

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

---

**Vol. 22**

**October 1991**

**No. 6**

---

## EDITORIAL

### ***To Be Forewarned Is To Be Forearmed***

Thank God for the Bible. For if we did not have the Bible we would not know that God is our Creator and He loves us to the extent that He was willing to come down to earth to die in our stead, taking our sins upon Himself, because He is not willing for any of us to be lost in sin. It is the Bible that reveals to us the fact that humanity is separated from its Creator God because of sin, and that sin will cause men and women to be eternally lost in hell. Thank God, again, for the Bible, for the message found in its pages which says, that while the wages of sin is death (separation), but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23). Not only is there hell, but the Bible also reveals to us God's heaven. Christ, the Bible says, is the only hope of this lost world.

Hundreds and perhaps thousands are dying every day around the world prematurely because they failed to take warnings seriously. Think of those who brought upon themselves deadly diseases such as cancer, AIDS and heart ailments by not heeding the Warnings: Each packet of cigarette has the warning written on it: "Cigarette smoking is injurious to health." But who cares? People haven't quit smoking. Most think it will happen to others, but not me. Liquor or alcoholic beverages is causing countless diseases, accidents and deaths each day, yet millions of rupees are spent on it by those who drink, not realising that they might be the next victim.

The Bible warns : "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit, will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (Galatians 6:7, 8). There is no escape from this law of God. This is true physically and this will be true spiritually also.

When the Bible speaks of sin and says, "ALL", including you and me, have sinned, and thus have become separated from our God (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1,2), and that if we continue to live in sin and die in sin, we will then go to live eternally separated from God in the place the Bible describes as "hell", where there is fire that shall never be quenched, (Mark 9:42-48), we should do something about it. We should want to know what can be done to escape hell. Nothing upon this earth should be more important to us than the question: "What must I do to be saved?" The warning of Christ must become real to us: "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). Are you prepared to die? What if this night your soul will be required of you?

Remember, God is not willing that any of us should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9). His gift of eternal life in heaven is still available to all who would believe in his Son and would repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.

## ***Is Your Name Written in the Book of Life?***

**J.C. Choate**

We read in Revelation 20:12 of the books being opened and the dead being judged out of those things written in the books according to their works. These books obviously have reference to God's book, the Bible, which is actually made up of many books. First, there is the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the books that make up those Testaments. John goes on to talk about the seriousness of dealing with the words written in God's book or books. He says, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the

words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of the life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18, 19). We must be very careful in dealing with God's word, not to add to it or subtract from it, but rather to believe it and to obey it as it is because we will eventually be judged by it according to the way we have dealt with it. Christ himself said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48). Now where do we find the words of the Lord? In the books that John speaks of in Revelation 20:12. Therefore, man will be judged by the words of those books at the judgment. That is why it is so necessary that we respect God's word, that we come to know what it is saying to us, and then that we comply with it, provided we want to be acceptable to the Lord on that great day.

There was also another book mentioned in Revelation 20:12, and that was the book of life. That book would contain a list of those who belong to the Lord, those who have obeyed God. The purpose of opening it would be to see if one's name is written there. If a person's name is not listed there then that means that he is lost and that he cannot go to heaven.

Perhaps you are wondering if the Lord keeps a literal book with an actual list of names of those who have obeyed him? Although we have God's word written down in ink and on paper and bound into what we call a book, it would not follow that the Lord has a book like that in heaven. The book of life that he refers to is a figurative book, a record, the memory of those that he has saved and are prepared to meet him and to go to heaven. In other words, he knows those who belong to him, he knows their names, and he knows that they are saved, and that is why it is said that their names are written in the book of life. Something similar to this is found in Acts 2:47 when it says that the Lord adds the saved to the church. In other words, when one obeys Christ then he recognizes that person and his action by adding him to the church, which is the Lord's spiritual family, and as such that person's name would be written in the book of life. Now the Lord would not add everyone to his church, but only those that he recognizes as having complied with his will. He would therefore know that person and continue to remember him as being one of his.

Speaking of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem as it is called, the evil, wicked, ungodly, and sinners would not be able to enter that hallowed place. It is said that only those whose names are written in the

Lamb's book of life would be able to enter in: (Revelation 21:27). He also said, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:15).

The apostle Paul in writing to the Christians at Philippi, said, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." (Philippians 4:1-3). Now who is Paul speaking of here? How does he know their names were written in the book of life? Of course he was inspired of God, but he was probably writing out of the knowledge that these were people who had obeyed the Lord, that they were therefore saved, added to the church, were faithful Christians, and therefore he could say with all confidence that their names were written in the book of life.

But what about that person whose name has been written in the book of life, and then he falls into sin and becomes lost again? Is it possible for his name to be removed? To answer that, go with me to the days of Moses and the children of Israel. While Moses was away to receive the law, the Israelites with the help of Aaron made a golden calf. When Moses returned to find what they had done, he was angry, and the children of Levi were sent throughout the camp and some three thousand men were slain. Then we read, "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people because they made the calf, which Aaron made." (Exodus 32:30-35).

Yes, the Lord can blot one's name out of the book of life. If he can put it in, he can take it out. Furthermore, if one's name is removed, it is on the basis of the Lord's disfavour with that person. That means then that he is lost in that condition, and if he dies in that state then he will be

cast into the lake of fire, since his name is no longer written in the book of life. (Revelation 20:15). It also means that if one's name has been removed from the book of life, then for it to be re-entered that he must repent of his sins and ask the Lord and his brethren to forgive him. (James 5:16).

But how would the Lord be able to keep up with all of those means? Remember that the Lord can do all things, that all things are possible with him. He is aware of each soul that exists, and on one's obedience to him, he personally saves them and adds them to his church. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:47). At that point also one's name is written in the book of life or is listed among the saved. But how can one know that the Lord will do that? How can one know that one is saved or that one will go to heaven when he dies? We of course know when we have done that which the Lord has asked us to do and we then trust him to keep his promise to save us, to write our names in the book of life, and to give us the hope of eternal life.

Finally, at the judgment the Lord will not only remember us personally, but will remember all of our deeds and even all of our thoughts. Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10). Jesus said, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matthew 12:36). The Hebrew writer says that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13). All of this is to say, that when we stand before the Lord on the day of judgment to be judged by him and his word, according to the deeds done in the body, that all things will be open to him and we will not be able to hide anything from him. If we have been forgiven of all of our past sins, and our names are written in the book of life then we will be given a home in heaven. If our sins are still there, meaning that our names are not written in the book of life, then we will be cast into the lake of fire.

Now the question that we should be most concerned about at this time would be this question: Are our names written in the book of life? If our names are not there then that means we are lost? If we are therefore wise we will want to immediately take the necessary steps to be sure that our names are written there.

## ***'To Be a Mother-in-Law'***

**Betty Burton Choate**

The whole world seems to share jokes about terrible mothers-in-law. In many cases the jokes would be untrue or at least an exaggeration. But the old saying, "Where there's smoke, there's fire," is reliable. There would not be universal jokes about bad mothers-in-law unless many were guilty of fitting the description.

Sometimes parents, especially mothers, have problems adjusting to the fact that their children are growing up. Even though they want this, mentally, they are not emotionally ready to accept a role of lesser importance in the lives of their children. Particularly does this tend to be true of mothers with their sons when they marry and either bring home a bride or when they go out to establish their own home. The mother may see the loved son showing attention and preference to his new wife and, as a result, she may feel rejected. Jealousy can develop and lead finally to bitterness and enmity. This causes quarrels and continual problems between the husband and wife as well as between the son and his family.

An unwise mother-in-law may belittle the new bride for shortcomings in her household work or in her cooking. She may misuse the daughter-in-law, making her nothing more than a servant. The unfairness of such treatment will cause resentment and hatred if it is continued.

But how will the Christian mother-in-law behave? Being a mature woman, she should be well practiced in obeying Christ's command, "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). Every problem in every human relationship could easily be solved if all people would obey these directions. What mother-in-law would have wanted to have been ill-treated as a bride? Or what mother would want to see her own daughter belittled and abused? Of course, no woman would choose such treatment for herself or for her daughter, so the Christian mother-in-law will not mistreat her son's new wife either.

When a mother-in-law understands God's plan in marriage, she won't feel competition with her daughter-in-law for her son's love. She

will realize that there are many kinds of love and that the love of a son for his mother is different and separate from his love for his wife. A new love is developed for each person in one's life, so there is no competition.

But, at the same time, God's plan for marriage is that the husband and wife become one--one flesh, one in purpose, one in heart. If the mother truly loves her son, she will realize that his wife is now a part of him and she will extend the love for the son to include the bride as well. She should understand that to belittle or abuse the daughter-in-law is actually to do the same thing to the son she loves. And how could there be true happiness between the mother and the son unless the daughter-in-law is included in the love? Of course, it would not be possible.

It is wonderful that even in our human relationships, God's rules provide perfect guidance. "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. . . let us love one another, for love is of God. . ." (1 John 3:18; 1 John 4:7). When Christian mothers-in-law have God's love in their hearts, they will behave like loving mothers to cherished daughters when their sons bring home brides.

## ***Grace Defined***

**Jim O'Connor**

The subject of grace has received so much abuse over the years that to define it "in so many words" is no longer possible. We must clear away some rubble before the meaning of this great word can be truly seen and appreciated.

For instance, the subject has been abused by indifference on the part of those who simply don't care one way or another. These are the "ignorance is bliss" people who are so keen on themselves that they have no time for anything outside, or above, them and the private little world they exist in. These are of the type that would sit in their tent and complain while the manna fell all around outside.

Grace has been abused by those who would fence it in with false restrictions, making laws where God made none, requiring things God does not require. It is true that God requires some things to be done in order to be a recipient of grace; but it is not true that he requires

everything being taught today. The "circumcised to be saved" question was resolved in Acts 15, and men would do well to heed the principle followed there. God doesn't take kindly to those who would tamper with his word (Galatians 1:8-9; Revelation 22:18-19).

This beautiful subject has also received abuse at the hands of those who would lift the restrictions God has placed upon it, or stretch it to include more than God intended for it to include. "Shall we continued in sin that grace may abound?" Some evidently were saying, "Yes." the apostle Paul said, "No." Those who would "take a mile when given an inch" are guilty of applying grace where grace will not apply. They are seeking to increase grace by the very things that cut grace off!

The word "Grace" is commonly defined as (a) Unmerited favor; (b) The unmerited love and favor of God toward man; (c) Divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong; (d) God's gift to man which was not, and could not be, merited. An English acrostic gives a fair, but limited, definition as follows: "God's Riches At Christ's Expense."

Webster's dictionary defines "Grace" as "Favor, goodwill, or kindness, disposition to oblige another; the love and favor of God; divine influence renewing the heart and restraining from sin; a state of reconciliation to God; virtuous or religious affection or disposition proceeding from divine influence; mercy; pardon; favor conferred; a license, dispensation, or peculiar privilege; a short prayer before or after meals acknowledging the grace or goodness of God." English words are defined according to current usage, and this one is no exception; but, for the most part, the definition is correct.

"Charis" is the Greek word which is translated "Grace" in the English. In the objective it carried the idea of "That which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight, or causes favorable regard." In the subjective it carries one of two ideas. On the part of the bestower it is "the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds; graciousness, loving kindness; goodwill generally" (as in Ephesians 2:8). On the part of the receiver, it is "a sense of the favor bestowed, a feeling of gratitude" (as in Romans 6:17). (Greek definitions are from W.E. Vine's "Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words," pages 169-170).

When a subject has been abused, as "Grace" has been, it is helpful sometimes to look at what it is not, in order to clear away misrepresentations and misapplications.



**Grace is not Law:** It is not a set of rules, which when kept, will merit the doer the reward. Jesus said, "... when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). The very act of making it law destroys it. As Paul explained, "And if by grace, then is it no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Romans 11:6). Make a favor a law and it ceases to be a favor.

**Grace is not License:** Some have reasoned that since God has an unlimited supply of grace which he wishes to bestow upon men, then we should increase sin to increase the need for grace, thereby increasing the amount of grace God can bestow. Such reasoning is evil. We appeal once again to Paul in Romans 6:1-2, where he addressed this very thing. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Those who would advocate and practice such a thing are "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). One cannot "take advantage" of God's grace; for when such motivation is in the heart, grace is not available.

**Grace is not salvation.** Ephesians 2:5 declares, "By grace ye are saved." My salvation and God's grace are two different things. I have salvation because of God's grace.

**Grace is not mercy:** Grace means bestowing an unearned benefit. Mercy means withholding just judgment or punishment. Grace is beneficial because mercy is available. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

**Grace is not unconditionally received:** The false doctrines of Universalism and Calvinism cover up the truth, hiding from the seekers of grace the fact that God has placed conditions upon receiving grace. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live, soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).

**Finally, grace is not unconditionally retained.** Some are teaching that once one has been a recipient of God's grace his eternal destiny is sealed; heaven is his, regardless of how he may live afterwards. The Bible does not teach this. Paul pleaded, "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." (2 Corinthians 6:1). Paul also wrote in Galatians

5:4, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." To speak of receiving in vain, and falling from is to affirm that the blessing of grace can be forfeited if the requirements of grace are rejected. The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God" (Hebrews 12:14-15).

God's grace in the temporal realm is illustrated daily. As Jesus said, "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). Paul said, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (I Timothy 4:4-5). Daily needs met are daily experiences of God's grace in the temporal realm. A young daughter of a radio announcer, when asked to give thanks at the dinner table, said, "This food is brought to us through the courtesy of Almighty God." How true!

In the spiritual realm we see illustrations of God's grace each time we see a life changed, or a faith strengthened. Multitudes can say, with Paul, "by the grace of God I am what I am" (I Corinthians 15:10). It is by the grace of God that we are saved (Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:8-10), and it is by the grace of God that we remain so (Romans 8:35-39; I Corinthians 10:13).

What is grace? It is God's love in action! May He ever be praised for His sufficient grace.

## ***Dead Prayers***

**Leon Frederick**

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:5-8).*

Prayer is the Christian's greatest privilege. It is also a command. I Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to "pray without ceasing." But our prayers are a mockery if we are sinful, Isaiah told the sinful Israelites, "... your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination [disgusting]" (Proverbs 28:9).

James mentions two kinds of prayer: a living, active prayer (James 5:13-18), and a dead prayer (James 1:6). Those verses show that we must do our part. Here are some examples of dead prayers:

A prayer for HEALTH, then abusing our body by indulgence or neglect, is a dead prayer. See Proverbs 23:29-35; Romans 13:13-14; Philipians 3:19.

A prayer for THE SICK, then failing to minister to them, is a dead prayer. Matthew 24:34-46. Also, this sick person should call for help (James 5:14), not merely wait to see if someone will come.

A prayer for the BEREAVED, then failing to comfort them, is a dead prayer. We must "... weep with those that weep" (Romans 12:15).

A prayer for WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE, without studying, is a dead prayer. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:1-2). "Test all things; hold fast what is good". (I Thessalonias 5:21). We must not believe any religious teaching, until we have tested it to see if that teaching is in the Bible. See also II Timothy 2:15.

A prayer for GROWTH, without exercise and food, is a dead prayer. "But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself rather to godliness" (I Timothy 4:7). In the body, spirit, and church, all must exercise to live. See also Hebrews 5:12-14; Peter 2:2-3.

A prayer for YOUNG PEOPLE, without being a good example, is a dead prayer. "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Training comes through what they hear from us and what they see us do.

A prayer for THE LOST, without effort to deliver them from sin, is a dead prayer. We must speak with them in person. "Brethren, if a man is

overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).

A prayer for PEACE, without understanding and tolerance, is a dead prayer. "Pursue peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). We must always be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). But we must not abandon God's truth for the sake of peace. We must be "speaking truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15)

A prayer for OUR ENEMIES, if we are not willing to forgive them, is a dead prayer. "Therefore if your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). The Lord forgives us as we forgive others. Matthew 6:12-15.

A prayer for PREACHERS WHO TEACH US, without doing our part to support them, is a dead prayer. Why do we need them? See Romans 10:13-15. When a faithful gospel preacher needs help, he should be supported by the Christians who are receiving the gospel messages from him; "Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches" (Galatians 6:6). See also I Corinthians 9:6-14. As the local church grows, it should also help support the preachers who take the gospel to other areas (see Philippians 4:15-16). Each Christian must be careful to support only those men who are teaching the truth (John 9-11).

A prayer for SALVATION, when we refuse to obey, is a dead prayer. "But why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Will you obey? Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 5:32; 8:37-39; 22:16.

Jesus teaches us to pray often, simply, and fervently. He gave us the example in the garden and in the mountains.

## ***Some Lessons From Mark 6:41-42***

**Roger Shiflet**

Isn't it marvelous to consider the miracles performed by Jesus? During His ministry on earth, our Lord healed the sick, cast out demons,

restored sight to the blind, and even raised the dead. Twice He had occasion to feed large gatherings of people—4,000 people on one occasion, and 5,000 on another occasion—with what amounted to a small meal for one person. One of these occasions is recorded in Mark 6:

"Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. And He said to them, 'Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.' for there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves. But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat.' But He answered and said to them, 'You give them something to eat.' And they said to Him, 'Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?' But He said to them, 'How many loaves do you have? Go and see.' And when they found out they said, 'Five, and two fish.' Then he commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men" (Mark 6:30-44).

Imagine the wonder which Jesus created in those people who were present on this occasion. But let's especially notice two verses from the story. In verses 41 and 42, Mark shows four things that Jesus did and two things which were done by the people when the 5,000 were fed. We can learn some important lessons from a study of these two verses.

First, Mark says Jesus took the loaves and fish and looked up toward heaven. When Jesus took hold of them, there was nothing special about them. They were merely bread and merely fish. But He made them into something great—a meal to satisfy five thousands

people. You who read this may believe there is nothing special about you. You may see no great talents or qualities or abilities in yourself. But just as Jesus made a great feast out of a little bread and fish, He can make something great out of you. When a person becomes one of God's people, he or she becomes very special. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God; who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Next, we are told that Jesus blessed the food. He prayed over it. The scriptures often reveal that prayer was involved with the performance of a great spiritual work in the life of Jesus. Men and women today need to remember to pray while serving. A great man whom this writer once knew would remind him time after time. "Pray as if everything depended on God, and work as if everything depended on you." This is what Jesus did. It is what we all need to do.

Thirdly, we read that Jesus gave the food to the disciples to set before the multitude. He was providing a great blessing (food) for needy people (the hungry). He is still making His blessings available to those in need. He makes physical blessings available. Acts 14:17 tells us that He gives us "... the rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Jesus still amply meets the physical needs of those who follow Him (Matthew 6:25-34). More importantly, He makes His spiritual blessings available. Each person who has obeyed the gospel can say with Paul, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

Now let's turn our attention to two things done by the people who were present with Jesus. First, they all ate and were satisfied. In other words, they accepted and benefited from the blessings Jesus provided. Do you remember that we said our Lord still makes great blessings available to us who live today? He does. But, sadly, many people fail to accept those offered blessings. Some people fail to receive God's blessings because of their disobedience (see Matthew 23:37-38). Others forfeit the blessings of God simply because they fail to seek those blessings (Matthew 7:7-11).

Finally, the disciples picked up twelve full baskets of bread and fish left over from the meal. All who ate were satisfied. But Jesus made

certain that nothing was wasted. He showed His followers how to be good stewards of the bounty they had received. The Lord requires His followers to be good stewards of time, talents, possessions-indeed of all the blessings they receive (Matthew 25:1-30).

May all who read these words put their faith in God by surrendering to His will, receive and appreciate the blessings He offers, and resolve to be good stewards of the bounty they receive.

## ***Being A Kid Is Tough***

One of the great puzzles in my life is when Daddy whips me for smoking a cigarette butt he threw away. And Mommy sometimes washes my mouth out with soap for saying a word that I learned from her. Ever since I can remember, my parents have taught me not to tell lies, but the other day Mother sent me to the door to tell a salesman that she was gone. Maybe when we get big and our folks get little, we can enjoy the privilege of telling "whoppers." You know, being parents must be fun. . . but being a kid is tough, with so many restrictions.

Remember that every word spoken before our children and every action observed contribute to the formation of their character

## ***Watermelon Seed***

**W.J. Bryan**

I was eating a piece of watermelon some months ago and was struck with its beauty. I took some of the seeds and dried them and weighed them, and found that it would require some five thousand seeds to weigh a pound; and then I applied mathematics to that forty-pound melon.

One of these seeds, put into the ground, when warmed by the sun and moistened by the rain, takes off its coat and goes to work; it gathers from somewhere two hundred thousand times its own weight, and forcing this raw material through a tiny stem, constructs a watermelon. It ornaments the outside with a covering of green; inside the green it puts

a layer of white, and within the white a core of red, and all through the red it scatters seeds, each one capable of continuing the work of reproduction.

Who drew the plan by which that little seed works? Where does it get its tremendous strength? Where does it find its coloring matter? How does it collect its flavoring extract? How does it develop a water melon?

Until you can explain a watermelon, do not be too sure that you can set limits to the power of the Almighty and say just what He would do or how He would do it.

## ***Seventeen Rules for a Happy Marriage***

**Roy Burgess**

The rules are as follows:

1. The very nearest approach to domestic happiness on each side is the cultivation on both sides of absolute unselfishness.
2. Never both be angry at once.
3. Never speak loudly to one another unless the house is on fire.
4. Let each one strive to yield most often to the wishes of the other.
5. Let self-denial be the daily aim and practice of each.
6. Never find fault unless it is perfectly certain that fault has been committed, and always speak lovingly.
7. Never taunt with a mistake.
8. Neglect the whole world rather than one another.
9. Never allow a request to be repeated.
10. Never part for a day without loving words to think of during absence.
11. Never make a remark at the expense of each other.
12. never let the sun go down on any anger or grievance.
13. Never meet without a loving welcome.
14. Never forget the happy hours of early love.



15. Never sigh over what might have been, but make the best of what is.
16. Never forget that marriage is ordained of God, and that His blessings alone can make it what it should be.
17. Never be content till you know you both are walking in the same narrow way.

## ***Healing for All***

**Phillip Morrison**

Healing is not an exact science. Despite the advances of our high tech age, people still die unexpectedly, carefully prescribed medications prove ineffective, surgeries still fail. Healing is science, but it is also art and gift.

Physicians in Jesus' day were neither scientists nor artists by today's standards. Illness was an unfathomable mystery, a curse. Germs, viruses and other logical explanations for disease were unknown. Similarly, there was no awareness that healing might be logically understood. Healers such as they were, were thought to be especially gifted, even magic.

The desperately ill of our time will spend all they can scrape together and travel great distances to visit famous medical centres or seek care from noted doctors. When it was reported that Jesus could heal, people ravaged by disease made every sacrifice to reach His side or attract His attention.

A crippled man who despaired of ever reaching the healing waters of Bethesda had thirty-eight years of longing satisfied by a few words from Jesus' lips (John 5:1-9).

Another man with a withered hand sought whatever comfort could be found in the synagogue. Only when Jesus commanded him to stretch forth his hand did he find the strength to do that impossible thing (Matthew 12:9-13).

The most feared, if not the most deadly, disease was leprosy. Even this affliction quickly disappeared when confronted by Jesus' healing power (Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 17:12-15).

The lame and the palsied were able to live normal, useful lives after Jesus healed them. Paralytics with frozen joints, and people with withered limbs, were readily healed (Mark 2:3-4; Luke 5:18-19; Matthew 9:2-7; Matthew 12:9-13).

The demon-possessed (Luke 13:10-11), the hemorrhaging (Matthew 9:20-22), the fevered (Matthew 8:14-15), the blind (John 9) - all were healed with equal ease. Even death could not be sure of its victims after Jesus raised Jairus' daughter (Matthew 9:18), Lazarus (John 11), and the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:11-15).

At least nineteen additional healings are mentioned, and healings are undoubtedly included in the eloquent conclusion to John's gospel: "There were many other things that Jesus did; if all were written down, the world itself, I suppose, would not hold all the books that would have to be written" (John 21:15).

Impressive as these records are, Jesus did not eradicate disease. His world was still full of crippled, blind, deaf, mentally unbalanced, leprous, and desperate people. But the fact that Jesus did heal all kinds of diseases puts His power beyond question.

He could have healed everybody, but he didn't. Unless we are willing to accuse Him of arbitrary and capricious use of His power, we must acknowledge the reason for His selective use of power: He didn't come to heal all the lepers and the lame; He did come to heal all the sinners.

We can't read the stories about the healing of the sick without realizing that His power to heal sinners is equally genuine. His power over death destroys Satan's ultimate weapon, leaving the evil one with nothing more than temporary control over us.

Not even the Great Physician heals unilaterally. The doctor's advice must be heard; his medicine must be taken; his care must be applied. Jesus' healing was limited by design, and none but those who sought it could receive it. His power to save from sin is universal by design (Romans 5), and only those who refuse it are forever doomed.

What Shaw called "the ultimate statistic"--one out of one dies--will continue to be true until the end of time. Jesus' ultimate statistic provides for one out of one-- everybody--to be saved.

The Great Physician is the bread of life, the water of life, the life that need never end. He must not be refused.

# *Blessed are Those Whose Sins are Forgiven (Psalm 31:1)*

Hugo McCord

## **THE WAGES OF SIN**

Though a living death (Rev. 20:14) is the eternal wages of sin (Rom. 6:23), yet even in this life sin pays wages in inner grief and remorse. David had suffered deeply. Blood guilt from his murdering Uriah, as well as the sin of adultery, lay heavy on his heart. As long as his sins were unconfessed, misery was his day and night.

When I kept silence, my bones wasted away

Through my groaning all the day long.

For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me:

My Moisture was changed into the drought of summer.

(Psa. 32:3-4)

## **THE REMEDY**

Finally, after he allowed a recognition of what is right to take hold, his heart was crushed and broken. Then, with a changed attitude in which hypocrisy had departed (in whose spirit there was no guile, Psa. 32:2b), without blaming anyone but himself, he confessed to Nathan: "I have sinned against Jehovah" (2 Sam. 12:13). Later he wrote:

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity did I not hide:

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah;

And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. (Psa. 32:5)

## **THE RESULT**

Sweet and pleasant was the relief flooding a distraught soul when God's word of forgiveness came to David: "Jehovah also hath put away thy sin," said Nathan. Surely no other human being has ever felt more deeply a heart lifting joy than David when he wrote:

October 1991

Blessed is he whose transgression is  
forgiven, whose sin is covered.  
Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah  
imputeth not iniquity,  
And in whose spirit there is no guile.

(Psa. 32:1-2)

### **AN UNDESERVED REMEDY**

Forgiveness is never earned nor ever deserved. Nothing a human being can do and purchase release from sin's guilt. God owes nobody anything (Rom. 11:35). His willingness to take away the burden of sin never is out of indebtedness (Rom. 4:4). The only thing David did was to repent sincerely, and to make wholehearted confession. But David's penitence and confession were not meritorious. No matter how much he repented and confessed, he did not deserve forgiveness. By God's law, because of his committing murder and adultery, he deserved only death (Ex. 21:12; Deut. 22:22). Hence, God's absolution from sin was granted in wise because of David's works of righteousness. The blessing of forgiveness was pronounced "apart from works" (Rom. 4:6).

The sovereign God could have pronounced forgiveness even without David's penitence and confession of sin, but apparently those two items were the turning points in the Lord's mind. Without them in David there would have been no forgiveness; but with them, though non-meritorious, forgiveness would be granted.

### **TODAY'S REMEDY**

Similarly, the sovereign God could pronounce forgiveness to all sinners in the world today without any human conditions. His Son tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9), and God has the power to carry them all to heaven regardless of what they do or do not do. But it has pleased Him (who is of purer eye to behold evil, and that cannot look on perverseness, Hab. 1:3) to grant forgiveness over to those who come to him by way of Jesus Christ (Jno. 14:16). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jno. 3:16).

Sad it is how humans have wrested the Biblical meaning of the word "believe." The jailor was told, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and

thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts 16:31). If one understands what the Bible means by believing, then one can say that believing is all of the sinner's part in being saved. But if one restricts, or squeezes the sponge of faith, leaving only trust, then he does not understand the Biblical meaning of the command "believe on the Lord Jesus."

One of the essential elements in Biblical believing is the mental agreement that Jesus is the Son of God (Jno. 8:24; 20:30-31; Matt. 16:16), but that agreement alone does not give salvation (Jno. 12:42; James 2:19). By way of illustration, a young man may believe mentally that a certain young lady would be an excellent wife, but such believing does not make her his wife. If things proceed normally, he will begin to love her, and to him she becomes precious, but she is still not his wife. Similarly, when a sinner believes that Jesus is the Son of God, he is not saved; in addition, when he begins to love Jesus, and Jesus becomes to the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, he is still not saved. As the young man believes mentally, loves deeply, and then takes his bride through a marriage ceremony, so a sinner believes mentally, loves deeply, repents sincerely, makes the good confession, and is immersed in water (Comparable to a marriage ceremony); then is he married to Christ, then is he saved (Mark 16:16; Jno. 14:15; Acts 3:19; 1 Jno. 4:15; Gal. 3:27; Acts 10:47).

No virtue is seen in the act itself of going through a marriage ceremony, but it is required. No virtue is seen in the act itself of being immersed in water, but it has pleased God to make that action the transition between guilt and freedom, between the burden of sin and relief from it (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). Then may one Biblically rejoice, and say with David and with Paul:

Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, And whose sins are covered (Rom. 4:7).

## ***Can a Man Save Himself?***

There is a new emphasis on the doctrine being preached which declares that it is impossible for a person to do anything towards his salvation from sin. This teaching sets forth the idea that any action on the part of man toward his salvation nullifies the grace of God.

The Bible declares that salvation is dependent upon both divine and human action. It strongly emphasizes what God does to save the sinner, and what the sinner must do to save himself. God's part in man's salvation is broadly comprehended in the word "GRACE". God's grace is shown by His love for man. Man's part in his salvation is broadly comprehended in the word "FAITH". Man's faith is shown by his obedience to God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith . . ." (Ephesians 2:8).

### **THE DIVINE SIDE**

God conceived the plan of salvation; Christ made it possible by His death; and the Holy Spirit revealed it through inspired men. Thus God, Christ and the Holy Spirit play a most vital part in man's salvation. We are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8) as we are cleansed by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). We have no righteousness or merit with which to commend ourselves to God and He is under no obligation to save us. We must depend upon God's mercy and upon Christ's atoning blood.

### **THE HUMAN SIDE**

When the gospel is preached, we must hear it with an open mind and receptive heart (Romans 10:13-14). We must believe in Christ and trust in Him for salvation (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:13). We must repent of all sins, for this God commands us to do (Acts 17:30). We must confess Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10), and, upon this confession of faith, be baptized (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:37-39). Baptism is always "for remission of sins" (Acts 2:38); to "wash away sins" (Acts 22:16); to put us "into Christ" (Galatians 3:27); and to "save us" (1 Peter 3:21). These are actions which man must take. God cannot believe, repent, or be baptized for man, but God directs man to do these things in obedience to His requirements. When man has obeyed he has not earned or merited his salvation, but by his faith he has appropriated unto himself the grace of God.

If this teaching of man is true which says that a sinner cannot do anything to save himself, then it follows that man's salvation is wholly dependent upon God. It follows also that if God does not choose to save a man, then God is wholly responsible for that man's condemnation. But the Bible says that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). If a person is lost it will be

because HE CHOSE to walk in the broad way that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13).

The Bible says "... Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). Again "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). "... he (Christ) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

## ***Reading For His Own Benefit***

**Hardeman Nichols**

The drawn expressions of shock were still upon the faces of the neighbors and friends who were gathering to offer sympathy to his widow. Like most of us, these knew of the possibility of death, but it was not expected here yet. His wife met the three of us as we entered the room.

Her husband had died suddenly at the evening service soon after worship began. One minute he was singing praise and the next he was slumping forward as his soul left the body. He had prepared, but he wasn't ready. That is, he had made preparation for changing worlds some day by obeying the gospel and growing for many years into a mature soul, but he wasn't expecting that this would be the day of death. We offered our condolences as his wife recounted the already precious memories of the hours spent with him that day.

I was glancing around the room, noticing the usual touches of comfortable housekeeping. Beside what apparently was his favorite chair were books and commentaries, arranged at hand on a table as if they had been left in the midst of use to go to the evening services of the meeting. On that table was a well-worn Bible with a sheet of paper marking a place in it. She saw my eyes lingering on this place of study and she explained that while she had ironed during the afternoon, he had sat there studied. One of them asked; "Oh, was he preparing to teach a class?" "No," she replied, "he was just reading the Bible for his own benefit."

Now there is the key to conversion and growth. The rich benefits of the Bible are available to those who read it with proper motives. It is commendable to study, to read the Bible for the purpose of sharing its

truths with others; but this is good only if we are constantly reading the Scriptures for our own benefit.

In the hurried paces of each--stop running. Read God's Word and pray.

## ***Did a Close Friend Ever Rebuke You?***

**Ferrel Jenkins**

A common idea among people today is that our friends will never say or do anything to hurt us. If a person "wounds us," we think he is an enemy. Very much contrary to this opinion, we learn who true friends are, many times, by the way they save us from danger. A Christian knows the danger that a sinner is in and makes an attempt to save him from that peril by teaching him the way of salvation, but the person often takes this as an insult. We are not ignorant of the fact that there are some who are completely tactless and are always "wounding" others. These are not people we call friends. Our friends are those who "wound" because it is best for us. The man who is always throwing "love and kisses" upon us may be the worst enemy we have for he will not warn us of our peril. Remember the act that betrayed Jesus. It was the apparent action of a friend. The wise writer in the Old Testament teaches what I have stated, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are profuse" (Proverbs 27:6).

### **BEST OPPORTUNITY**

**For People Living In Central Riy. Areas of Bombay  
To meet with CHURCH OF CHRIST  
EVERY SUNDAY FOR WORSHIP AT 6.00 P.M.  
At G.E.I. High School, Near Bus Stand, KURLA (W).**

**ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED**



YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!

# Radio Sri Lanka Broadcasts

**English**—*The Voice of Truth-Speaker* : J.C. Choate.

The Voice of Truth, Post Box 3815, New Delhi 110049.

Mondays—9:00 to 9:15 P.M.

Friday 7.45 to 8:00 P.M.

**Hindi**—*Satya Susamachar*—Speaker : Sunny David.

Satya Susamachar, Post Box 3815, New Delhi-110049.

Tuesdays—9.00 to 9.15 P.M.

Thursdays—9.00 to 9.15 P.M.

Fridays—9.00 to 9.15 P.M.

Sundays—12.45 to 1.00 P.M.

**Telugu**—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : Joshua Gootam

The Voice of Truth, Post Box 80, Kakinada 533001

Sundays—2.15 to 2.30 P.M.

Tuesdays—2.15 to 2.30 P.M.

Thursdays—2.15 to 2.30 P.M.

Fridays—2.15 to 2.30 P.M.

Saturdays—2.15 to 2.30 P.M.

**Tamil**—*The Way of Truth*—Speaker : P.R. Swamy.

The Way of Truth, Post Box 8405, Bangalore 560084

Tuesdays—5.30 to 5.45 P.M.

Thursdays—6.45 to 7.00 P.M.

Sundays—T.45 to 7.00 P.M.

**Malayalam**—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : P.K. Varghese

Church of Christ, Sunny Meads Lane, Trivandrum—34 (Kerala).

Tuesdays—3.15 to 3.30 P.M.

Fridays—3.15 to 3.30 P.M.

**Kannada**—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : Robert Rathnakar

Box 448, Bangalore 560004

Sundays—1.45 to 2.00 P.M.

## ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO LISTEN

Bible Correspondence Courses and Christians Literature  
are available in these different languages from the addresses  
and. Also the radio sermons are available in book form.

and Published by Sunny David on behalf of Church of Christ,  
and Printed at : Print India A 38/2, Mayapuri, I, New Delhi-  
Editor : Sunny David.

Licence to Post without Prepayment of Postage No.

U/SE-25/85

Posted at New Delhi PSO on 10/11 October, 1991

Delhi Postal Regn. No. D (SE) 059

Rego. No. 25921/71

# **You are Cordially Invited**

To Attend

Worship Services of the church of Christ

**Every Sunday :**

Paite

8.00 A.M.

English/Hindi

10.00 A.M.

**Meeting**

**E-10/B Defence Colony, Ring Road  
(Near Andrews Ganj Bus Stop)  
New Delhi.**

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**To:**

**From:**

**The Bible Teacher**

Post Box No. 3815  
New Delhi-110049.