part of this country.
2. I am dreaming that the Lord's cause will spill over into neighbouring countries.
3. I am dreaming that more preachers will work to establish self-supporting congregations.
4. I am dreaming that the members of numerous congregations will learn the meaning and joy of giving so that their home congregation can fully support their own preacher and also they can help others with their work.
5. I am dreaming of the time that more congregations will have men who can qualify to serve as elders and deacons. (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1).
6. I am dreaming of the time when preachers and congregations will work together to help and encourage each other in the Lord's work.
7. I am dreaming of the time when the church here will not be so dependant on foreign brethren but will practice autonomy and self-sufficiency in its work.
8. I am dreaming of the Christians being strong enough in number and in financial ability to have their own schools and colleges to train and educate their young people.
9. I am dreaming of the day when more Christians will use their ability to write articles and sermons for our gospel magazines.
10. I am dreaming of the day when all congregations will recognize their need for Bible classes and will do a better job of attending them.
11. I am dreaming of the time when the ladies of the church will be more fully used in teaching ladies classes, children's classes, speaking to ladies meetings, and such like.

Yes, I am dreaming, and I will continue to do so. I want to see Christians grow and for the church to be strengthened. I want to see brethren make plans and set goals and take initiative to carry out their

plans and to reach their goals. Actually, we are dealing mainly with negatives. We convince ourselves that we can't do this and we can't do that. Where is our faith? Listen, with the Lord's help we can do anything we want to do, and we can succeed. We just need to open our eyes, see the need, and go to work to bring it to pass.

It is time for us to quit thinking of ourselves as small, weak, and unable to support ourselves. As individuals and families, we do amazing things. We support ourselves, we go into debt to get what we want, we have houses or rent rooms and apartments, we get our education, and we improve our situation over a period of time. Now if we can do these things on our own or as families, if a number of us join together in a congregation, what is to keep us from having enough funds generated through our contributions, and enough man-power and woman-power, to do what ever we set our minds to do? Then on top of all of that, there is the Lord to help us and to bless our efforts with success. So I am dreaming that we fill ~~see~~ our potential and that we will take full advantage of our assets, our abilities, and of the Lord's blessings to enable us to move forward.

What are your dreams? And what are you doing to help make them to come true?

We need to begin with ourselves. Do you remember what Paul said? He said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13). Now don't you think that if Paul could have that kind of confidence, that we can too? Certainly so? The question, is what are we waiting for? Let's dream, but let's also help make those dreams come true.

*Especially for Women*

## ***"Wastefulness—Plenty In The Midst Of Scarcity"***

**BETTY BURTON CHOATE**

Too often in the world there are inequalities that seem neither understandable nor fair. This is true of nations: some are looked upon

as rich and others are called poor. It is also true of families and individuals: those who have more than they need live side by side with those who exist on almost nothing.

It is easy for us to look at a wealthy nation and to condemn it as being wasteful. But wealth is a relative thing and not all of it is abroad; neither is all of the wastefulness to be found abroad.

When water is scarce, a few drops can be as precious as life. But when the supply flows freely in the taps, how often is it allowed to run full-force while cleaning clothes or dishes or doing some other work, washing liters in wastefulness down the drain? Closing the tap partially would allow ample water-flow for cleaning, without being wasteful. Wouldn't that be better?

Sometimes, too, taps leak and are not repaired, wasting precious water, or they are left open through carelessness and more water runs uselessly down the drain. While some people are literally dying of thirst, how wrong it is to take the abundance and waste that precious gift!

In contrast with those who are malnourished, there is often the almost worshipful feeding of children in homes where food is plentiful. Mothers hover over their little ones, spooning into their mouths the choicest foods available. They pile their plates high with the abundance and urge them to eat. Perhaps half of the food that was offered is rejected, to be thrown out as garbage. Parents should not do this. It is teaching the children to be spoiled and wasteful. How much better it would be to give small quantities, and then to give more if more is wanted.

When we were children at home, the rule was, "whatever you have on your plate is yours: You must eat it." After those years of training, it is automatic now to follow the same practice as an adult. I remember the old saying, "His eyes are bigger than his stomach," and I don't want to be guilty of that!

There is another form of wastefulness that should be avoided: children, unchecked will often change clothes two or three times a day, creating mountains of unnecessary work for their mothers. Of course none of us want to be dirty, and we want our children to be neat and clean, but they should also be taught to be careful about their clothes and to be caring about their mothers. I have often told my children, laughing but enforcing a truth, "You have only one mother. Take care of her, because when you wear her out, there won't be another one!"

Wastefulness, in any form, is not a part of the Christian life or of

the training of children in a Christian home. We must guard against such sinful habits.

# ***A New Testament Principle Explained By Old Testament Example***

**DAVID E. ARMSTRONG**

*"...There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he should pray for it"  
(1 John 5:16)*

## **A REVIEW OF I JOHN**

In 1 John 5:16, we find a passage of scripture that has caused no small problem among students of the Bible. It is one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament to understand. John writes through inspiration, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

John began this First Epistle by showing how we have and maintain our fellowship with God (1:1-10). In the second chapter he says of some, "They went out from us..." (2:19). And in the third chapter he describes what sin is, "Whosoever committeth sin trangresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law...He that committeth sin, is of the Devil..." (1:4, 8). The word "committeth" in the Greek means a continuing action. So those who keep on committing sin are of the Devil! Then in chapter four John speaking of Love, how God loves us and how we must love God and our fellowman, says, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." (4:17). And then in chapter five we are commanded by God not to pray for brethren who sin unto death.

## **THE OLD TESTAMENT IS OUR EXAMPLE**

**I Cor. 10:6**

**The Book Of Jeremiah**

Jeremiah is known as "the weeping prophet." He shed many tears



over the sins of his people and that he prayed for them often we do not question. Jeremiah also teaches us that just being "religious" and "going to worship service" does not put one in "fellowship" with God. "stand ye in the gates of the Lord's house, and proclaim these words of the Lord, all ye of Judea, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. (Jer. 7:2, 3).

### **JUDAH, AS ISRAEL, HAD FORSAKEN GOD**

**JER. 1:16**

Recall that John began his epistle by showing how we enjoy fellowship with God. Then, in chapter two he declared that some had departed from; this fellowship! Here, Jeremiah is told by God, "And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands." (Jer. 1:16). In essence they had forsaken their fellowship with God. Let us observe how God directs Jeremiah to deal with these rebellious "brethren" and see through Jeremiah the principle carried over into I John 5:16. Principles, like God, never change. They are as true today as when they were first set forth. So let us go to the Old Testament, and see how God dealt with His people in this manner under the Old law.

### **GOD CALLED FOR THEIR RETURN TO THE OLD PATHS**

**JER. 6:16,17**

"Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, wherein is the good way, and walk therein... But they said, we will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Hearken to the sound of the trumpet.' But they said, 'We will not hearken.'" God would have those who have forsaken the fellowship they once had with God to return. And He expects His "watchmen" to sound the WARNING (See Gal.6:1). Yes, I have an obligation to my erring brethren to call for them to "...Hearken to the sound of the trumpet..."

### **THEY TRUSTED IN LYING WORDS THAT COULD NOT PROFIT**

**JER. 7:8-10**

"Behold, ye lie in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and

walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations?' These are those who declared, "...We will not walk therein...We will not hearken." But observe, friends, they were still going to "worship" in God's temple! Let us all take this to heart and examine whether we be in the faith of not (2 Cor. 13:5).

### **JEREMIAH TOLD NOT TO PRAY FOR THEM**

**JER. 7:16**

"Therefore, Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them..." Why would God command His prophet Jeremiah, the "Weeping Prophet", who had shed many tears over Judah's sins, "...NEITHER LIFT UP CRY NOR PRAYER FOR THEM..."? The very people God loved, redeemed and had fellowship with, He now commands His faithful not even to pray for them. Why? "...Neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear them." (v. 16b). Here God says He will not hear "thee" Jeremiah. Listen again to the beloved John, "...There is a sin unto death, I say not that he should pray for it."

### **JUDAH WAS TURNED BACK TO THEIR FATHERS' INIQUITIES**

**JER. 11:10**

"They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words..." John writes, "They went out from us..." (1 John 2:19). Again God declares to Jeremiah, "Therefore, pray not thou for this people... for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble." (Jer. 11:14). There is a time when God will not even hear those who would call upon Him for help. Those who do not seek to walk in God's ways have no right to seek His blessings.

### **NOT TO PRAY FOR THEM FOR THEIR GOOD**

**JER. 14:11**

"Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for them for their good." God says there is a time when our refusal to pray for those who have forsaken God might be for their good! Where are the wise men among us who will learn this lesson?

# ***THE HOLY Spirit's Part In Conversion***

**W. EDWIN KEARLEY**

The Holy Spirit clearly has a part in man's conversion. The following four points must be observed. (1) The Holy Spirit revealed the gospel of Christ through the apostles and other writers of the New Testament. (2) The Holy Spirit used the word in the conversion of sinners. (3) All are converted with or by the revealed truth. (4) The Holy Spirit does not operate separate from the word in conversion. Not a single case is recorded, after the gospel was given on Pentecost in Acts 2, when any one was saved directly, independently, or instantaneously by the Holy Spirit, apart from the gospel of Christ.

The Holy Spirit revealed the gospel. Jesus made some statements concerning the revelation: "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). "he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). "He shall testify of me" (John 15:26-27). "He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8-11, A.S.V.).

On Pentecost the apostles spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance. . . ." (Acts 2:4). Paul speaks of how the Spirit inspired him: "We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (I Corinthians 2:12-13. New International Version).

The inspiration was not thought inspiration, but plenary inspiration. "Plenary" means complete. In Genesis 12:2, the Lord made promises to Abraham. The greatest promise was that through his seed all nations would be blessed. Paul spoke of this promise to the Galatians: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16). Inspiration was so exact that trust can be put in the singular and plural of inspired words. Remember: translators were not inspired.

All scripture was given by inspiration: "All scripture was 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" (II Timothy 3:16-17). Jude wrote of the faith ". . . which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

The Holy Spirit uses the word of God in conversion. The "conversion" of which we speak, is turning from evil to God. Jesus said one is drawn to the Son by the Father. But how does the Father draw the sinner to the Son? Jesus stated, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45). How does God teach? Paul informs us,; "For I am not ashamed of the GOSPEL OF CHRIST: for IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION to every one that believeth. . ." (Romans 1:16). To the Corinthians Paul stated: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet ye have not many fathers: For in Christ Jeus I have BEGOTTEN YOU THROUGH THE GOSPEL" (I Corinthians 4:15). James wrote: "Of his own will BEGAT he us WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18) Peter reminded those to whom he wrote, "seeing ye have PURIFIED your souls IN OBEYING THE TRUTH through the Spirit... BEING BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1:22-23). The word is the agency of the Spirit in converting the soul to God.

In the New Testament, the same instrumentality of revealed truth was used for all. There are no recorded exceptions, nor inferences of exceptions. New Testament examples of conversion are found in Acts 2; 8:5-12, 35-38; 9; 10; and 22. The word of truth revealed through the agency of man, by the holy Spirit, was (and is) used to convert men to the Lord in obedience. The six steps are:" (1) The word of the gospel was preached in every instance of conversion. (2) All of them heard the word. (3) All who would be saved, believed the word. (4) All who wanted salvation repented of their sins. (5) All confessed their faith in Christ. (Romans 10:9-10), (6) All were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:1-4; Matthew 28:19).

Those who were thus converted, were further taught after their conversion (Matthew 28:20; Romans 13:14; Revelation 2:10).

No separate operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary in conversion. The word of the Lord is sufficient. Errors of men conflict with the Bible. The New Testament must be our only rule of faith and practice.

# ***The Land of the Living***

**ANCIL JENKINS**

Where do you live? one often hears the expression, "He has left the land of the living. . ." Yet in a sense this is incorrect. We do not live in the "land of the living" Psalm 27:13; we also live in the land of the dying.

As you turn off the light each night, you can count you have one less day to live. Eternity is nearer each minute. We cannot stay here. We will leave this world at a time and manner unknown to us.

Let us remember there is a land beyond this. It is the heavenly home prepared for us (John 14:1-2) . It is not in this world; it truly is the land of the living.

In which land is your heart? Although David Livingstone died in Africa, his heart was brought to England to be buried. His heart was brought home! The Scriptures teach that where our treasures, aims, and affections are, there is our heart (Matthew 6:19-20). We must live in the land of the dying, with our heart in the land of living.

I have heard of a land  
on a faraway strand  
'Tis the beautiful home of the soul.  
Built by Jesus on high  
Where we never shall die  
'Tis the land where we'll never grow old.  
Never grow old, never grow old.  
'Tis a land where we'll never grow old."

## ***"And I, If I Be Lifted Up"***

**DEMAR ELAM**

Jesus spoke of his death in john 3:14 when he said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up . . ." This, of course, was a direct reference to numbers

21:9 where it is said: "And moyses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Our Lord knew that the Jews would lift him up on a cross and kill him. John 8:28 reads: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

Why was it necessary that Christ be lifted up and crucified upon a cross? Jesus stated why in John 12:32 when he said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Christ was lifted up so he could draw all men unto himself. The very next verse explains what Jesus meant about being "lifted up." "This he said, signifying what death he should die" (verse 33). The cross was an instrument of death.

Christ's drawing power depended upon his being lifted up. He said, ". . . If I be lifted up . . ." If Jesus had never been lifted up, the redemptive plan of God would have been thwarted, and we would die in our sins.

However, Satan, the prince of the world had been drawing people unto himself; but Christ, in offering himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, counteracted the work of the evil one. This, therefore, explains Paul's strong feelings expressed in Galatians 6:14 when he said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Zechariah (chapters 12 and 13) spoke of him who would be pierced, and of a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. What a marvelous, wonderful, and faith-building prophecy! It predicts the "Fountain, filled with blood, drawn from Emanuel's veins." This fountain of blood flowed from the body of God's Son, making it possible for man to escape the end result of sin—eternal damnation!

Why was Christ lifted up? That you might be saved!

## ***Conviction***

**R.W. GRAY**

Paul had conscious knowledge of the God in whom he had placed his trust. He was fully convinced that the trust he had committed would

be kept by the God he knew (II Timothy 1:12). Such conviction drove this Christ saturated, Christ motivated, man to fight a good fight, to finish his course, and to keep the faith (II Timothy 4:1-6).

Back sliding, turning back, apostasy, are words and terms often read and heard in religious circles. Vascillation seems to be the "in thing" in these changing times. One writes a well researched volume to warn his brethren that liberalism is a real threat to their faith. He documents well his expose of the attitudes and threats one may expect from those caught up in the trap of liberalistic thinking. He warns that they will seek to win over truth by a facade of piety and/or by intimidation. Within the scope of few years the one who issued the warnings is heard all over the land parroting the very phrases he warned others to watch for as a sign of apostasy.

When the depth of our profession of faith is shallow we can drown near the shore. And when we permit ourselves to be tossed to and fro with every wind that blows we can be certain to end up in a cyclone of error. If we are perplexed with these things it provides us some idea of God's patience. From Adam to Moses, and from Moses to the baptizer, man demonstrated his fickle nature. "All the day long," Jehovah reveals, "have I stretched forth my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Romans 10:21).

Joshua was reflecting the "impatience" of the Lord when he called upon Israel to take a stand. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve ..." (Joshua 24:15). "Take a stand!" "Set your course and pursue it!" Throughout the Bible we are encouraged to faithfulness and warned of our propensity to drift away from our moorings. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

We must grieve, not gloat, over the slipping into error's path by any brother or sister. Our love for them must not wane. The "illness" of a loved one will not drive us from them but draw us to their side in their time of need. Yet we must exercise care that while attending to their need we do not carelessly expose ourselves to the sickness (Galatians 6:1).

In any warfare the troops must be convinced of the justice of their cause and believe in the ultimate victory that awaits the right if the fight is to be won. It is wise to evaluate one's position all along the way, testing every proposal before it is embraced; before the soldiers advance. If there are hidden doubts they will surface and let us down when the battle is raging. But once tested and proven sound, the position must be held.

Our spiritual metal is put to the test when the cause we serve is under siege. The defection of just one fellow soldier can cause us to become faint hearted, cast doubt upon the course we follow, and spread discouragement among the troops. Our Commander is looking for a few good men who will hold the fort when the enemy is at the gate.

In a time when apostasy has become somewhat of a "fad" our convictions are once more placed under the gun. Where we ultimately stand depends upon our knowledge of and love for the God we serve. It was in a context of dismay regarding those who had "turned away" from him and from the Lord that Paul wrote, "Nevertheless, I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Timothy 1:12-18.)

## ***Is Honesty The Best Policy?***

**DAVID WADE**

We often hear the statement, "Honesty is the best policy." As noble as this statement may sound, it falls short of giving proper guidance for the Christian in matters of honesty. For the Christian, honesty, must be more than policy, it is to be his very nature, his guiding principle, a way of life.

Policies may change with different situations, but divine principles are unchanging and eternal. So it is with the divine principle of honesty. Paul urges us to "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Romans 12:17). "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (II Corinthians 8:21). "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing" (I Thessalonians 4:12)

Covetousness is at the very heart of dishonesty. Covetousness is a form of idolatry (Colossians 3:5). The writer of Hebrews commands, "Let your conversation (manner of life) be without covetousness and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"(13:5).

Recently W. T. Allison had a short article in the Creekwood bulletin that drives home the point, under the title "Practice What You Preach."

"One Monday morning a minister boarded a city bus and gave the driver a one-dollar bill. As he was finding a seat, He counted the change



and noticed that the driver had given him too much money in change. He sat down and contemplated what would have seemed good fortune to some people. Finally, he went to the driver and said, 'Sir you gave me too much money back when I boarded the bus.' Without even looking at him, the driver said, 'I know, I was at your church last night and heard your sermon against stealing and I just wanted to see if you practiced what you preach.' "

In all avenues of life we need to be honest. Be honest with your spouse. Be honest in all your business dealings. Be honest with your friends, your enemies, and with the stranger. In short be honest, period! Everyone is looking, including God.

## ***Solomon's Choice***

**T. PIERCE BROWN**

The inspired and inspiring story of the choice of Solomon as recorded in I Kings 3:1-16 is worthy of our intensive study. He had had a long and solemn time of sacrificing offerings to God, with a great sense of gratitude and an awareness of his weakness and unworthiness. He exemplifies Jesus' statement; "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). The importance of making the right choices at the right time is beyond comprehension.

Every new opportunity or circumstance that confronts us demands a choice, or usually, many choices. Even on a somewhat insignificant event, many choices are involved. Suppose a friend says, "Let us go out and eat." You have to choose first whether you go. Then you choose the time to go, the place to go, what to eat, and many other things.

Every choice, no matter how little it may be, involves your character. The things you choose, and the basis on which you choose them depends upon and suggests the kind of character you have and will have. Often a seemingly small choice will determine the direction of your whole life. I am told that there is a place in Europe where a person might stand and throw a piece of wood in one of three directions. If it falls in one stream at that point, it will flow north into one sea. If it falls into another stream nearby it will flow south into another sea. If it falls into another stream within reach it will flow west into another sea. Each destination is thousands of miles from the other, but at the beginning they were very close together. Whether or not that is true, it illustrates the reality about our choices. To make it more realistic to you, think of

standing on a spot and facing in one direction from which you may start walking. With just a slight turn, you are facing in another direction. If you start walking in that direction, you will end your journey several thousand miles from where you would be at the first point.

The greatest choices we can make are things that relate to serving humanity wisely under God's direction. The most fundamental choice we can make is the one Joshua suggested in Joshua 24:15, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve—but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Keep in mind the principle involved here. Make the big choice and most of the little choices are automatically made without difficulty. My choices of what drinks to serve at meals and what whom I take out to dinner were largely determined by one previous choice.

When I was a boy I read of Aladdin lamp with the genie that would grant wishes. God had a better offer to Solomon. "Ask what I shall give thee" (v.5). There are some principles behind making any worthwhile choice. First, we need to cultivate the proper desire. Second, we need to make that choice consciously and deliberately. Third, verbalize that choice. Let us note an important difference between having a desire, and choosing that which will cause us to gain that desire. A person may want to be healthy. Choosing to exercise, eat properly and exercise self control are different matters. A person may wish he had the knowledge or ability to be an artist, pilot, swimmer, golfer or personal evangelist. To do the studying and practice that would give that is another thing. Brother Gus Nichols told of a woman who said, "I would give 40 years of my life to know the Bible like you do." He replied, "That is what it took." Of course she would not and did not, either before or after the conversation.

I am persuaded the same kind of situation confronts us. God has made promises to us that may surpass that offered to Solomon, but few of us take him at his word, or accept them on his terms. II Peter 1:3, 4 says, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." Note some of them: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). Even such a promise as the one of the found in II Corinthians 9:8-11 is not accepted by most of us. Do you have all sufficiency in all things? If not, perhaps the reason is that you have not accepted God's promise on his terms. I am convinced that most of us do not really believe and accept Ephesians 3:20, "Now unto

him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Our faith and vision are both too small, or we would be doing far greater things for the Lord.

Solomon made a very wise choice. He said in verse 9, "Give thy servant an understanding heart." Before he made that choice, he looked backward to God's goodness and power, cutward to the needs around him, inward to his inability to do his work by his own power, and upward to the source of the power he needed.

It is not enough to have the opportunity of choosing. One must decide what course to pursue, or what goals are worth working for. In Solomon's case it was to discern what was good and bad and be able to do that which was best for all concerned. This should be our attitude. Then there was a statement of his desire. James 4:2 says, "Ye have not because ye ask not." Could that also be a part of the reason for our not receiving more blessings? We do not really have our hearts set on worthwhile goals to the extent that we can specify those goals clearly. Often, we simply say "Lord bless us." Imagine a son who wants a bicycle, but only says to his father, "Bless me." There are good reasons for God wanting us to specify. One of them is that unless we know what we want enough to define it clearly, probably if we received it we would not use it properly.

His choice pleased God because it indicated an attitude of humility. It was not for his selfish advantage. James 4:3 says, "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask to consume it on your own lusts." It was both for the honor and good of his people, and for the glory of God. If our goals and aspirations always included those things, there is little doubt that we would receive far more things we want and need.

Because it was such a wise choice, he not only got what he asked for, but far more than he thought (vss. 12-13). When Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33), and when he said "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7), he was expressing the thoughts I want to emphasize in this article. When he said, "Ask what ye will" we must remember that our will must be to do his will. That is, the promises of God for granting our prayers involve the attitude of loving obedience. These promises are for every faithful child of God.

# **Jesus And The Church**

**WINFRED CLARK**

When you think of some people, there are some other things you think about. When you think of Noah, you think of the ark. When you think of Christ you must also think of the church. There is no doubt that it filled his mind. He spoke of it (Matthew 16:16-19).

Have you stopped to ask yourself what it meant to him? We should be able to see something of his concern for the church. This can be done when we look at passages that show his relationship to the church.

## **I. LOOK AT THE PRICE HE PAID**

We can usually tell what people think of a thing by the price they are willing to pay. If they consider such to be of great value, they will spare no expense. They will go all out to purchase that which they consider to be valuable. They will sacrifice in order to obtain that which means a great deal to them.

This will tell you something about the value our Lord placed on the church. Listen to what Paul would have to say, "husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). He would later say to the Ephesians' elders, "... which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Surely one does not pay that kind of a price for that which is considered to be worthless or merely an afterthought. Jesus had a mighty large investment in the church. It cost him all that he had.

We can have no doubt about the Lord's sense of worth concerning the church. He saw it as being worth his blood and life. He would make the supreme sacrifice for it. We are thus compelled to see it as something of great worth. It is to be respected as such. We dare not think of it otherwise.

## **II. LISTEN TO HIS PRAYER FOR IT**

If you will take time to read that great prayer, found in John 17, you will see something of the Lord's feelings for, and concept of the church. Those disciples were uppermost in his thoughts. Take the time to look at

all the references to them and you will see.

He would pray for their purity, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). Jesus knew these were to be the salt of the earth. They were to keep themselves pure and clean. They were to live lives that were separate and sanctified.

He would pray for their unity. Time and again you will find the Lord praying "that they may be one" (John 17:11, 21). He knew the awful tragedy brought on by division. He knew that the cost of division would be an unbelieving world. That is too much to pay for division. It isn't worth it.

Remember also, Jesus would not only pray for the church himself, but he also taught us to do the same (Matthew 6:9-13).

### **III. LOOK AT PLANS HE HAD FOR IT**

There was no doubt that Jesus had plans for the church when he came. It was not an afterthought. It was not something that came into being because the Jews rejected him as the Messiah. Not at all. This can be seen in all the work that he did from the beginning of the public ministry. He let it be known that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matthew 4:17). He was not talking about something other than the church at that time. He did not have another institution in mind. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29-30). This is, without a doubt, the Lord's supper. None of us would doubt that the Lord's table is in the church (I Corinthians 11:23-26). But Jesus said it would be in the kingdom. This being the case, we speak of the same institution, or body of people. Thus when he spoke of the kingdom, he would be speaking of the church. That is the reason you will find those terms together in such places as Matthew 16:16-19. When he spoke of building his church and giving to them the keys of the kingdom, these are one and the same. He had plans for building the church.

### **IV. LOOK AT ITS POPULATION**

When you stop to think of those people who make up the church, you then get an idea of the Lord's concept of the church. Luke described the kind of people who are in the church "and Lord added to the church

daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). The best people on earth are the ones who compose the church, those that have turned from Satan to serve the Living God. They are the ones who have turned from darkness to light.

Let no man think that the church is to be less than pure. He would have it sanctified and cleansed (Ephesians 5:26). He would have it purified (1 Peter 1:22-23). It is not to have spot, wrinkle or blemish. Jesus wants it to be clean.

Just any kind of people are not in the church. One has to be a certain kind. One has to be saved. One has to be willing to follow the demands and dictates of the Lord.

### **V. LOOK AT THE PLACE PREPARED FOR IT**

Didn't Jesus speak of going to prepare a place for those disciples (John 14:1-3)? He would prepare for them a place in heaven. It is that place that Paul had in mind when he was ready to depart and be with the Lord (Philippians 1:21-23). He knew what the Lord had in mind for the church. He would have a home waiting for the redeemed of the ages. Nothing else would satisfy.

Yes, we know what he thought of the church and so should we.

## ***Does The Bible Teach Soul Sleeping?***

**CECIL CORKREN**

Some religious groups seem to think that it does. "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten" (Ecclesiastes 9:5). When they read a verse like the above they feel sure of their convictions. They believe as some members of the body of Christ, that there is no conscious existence after death. Some question a conscious existence between death and the resurrection of the body, but seemingly never think of what this leads to when examined in the light of God's word. This doctrine, with its related tenets, is often

referred to as the "soul sleeping doctrine." Those who teach this error deny that man has both an outward and an inward man (2 Corinthians 4:16). Such false teachers will boldly affirm that "man does not have a soul, he is soul." Thus when one dies, he is like the dog Rover—dead all over! If this were correct, "soul sleep" is a misnomer it should be "soul cessation or soul stopping, ceasing to exist," and "resurrection" should be changed to "recreation."

In the Old Testament, the term "soul" (from NEPHESH) was often used to designate the composite person, made up of various parts. The New Testament's equivalent (PSUCHĒ) also is used in the same way in Acts 7:14. However, the Old Testament uses soul to refer to the inner man in contrast with the body (Genesis 35:18). The New Testament develops this usage of soul in much more detail. Matthew 10:28 and Revelation 6:9-10 are key passages which show beyond any doubt that the soul of man lives on after bodily life ceases.

The term SPIRIT also is used to designate this inner being (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; Hebrews 12:22-23). This part of man is that which we share in common with our Maker. When God said, "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26), He had to mean His spiritual image, since He is SPIRIT (John 4:24). Therefore, even though we receive our physical bodies from our parents, our SPIRITS come from God. He is the "Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9). God is the one who formed the spirit of man within him (Zechariah 12:1), and thus when we die "the spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

The Sadducees of old taught the same erroneous doctrine regarding the spirit of man (or lack of it) as the "soul sleepers" teach. Jesus assured them that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were yet alive though their bodies had already decayed (Matthew 22:23-32). The fact that a person can live apart from his body is clearly taught in numerous passages. In II Corinthians 5:6-8, We can see that Paul taught one could be absent from the body and present with the Lord. (Who is the WE, if not the spirit or soul of man?) The corpse of Dorcas was present but SHE was not present (Acts 9:39). For similar passages see Romans 14:8; Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:21-23 and Luke 18:19-31.

The soul will live on after death. Jesus said at the graveside of Lazarus, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me SHALL NEVER DIE. Believest thou this" (John 11:26). All men die physically, so Jesus was referring to the conscious existence of man after death. We sing, "When my body is lying in the cold, cold clay, I'll live on." Do we believe what we sing? Luke records that Lazarus, was "comforted" in

ABRAHAM'S bosom (Luke 16:19-31). Sounds like Lazarus, had a conscious existence after he died. ❀

## *By What Standard of Authority*

WENDELL WINKLER

By what authority do you practice the things you do in religion? Let us observe the following questions:

*Is the majority the correct standard of authority?* Surely not. Through time the majority has been in the wrong. Where was the majority when the flood came? When about Sodom and Gommorah? Jesus said many would go in the broad way that leads to destruction. (Matthew 7:13-14.) The majority is not the correct standard of authority.

*Are kinsmen the correct standard of authority?* Surely not. If they were then every religion, even those that deny the divinity of Christ, and reject the Bible as the infallible guide in matters of religion, would be all right if such was accepted by kinsmen. Kinsmen are not the standard of authority.

*Are the creeds of men the correct standard of authority?* Surely not. They are contradictory to the inspired and infallible word of God. They contain the doctrines and commandments of men, concerning which Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9.) The creeds of men are not the correct standard of authority.

*Is "I think" the correct standard of authority?* Surely not. In Jeremiah 10:23 we read, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Also, observe Proverb 14:12. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." "I think" is not the correct standard of authority.

*Christ and his testament is the correct standard of authority.* All authority in heaven and in earth has been given unto Christ. (Matthew 28:18.) His testament is complete, final and all sufficient. (John 16:13; Jude 3.) Religious practices are to be based upon such. Peter wrote, "If any man speak, let him speak as of the oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11.)



In view of such, can you give book, chapter and verse from the New Testament for that which you practice in religion?

## ***Daily Christian Living***

**GLEN ELLIOTT**

The only way that Christianity can become a meaningful endeavor is for us to make it part of our daily activities. The idea of a once-a-week, or once-a-month religion is unheard of in the Scriptures. As the people of Israel gathered the manna in the wilderness one day at a time, so also the Christian must live for Christ on a daily basis. (Exodus 16:4.)

Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23.) Each day presents new challenges to be faced for the cause of Christ. But we must first make the determination that the Lord will come first in the decisions which must be made. (Matthew 6:33.)

Taking up the cross of Christ involves more than carrying a miniature cross about the neck. It means that we will stand behind the cross of Jesus and live for him who died on our behalf. It means that we will hold up that cross every day showing the world what it means to live for Jesus. When this is done on a daily basis, Christianity becomes meaningful for us and for all those who are touched by the influence of our lives.

Another important thing to remember when trying to live for Jesus is that daily Bible study will supply us with the strength we need to overcome the obstacles in our path. The Bible commands some at Berea, saying, ". . . these were more noble-minded than those at Thessalonica, for they received the word of God with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11.) May we be so noble-minded as to search the Scriptures daily and learn what it means to live for Christ every day!

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