

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

**Vol. 48**

**February 2018**

**No. 10**

## Editorial

### **What Does the Bible Teach?**

#### *God Has Given To Man To Choose His Own Eternal Destiny*

ONE OF THE REALITIES OF LIFE IS, everyone who is living must die one day. Death is as sure as life is. No one wants to die, but everyone knows that he/she will die. In this world nothing is more common than death. Death is no respecter of persons. It is said, that each day approximately 100,000 people die upon the earth. Some die suddenly, some in accidents, others die due to illness, and still some other commit suicide. A song writer wrote, "Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away, They fly forgotten, as a dream, Dies at the op'ning day." The question is: Where do people go after they die? The inspired writer of the Bible wrote, "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27). At another place it says, "....For man goes to his eternal home." (Ecclesiastes 12:5). Man goes through this life only once and then to the judgment, and not go around again and again in many lives through a cycle of death and rebirth trying to right his wrong, as some believe.



Having been created by God in His own image and after His own likeness (Genesis 1:26,27), man is a spirit being. Man is more than a body with a soul. (Genesis 2:7). Man is, in fact, a soul dwelling in a body. Death occurs to body. Soul or spirit never die. Physical death is a separation of the spirit from the body (James 2:26). When

man dies, the Bible says, "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was. And the spirit will return to God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7). When man, in the beginning, had sinned in the garden of Eden, and consequently had died spiritually, that is, separated himself from God, because of sin (Genesis 2:17), before he was driven out, God had said to Adam, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19). The body of Adam, first man, was from the dust and that was to return to dust, while the spirit returns "unto God who gave it" to give an account according to what was done in the body. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). The soul or the spirit of man does not become extinct with the death of the body, because unlike animals, man was created in the image of God, who is Spirit. (John 4:24). Like God, therefore, man is an eternal spiritual being, who like Him will live forever. **But where in eternity?** When the Bible says, at death, "the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it." It does not mean that the soul or the spirit of man goes to live with God in heaven. But it means it goes to God as a judge, to give account of itself, and to be lodged either with the spirits of the unrighteous in Hades (Luke 16:23; 2 Peter 2:4) or with the spirits of the righteous in paradise, (Luke 23:43) according to what was done in the body (Luke 16:25; 2 Corinthians 5:10) , and to remain there until Christ comes back on the day of judgment to judge all people. (Acts 17:31). Depicting the day of judgment, Christ said, on that day all people of all nations will be gathered before Him, the righteous on His right hand and the unrighteous on His left. Speaking of the unrighteous He said, "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:46). Thus both the wicked and the saved will continue to live forever in eternity, in whatever realm they have chosen to live in this life, either in hell or in heaven. Eternity is infinite, without ending. It is not spendable. **So people will not spend eternity, but will live in eternity forever.**

God has ordained man to be a free moral agent. Just as in the beginning in the garden of Eden man had the choice to obey God's command or to disobey. **Thus man actually chooses his own eternity.** The issues of eternity are settled for each one in this life by one's own personal choice. The Bible teaches that each individual is accountable to God, "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12). With the Bible as man's infallible

and all sufficient guide, there is no excuse for anyone to live and die impenitent and be forever lost. The only hope for human redemption is while people live. It is too late when they are dead. The Bible says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23). And again, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:21). Man cannot make himself righteous by performing works of his own righteousness. (Isaiah 64:6). And no one will enter heaven without being righteous. Thus God revealed His righteousness in His Son Jesus Christ, and it is available to all people through faith in Him and obedience to His command. (Romans 3:22; Mark 16:16).

## WAITING ON THE LORD

J.C. CHOATE

AMONG THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE BELIEVERS in Christ there is always someone talking about waiting on the Lord. To be more exact, there are many who offer this as their reason for not being more active. They say that they are waiting on the Lord to reveal his will to them, to tell them what to do, so they will know the right course to take. They mean by this that the Lord is going to speak to them or in some way reveal his will to them separate and apart from his word. If you should be one of these, and you may well be, as this is the usual concept of the majority of people as to how the Lord works, but if you are one of them then you are waiting in vain. Instead of you waiting on the Lord he is waiting on you to do his will. You remember how Saul was waiting but the preacher came to him and said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22: 16). Also, as you read through the story of Saul's conversion in Acts 9 and 22 you will note that it was not Christ who told him what to do but a preacher of the gospel. Of course in this case the Lord did appear to him but this was in the time of miracles and prior to the time that the New Testament was given in written form.

The God of heaven has given his will to man and through this he reveals his teaching and gives instructions as to what he wants



man to do. It is not necessary for any man to wait for the Lord to reveal his will to them because the only will that he has for man has already been revealed. He has not promised to, and neither will he, speak directly or in some other way to any man. He will not speak directly or indirectly, that is. apart from his word, to make known or to convey any message of any kind to any human being anywhere in this world. To do that would make him a respecter of persons, unless he dealt with every man in the same manner, and since he is no respecter of persons then you can be certain that he is not involved in such a practice. (Acts 10: 34, 35).

In the next place, why should the Lord have to speak to any man? Why should man have to wait on the Lord to speak to him? What would be the purpose of it? He has already given his word to the world and he has asked his disciples to go to all the world, to all nations, and even to every creature to preach its message. (Mark 16: 15, 16; Matthew 28: 19, 20). On reading the word, or hearing it taught, faith is produced (John 20: 30, 31; Romans 10: 10), and then it is up to the individual to either accept it or to reject it.

Why would the Lord reveal his will to man and then find it necessary to speak directly to man concerning his will for him? As pointed out, that would make him a respecter of persons if he spoke to you in that manner and didn't speak to me in the same way. But should he find it necessary to do that then what was the purpose of giving us the Bible, if it is not complete and final? Also, why should any man have to wait on the Lord and why would the Lord make any human being wait if it is up to the Lord to speak directly to him?

Next, the question arises if that means that the Lord cannot directly speak to man. He cannot speak anything that would be contrary to his will, if so that would make him a liar, and the Bible says on the one hand that his word is truth (John 17: 17), that it is complete and perfect (James 1: 25), and that it completely furnishes man to every good work (2 Timothy 3: 16, 17), and on the other hand we are told that God cannot lie. (Hebrews 6: 18). Therefore, he cannot and will not speak directly to you about any matter. If you are waiting for him to do so then you are wasting your time.

The foregoing does not mean that God is dead, that he cannot see or hear, or that he is not with us. Neither does it mean that he does not lead us or guide us. He does so but through his word and by his providence. He is with us and in us, hears us and answers our prayers if they are according to his will and for our good. You remember that Paul revealed that all things work together for our

good if we love the Lord and are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8: 28).

The important thing to remember, therefore, is that we should hear God's will for us as revealed through his word, act on it, and be assured that the Lord will take care of the rest. Don't worry about having to wait on the Lord. He is more than aware of your needs, has already provided for them, and will more than adequately care for you. Are you waiting on the Lord? If so, don't wait any longer—he is waiting on you. Will you not hear him, arise and obey his teaching by believing in Christ (John 3: 16). repenting of your sins (Acts 17: 30), confessing your faith in Christ (Matthew 10: 32), and being baptized (buried in the water) for the remission of your sins? (Acts 2: 38). If you will the Lord will save you and add you to his church. (Acts 2: 41, 47). Regardless of who you are or where you are, the Lord invites you to obey him. You may be a preacher, teacher, and a great sinner, but God's word applies to one and all since all have sinned and therefore all stand in need of salvation.

Even as a Christian you will not have to wait on the Lord. Instead he has revealed his will so the Christian will know his duty and can therefore go forth to discharge it. Again, don't wait on the Lord because he is waiting on you to act. Right now! May God bless you as you so do.

---

## *Does Jesus Trust Us?*

ANCIL JENKINS

“... many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men” (John 2:23-24). There is an interesting play on words in this passage. The people “believed” in Jesus because of his miracles. However, Jesus refused to “entrust” himself to them. This was because of the superficial nature of their faith. It was based entirely on the spectacular. This was the same faith that caused the multitude to follow him because of the loaves and fishes. This was an incomplete, inadequate faith. To have entrusted himself to them would have been like building a house on the sand. How real is the power of Jesus in your life? Do you ever say, “I wish I were able to do more for the Lord?” Have you often thought, “My spiritual life is just not what I want it to be.” Are you confused by your lack of

opportunities to use your abilities. Do you wonder why the Lord has not used you in a mighty way?

The promise of Jesus is that he will be with us, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20). He promises to come in and make his permanent abode in us (Revelation 3:20). Jesus said that both he and the Father would dwell in those who love them (John 14:23). Paul prayed that Christ might have a permanent dwelling in the heart of the Ephesians (Ephesians 3:17).

Do you have such a relationship? What actions come from your knowledge of this indwelling? Our lives are to be enriched and empowered by Christ in us. If they are not, it is because we either do not have this knowledge, or he does not dwell in us.

If we are Christians, how could we have missed his being in us? It may be that he does not trust us, just as he didn't trust some in his day. He has not committed himself to you because you have not committed yourself to him. If we give all we have to him, he will give all of himself to us.

This trust will never come until we are willing to give him every part of our lives. I seem to remember a fable of a king who wanted to reward some of his subjects. He asked them to give him all the money they had. They gave him copper, brass, and a few silver coins. When he later called them in to his presence, he returned the money to them, but the coins were now all made of gold. This brought a mixed blessing to the people. They were happy they now had gold coins, but disappointed they had hoarded back a few they had not given the king. God is able to take all we give him and reward us richly.

---

## *CHRISTIANS ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE*

CLEM THURMAN

THE WORD "*church*" is from the Greek, "*ekklesia*" which is defined as "A called out group. From 'ek' (out of) and 'kaleo' (to call)" [Thayer's Lexicon]. And it is God who does the calling: "*He called you through our gospel*" (2 Thes. 2:14), When one is taught the gospel of Christ, believes and accepts it, he is then "*called of God*." As Jesus put it, "*No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written*

*in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me*" (John 6:44-45). Note that to "*be taught of God*" means hearing and learning "*from the Father.*" In other words, when we hear the word of God, He is our teacher. That is the way He calls us "*through the gospel*" (2 Thes. 2:14).

There is a beautiful passage of Scripture that describes the Christian who has been called out. "*But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*" (1 Pet. 2:9-10). Let us study this passage carefully to find what a Christian really is and what changes have been made in him because of his calling.

### **"A CHOSEN PEOPLE"**

Where the American Standard has "*An elect race*" the New International Version reads, "*A chosen people.*" Both convey the same idea: that we are "*chosen*" people, and God did the choosing by the gospel which we accept. In the Old Testament, Israel was God's "*chosen people,*" God told them, "*For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth*" (Deut. 14:2; see also Isa. 41:8; 45:4). Because Israel was His chosen people, God dealt with them in a much different way than He did with the Gentiles.

Christians are told, "*Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God*" (Heb. 3:12). The "*falling away*" of Israel is held up as an example, and caused them to be rejected of God because of their "*unbelief*" and "*disobedience*" (vs. 18-19). The apostle John reveals the vision he was shown in the battle of Christians against the forces of Satan: "*These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful*" (Rev. 17:14). In the same way Israel was "*the chosen people*" under the old law, Christians are chosen today.

### **"A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD"**

Under the Old Testament, the priesthood for the people was of the tribe of Levi. "*And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near;*

*for them Jehovah thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of Jehovah"* (Deut. 21:5). From the High Priest down to all of the other priests, they had to be of the tribe of Levi. But we read, *"The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law"* (Heb. 7:12). Christ Jesus could not be a priest according to the Old Testament law (Heb. 7:8; 8:4). But He is now our High Priest (Heb. 7:25 -8:4).

And the real beauty of this new relationship with God is that every Christian is a priest! We are *"a royal priesthood."* Just as the priests under the old covenant offered sacrifices in praise to God, so do we: *"Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ"* (1 Pet. 2:5). And what are some of those *"spiritual sacrifices"*? Let the Bible answer: *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service"* (Rom. 12:1). Everything we do in the service of God is *"a spiritual sacrifice."* Thus, we are a *"And madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon earth"* (Rev. 5:10).

#### **"A HOLY NATION"**

Just as Israel was to be a holy nation under God, so are Christians the world over. *"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works"* (Titus 2:13-14).

The apostle Paul wrote that the church is the temple of God: *"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye"* (1 Cor. 3:16-17). And again, we read of the purpose of the Christian life: *"For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world"* (Titus 2:11-12).

*"Holiness"* defines the character of the church and the Christians who compose it. *"Like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy"* (1 Pet. 1:15-16). We belong to God, and as He is holy, so must we be *"in all manner of living."*



### **“WE ARE GOD’S PEOPLE”**

We belong to God for a very simple reason: He bought us! We are *“The church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood”* (Acts 20:28). And to show the need for holy living, God says, *“Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body”* (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Because we are purchased with the blood of Jesus, we are *“A people for his own possession, zealous of good works”* (Titus 2:14). The apostle Paul put it this way: *“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s”* (Rom. 14:8). If we belong to God and Jesus Christ, then our lives must reflect the kind of character that shows we are in His family.

### **“IN GOD’S LIGHT”**

Notice that our text says, *“Called out of darkness and into his marvelous light.”* John writes of this, also: *“And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin”* (1 John 1:5-7).

Jesus told His disciples, *“Ye are the light of the world”* (Matt. 5:14). And the apostle Paul shows the source of that light: *“Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”* (2 Cor. 4:6). In the Scriptures, darkness is the realm of Satan, just as light is the realm of God. *“For ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober”* (1 Thes. 5:5-6). As *“children of light”* we are to *“resist the devil”* (James 4:7) and live holy lives for the Father.

### **“HAVE OBTAINED MERCY”**

*“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Rom. 3:23), and *“The wages of sin is death”* (Rom. 6:23). None of us wants justice before the throne of God, we want mercy. *“By grace have ye been saved through faith”* (Eph. 2:8). And the grace of God is found only in Jesus Christ: *“But we behold him who hath been made*

*a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man*" (Heb. 2:9).

Paul wrote, *"But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration"* (Titus 3:4-5). We can't live good enough, or do enough good works, to earn our way into God's fellowship. Only by His mercy can we obtain the forgiveness of our sins and be at one with God.

Peter wrote, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"* (1 Pet. 1:3-5). Thus, we are not only saved by the mercy of God, but we continue to be *"guarded through faith"* by the power of God! He continues to look after us, guiding and guarding us from Satan's power.

Yes, *"Ye are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation ... called out of darkness into his marvelous light ... now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy"* (1 Pet. 2:9-10). That is what it means to be a Christian, a member of the body of Christ, a child of God.

---

## *Fall Into The Hands Of The Living God*

W. EDWIN KEARLEY

IT IS EVIDENT THAT A GREATER percentage in the church today have little fear of God. The clamor for compromise is everywhere. Some want "grace" to mean the salvation of everyone, without conditions. Others would lower the standards of morality on such things as divorce and remarriage, social drinking, etc. Still others want a preacher who says the right things, but then negates what he says by apologizing for what he says.

The writer of Hebrews stated, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). In this context the writer urged the church to "provoke one another to love and good works."

They were not to forsake the assembly of the saints. He warned, if after they learned the truth, then “sin willfully,” there will not be another sacrifice for their sins. The death of Jesus on the cross is the only sacrifice God will give.

The New Testament does not teach that one can earn or merit salvation; yet it does lay down conditions of salvation. Down through the centuries men have sought to lower the conditions of salvation. In this they take upon themselves the role of God. However, God is still on his throne. His word expresses his will for man. By his word we shall be judged (John 12:48).

The “faith only” theory is an effort to water-down God’s will. This dogma originated from the idea that the body of man is evil, and can do no good. They acknowledge man can believe. They then conclude that if one believes in Jesus Christ for a fleeting moment in his entire life, he is saved and cannot be lost.

One problem with the above is that it is not true. Paul taught that man is responsible for what his body does. He said, “For we must all appear before the judgement 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” (II Corinthians 5:10). The Bible teaches man’s faith must be strong enough to obey God’s will. The writer of Hebrews stated concerning Christ and his will: “and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:9).

Today far too many in the church have compromised with the world. An example is one who wants to dance, yet wants to worship God. This caused preachers of the last century to declare that a dancing foot and a praying knee do not grow on the same limb.

The Christian today is drawn by the pressures of today’s society to be a part of the world, and to do what the world does, and yet be pleasing to God. There is a tendency to yield to the humanistic philosophy and declare evil does not exist. This is the cry of the atheists. The cry of many in the church is the cry of unbelief.

There is a need today to impress upon the church that God is on his throne; he rules the universe; his word is law; he will judge the world in righteousness.

God is love, merciful, and forgiving. The Bible tells us his love is manifested in the gift of his Son. Sins are forgiven through his shed blood on the cross. The benefits of his blood are not without condition. The word of God teaches a plan whereby one may receive

the effects of the cleansing blood of Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4, 16-18; 10:8-17). Worship is directed by the word (Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2; 11:23-29). Daily living is regulated by the word of God. Paul said, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (I Timothy 5:22).

One day we will all stand before the throne of God to be judged. Jesus said the Father gave him all authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of man. Then he said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

Ignoring the law of Christ and the reality of the judgement are the actions of fools. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." May we throw off the allurements of the world that will destroy us spiritually. May we become wholly dedicated to love God and do his will.

---

## COME AND SEE

WINFRED CLARK

THIS IS A STATEMENT MADE by the Lord to two of the disciples of John (John 1:35-39), who had just pointed them to the Christ, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This aroused their attention and caused them to follow him. As Jesus turns to see them following, he says: "What seek ye?" And they said, "Where dwellest thou?" His answer was: "COME AND SEE."

That has to be a grand invitation! It has to be something worth our time and attention! So let us take a look.

### I. THIS INVITATION HELPS US TO OVERCOME DELAY

You will note that he does; not say, "Come sometime," nor does he say, "Come someday." The implication is: "Come now." The emphasis should be on the word NOW! That is where Paul places the emphasis in II Corinthians 6:2. He says: "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." Twice he utters this in rapid fashion. So it is easy to see the invitation of our Lord as helping one to overcome delay.

## II. THIS INVITATION HELPS US TO OVERCOME DARKNESS

It is obvious that these men were in the dark as to where Jesus dwelt. They would humbly ask, but would never know until they have responded to his invitation to see. After they respond, they will surely see. They would no longer be in the dark. Wasn't this what Paul was to do? Was he not given the responsibility of "opening the eyes and turning men from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18)?

Yes, as they respond to that invitation they would overcome any darkness or doubt they might have about the Lord.

## III. THIS INVITATION HELPS US TO OVERCOME DISTANCE

As they "come," the distance between them and the Lord is overcome. That which separated is no longer there. They are no longer separated from him who takes away the sins of the world.

Paul spoke of those who were at one time "far off" but now "are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

Yes, this is a grand and glorious invitation which helps one to overcome that which would otherwise separate him from the Christ to whom he must come.

---

# OUR RUIN

DAVE MILLER

APPROXIMATELY 8 YEARS AFTER Daniel was deported from his homeland, a second wave of Jewish exiles were transported to Babylon during the reign of Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. Among this latter group of captives was the fiery prophet Ezekiel. In 592 B.C., on the banks of the Cheber River, Ezekiel was called by God to speak inspired words to the Israelite captives. Ezekiel's divine message was typical of the Hebrew prophets: "Repent!" On one occasion, the prophet poses a particularly intriguing aim of this penitence: "so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30).

We sorely need to recognize the significance of this insight in our own day. There was a fellow in the church of Christ at Corinth who was exhibiting unfaithful behavior. The membership took the backslapping, tolerant approach to the situation. They took the "broadminded" approach. That's where you figure you should "bear with" impenitent persons. You feel you should give them time—perhaps more teaching—more encouragement. Then you get to thinking that such is the "loving, spiritual" course of action. The

members at Corinth were being “big” about the situation, no doubt thinking their tolerance was the “mature” thing to do. This attitude was evident from the fact that Paul described them as “puffed up” (I Corinthians 5:2). In other words, they were PROUD of their decision to continue to associate with the brother.

Paul set them straight about their warped perspective. He said instead of being PROUD, they should have been filled with grief! The word for “mourned” is the word used for the sorrow that occurs when a loved one DIES. Paul was saying they should have been mourning for this brother because in God’s sight, he was DEAD! Rather than seeking to woo the fornicator out of his lost condition by tolerating it or overlooking it, they should have already formally and publicly handed him over to Satan (I Corinthians 5:5)!! They should have already “purged” him from the church (I Corinthians 5:7). They should have passed “judgement” upon him and “expelled” him (I Corinthians 5:12-13)!!

How odd—how strange such instructions sound in contrast to the general mood prevailing among churches of Christ today! Groups accept the impenitent with open arms without batting an eye, or at most after only a mild bout with conscience. If only Ezekiel’s words could penetrate our proud hearts—so that sin will not be OUR ruin.

---

## *The Bible Is Indestructible*

G.F. RAINES

ALTHOUGH THE BIBLE HAS been frequently assailed by powerful and consolidated ranks of disciplined foes for many hundreds of years, “all the powers and malice of worlds seen and unseen shall never prevail against it” (Alexander Campbell).

Jesus says: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35);

Peter says: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever” (I Peter 1:24-25).

“They burned Truth in the market place  
And thought their work complete;  
But next day, with a smiling face,

They met it on the street.  
They threw it in a dungeon damp  
And thought it was no more;  
But lo, it walked with lighted lamp  
Among them as before  
They scorned and ostracized it,  
And ordered it to depart;  
But still it dwelt in all the land  
And challenged every heart."

---

## THE COMING GENERATION

JOHN GIPSON

WHY IS IT THAT PREACHERS continually emphasize the importance of Bible study? Have they just run out of other things to say, or is it really that important?

Perhaps one thing to remember is that apostasy lurks just one generation away. It has been true in the past, and it is true today. You well remember that the days of Joshua were glorious. This man served as the faithful minister of Moses, the servant of God; he was the bold and believing spy, the successor of Moses, the captain of the hosts of Israel, and the conqueror of Canaan. His influence was so great that *"the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua"* (Judges 2:7). But then, at the age of one hundred and ten, Joshua dies. *"And there arose another generation which knew not the Lord"* (Judges 2:11).

One generation served the Lord - the next does not. How swiftly things can change! What brought it all about? The answer is quite simple: Someone allowed a crop of children to grow up without proper instruction. And eventually they had to reap destruction. One step followed another until the punishment of God was meted out. Note the order of progression as it related to ancient Israel:

- (1) **Spiritual illiteracy.** They *"knew not the Lord"* (Judges 2:10).
- (2) **Forsaking God.** *"And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt"* (Judges 2:12).
- (3) **Serving false gods.** They followed *"the gods of the people that were round about them"* (Judges 2:12). They gave in to pagan ideas, pagan practices and customs. Immorality

abounded, and “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6).

- (4) **Punishment from God.** “And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies roundabout” (Judges 2:14).

There is no hope if spiritual illiteracy prevails. Heathen altars will abound. Tidal waves of iniquity will arise and destruction will follow.

We must not fail the youth of today. We must diligently teach them the truth lest it be said once again, “*There arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord.*”

---

## *These Are Perilous Times*

W.N. “BILL” JACKSON

PAUL WARNED TIMOTHY THAT “... in the last days, perilous times shall come” (II Timothy 3:1). Paul goes on to give some items characteristic of such a sinful day as our own. Spiritual and moral values are tumbling down, and every sort of authority is mocked and ridiculed, even God’s authority! We are indeed living in times of peril!

A. These are perilous times for congregations. There has always been an abundance of problems; but so many different sectarian notions are prevailing today, all congregations need to live in day-to-day alertness to the dangers around them, and exert day-by-day care to insure the purity of the body.

B. These are perilous times for elders. A part of the anti-authoritative philosophy of our day, when brought into the area of religion, is to attack the established order of God - the local eldership. It is a time of peril for elders who, in watching over the flock, and then in taking a stand for God in rebuking the sinful and withdrawing from the disorderly; their godly stand will be less and less appreciated as time goes on. Pressure of many sorts can be brought to bear on an eldership, and it takes strong men of faith to withstand.

C. These are perilous times for preachers. Living accommodations and financial help have never been better, but the work is being appreciated less and less. When one stands up to PREACH THE WORD, he must do so without fear or favor.



Again, there are pressures upon the preacher designed to make him either dilute the message, or shun the unpleasant altogether. He must withstand, having loyalty to Christ first.

D. Finally, these are perilous times for every member of the church. The world cries out “Conform!”—and pressures are applied to insure it. Every godly stand will be met with ridicule and mockery. The Christian is constantly “shamed” at being a part of the minority. The weak collapse, and either build a set of values without real conviction, or quit the Cause entirely. Now is the time to be strong.

Indeed, these are perilous times! But we are called to be soldiers (II Timothy 2:3); and the soldier’s real worth is tested, not in times of peace, but in warfare.

---

## *What Does The Bible Say?*

HILTON ROYSTER

All the great religious bodies professing to believe the New Testament to be the word of God hold that to be a member of their respective church one must submit to baptism, or to what they call baptism; and, in administering the rite, they refer to Matthew 28:18-19 as their source of authority for performing the rite.

Some hold that baptism may be performed by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion; while others insist that immersion only is baptism.

In giving the command to “baptize,” Jesus certainly used a word which had a clear, definite meaning, and used that word with its commonly-accepted meaning. From the lexicons of the language used in recording what Jesus said, we may easily learn the meaning of this word, and also from the practice of the inspired men performing the act commanded by the master.

The command of Christ was recorded in the Greek language, that being the language in which the New Testament was written. The word “baptize” is from the Greek word “baptisma” The question is not what does the word “baptize” mean as now used, but what does the word “baptize” as used by inspired men, mean? What was the meaning of the word when Christ gave the Commission?

Baptizo: “To dip in or under water.” —Lidell and Scott.

Sophocles, a native Greek, in his lexicon defines baptizo: “To dip, to immerse, to sink.”

Thayer, who is without doubt, the greatest New Testament Greek

lexicographer in all the world, defines baptizo: "To dip, to immerse, submerge."

We could quote a great many Greek lexicons; but why should we, since there is not a recognized standard Greek lexicon in the world which defines the word otherwise than the above-mentioned examples.

If one could be an eye-witness of a baptism administered by inspired men, the question as to what act they performed would be settled; but since this is not possible for us in this day, let us determine from the inspired records just what act was performed.

"And they were baptized of him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matthew 3:6).

And Jesus "was baptized of John in Jordan" (Mark 1:9). After his baptism it is said: "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove decending on him" (Mark 1:9-10).

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3:23).

"Much water" is not required for sprinkling or pouring; neither do those who have water sprinkled or poured on them "come up out of the water," as Jesus did immediately after his baptism; neither does anyone sprinkle or pour anyone "in" or "into" a river. All these conditions and circumstances are met, however, in immersion.

---

## *Perverted Grace*

JOE E. GALLOWAY

GOD'S GRACE IS BEING MISUSED by some as a spiritual "catchall" to give hope for the disobedient and unfaithful. Without any Bible basis for such, we have heard a few members through the years express their opinion that God may decide to accept many of the "heathen" who have never heard the gospel. These usually admit that God has not promised this; but they still argue that he may do this through "grace." More recently we are hearing some teach that God may overlook doctrinal error on the part of sincere Christians who are ignorant or gullible. The suggestion is that God may accept such Christians who are believing, practicing, and teaching error ignorantly, because they are under the covenant of grace.

That we are saved by God's grace (favor) we gratefully affirm.

The Bible teaches that God's grace has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11); that it resulted in Christ's death for us (Hebrews 2:9); and that salvation is by grace, through faith (Ephesians 2:8). However, some seem to overlook this important fact: God's grace provided God's revelation of his will for us in the New Testament! To be saved by his grace we must learn, believe, and obey this revealed will (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9). There is no indication that God's grace will save (cause God to accept) anyone—sinner or saint—who does not comply with the stipulations of his will.

After telling us in Titus 2:11 that “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,” verse 12 continues the thought by saying, “teaching us ...” In other words, God's grace tells us what we must do to be saved by God. So, the New Testament is called “the word of his grace” (Acts 14:3 and 20:32). Some have tried to make strict adherence to God's word antagonistic to God's grace. They label those of us who teach the need to faithfully obey and live by the Bible “legalists,” and say that such “legalism” is the exact opposite of grace. Yet the Bible clearly shows that strict acceptance and obedience to God's word is essential to being in God's favor!

A thought often overlooked when God's grace is being considered, is the fact that it is “impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18). So, God cannot go against (or act contrary to) his word! Any concept of grace which suggests that God may decide to set aside, or overlook, that which he has said, is a FALSE concept. God has clearly told us that when Christ comes again he will take “vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Thessalonians 1:8-10); so we can KNOW that his grace cannot extend to save the ignorant heathen. Likewise, Christians are told that all that they do in word or deed must be done by Christ's authority (Colossians 3:17), so all must be authorized by the New Testament. When we teach or practice that which is without such authority (for example, instrumental music in worship), we have neither the fellowship of Christ nor of the Father (II John 9-10). God's grace does not constitute an exception to this.

Remember that God's grace is extended to all, and that it is conditioned on each person's learning, believing, obeying, and living by God's word. This should keep us from giving hope for the disobedient and unfaithful. It is not a matter of sincerity and ignorance. Sincere and ignorant people crucified Christ; but God's

grace did not save them until they repented and were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38; 3:17-19).

---

## *The Whole Duty Of Man*

DON L. NORWOOD

THE WRITER OF THE OLD TESTAMENT book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon of Israel, was inspired by God to write the book and to show that all that man may do while he lives in the flesh is vain, unless the person fears God and does his best to learn and to keep God's commandments (Ecclesiastes 1:14; 12:13).

What, exactly, does it mean to fear God? This word "fear" used in Ecclesiastes 12:13 is translated from the Hebrew word "yare," which means "reverence for God." Reverence means "an attitude of deep respect, love, and awe for that which is sacred." Therefore, to fear God means to have the greatest respect for Him and also a feeling of terror or deep concern for being disobedient to Him.

In the New Testament "fear" is translated from the Greek word "phobeo," meaning "to cause fear or to terrify," used in such passages as 1 Peter 2:17; Acts 13:16; Luke 12:4,5.

Consider what Solomon revealed about man's life on earth in the flesh. All that mankind might accomplish as he lives in this world is truly vain (useless) unless he becomes spiritually reconciled unto God and lives in fellowship with God. Solomon thus said, *"And I applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. I have seen everything that is done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind"* (Ecclesiastes 1:13,14).

Solomon tried to satisfy himself with pleasure (2:1-11); he tried wisdom applied to earthy matters (2:12-17); he observed that man is totally controlled by time while here on earth (3:1-15); he saw all kinds of injustice in the lives of people (chapter 4); he saw the excellence of wisdom if properly used following God's guidance (chapters 9 and 10). Yet, with all this and more, the conclusion was and is: *"fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man"* (12:13).

To keep God's commandments in this the Christian age or dispensation is to obey the teachings of the New Testament. Paul, the apostle, was inspired to write, *"There is therefore now no*

*condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but by the Spirit*" (Romans 8:1). This means that a person must enter into a covenant relationship with Christ through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (Galatians 3:26,27; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:8-10; Acts 8:35-39).

This is what it means to be "*in Christ*." Such a person, then, must "*walk by the Spirit*," which means to continue to study the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, and to be obedient to its teachings. This is what it means for mankind today to "*fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

---

## ***Worship Is...***

RON BRYANT

WORSHIP IS NOT A SEEKING TO BE NOBLE; it is nobility. It is not seeking to be humble; it is humility. It is not seeking to adore God; it is adoration. It is not seeking to praise God; it is praise.

Worship is the seeking after God, and being found. It is the bowing of the knee, and being lifted higher. It is the pouring out of one's heart, and in the same moment having it filled. It is delighting in God, honoring God, praising God, adoring God, and, without seeking it directly, being changed by God. Worship is God-centered, not man-centered. It is privilege and duty, the least and the most of Christian existence.

Worship is so linked with life that the two can be thought of as one by the Christian. Life is to be a fervent attempt to honor God. Worship is never divorced from life, but is a focus of life. It is out of the beauty of holiness that God is to be worshipped. Homage is to be paid unto God alone. Homage is paid in worship and in service.

But service is not worship. Worship is not service. They each are a vital part of life for the Christian, and each is high and holy. In all of life the believer seeks God and His glory. In all of service the believer seeks God and His glory. In all of worship the believer seeks God and His glory. In all of these, it is the love and the majesty, the mercy and the grace of the Father, that controls. In all of these, it is man choosing to respond to the God who has chosen to love and accept man, and to give life to man in Christ.

# *Worship: Praise or Performance?*

JIMMY JIVIDEN

TRUE WORSHIP IS NOT A PERFORMANCE to please men, but praise to glorify God. Many seem to have forgotten this truth. Churches try to outdo one another in their pageantry, musical performances, and dramatic productions. Their motive seems to be to please men rather than to praise God.

God does not dwell in physical temples. He is not worshipped by human performances, no matter how beautiful, dramatic, or stimulating they might be. God is God. He desires spiritual worship rather than physical performance. Worship should be directed to God rather than man.

God does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He, Himself, gives to all life and breath and all things (Acts 17:24,25).

True worship is not reciting a memorized, traditional ritual or listening to a musical performance or watching a dramatic presentation of artistic symbols. All of these things are sensory. Their purpose is to stimulate the senses. Their appeal is to the emotional nature of man. Such activity is man-directed, not God-directed.

True worship involves the inner man—the spirit that wills, the mind that understands, and the heart that feels. No human innovation or stimulation can be substituted. Jesus said: *“And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full”* (Matthew 6:5).

---

## GOD’S WILL AND MAN’S WHIMS

DALTON KEY

THE WORD OF GOD and the ideas of man are not always in perfect agreement. Observe:

Man says, “Love for God is the important thing, not the keeping of commandments.” God, in 1 John 5:3, teaches, *“This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.”* And again, Jesus made clear, *“If you love me, keep my commandments”* (John 14:15).

Man says, "One church is just as good as another. Join the church of your choice." God, speaking through His Son, promised to build but one church (Matthew 16:18). The Word of God speaks of this church as Christ's body (Ephesians 1:22,23) and affirms, "*There is one body*" (Ephesians 4:4).

Man says, "Baptism may be important, but it has nothing to do with salvation." God's Word states clearly, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" (Mark 16:16). And, from 1 Peter 3:21, "*Baptism doth also now save us.*"

Man says, "God is love, and a loving God will not permit anyone to be lost." God does affirm His love toward all people (1 John 4:16; John 3:16), but He has also promised a time "*when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2 Thessalonians 1:7,8).

Man says, "Our worship of God is a personal and private thing. We need no scriptural authority for worshipping as we do. As long as the heart is sincere, all worship is accepted." God's Word teaches, "*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:23,24). And what is "truth"? Jesus, in prayer to the Father, said, "*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth*" (John 17:17).

My question is this: Will we succumb to the whims of man, or will we submit to the will of God?

---

## *Christianity Is Proven True by The Nature Of Its Rapid Growth*

ROGER E. DICKSON

THROUGHOUT LUKE'S DEFENSE of Christianity in the book of Acts, he records the phenomenal growth of the Christian movement. His argument is that man-made religious movements do not grow with such rapid expansion. Man-made religions with which the Roman Court would have been familiar developed slowly. In contrast, Christianity exploded out of Jerusalem with volcanic force. It spread throughout the Roman Empire in a period of about thirty years. Luke argues—How can we explain such phenomenal growth without

intervention of the Supernatural? And if the Supernatural is involved in the growth, then we cannot accuse those who believed of being misled by the deceptions of men.

In the book of Acts Luke records the phenomenal church growth at the very beginning of the Christian movement. On Pentecost, *"Those who gladly received his (Peter's) word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them"* (2:41). *"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved"* (2:47). The movement expanded. *"Many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand"* (4:4). *"And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women"* (5:14). They kept preaching and teaching Jesus everywhere (5:42). *"And the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith"* (6:7).

The Christians were then scattered everywhere (8:4). In Samaria *"multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip"* (8:6). *"They were multiplied"* (9:31). In Joppa, *"many believed on the Lord"* (9:42). After Herod died, *"the word of God grew and multiplied"* (12:24). Around Antioch of Pisidia, *"the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region"* (13:49). After the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas, *"they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles"* (15:35).

The disciples continued *"teaching and preaching the word of the Lord"* (15:35). In Thessalonica *"a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas"* (17:4). In Corinth, *"many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized"* (18:8). Out of Ephesus *"the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed"* (19:20).

Luke's argument is clear and his defense is unquestionable. How would the skeptics answer the phenomenal growth of Christianity by using the measuring statistics of how ordinary religions have developed throughout the years? We cannot explain the growth of Christianity by applying the methods of growth that are used to measure man-made religions. Luke's challenge, therefore, is that we cannot answer the argument for the rapid growth of Christianity without the intervention of the Supernatural.