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Editorial

What Does the Bible Teach?

Christ Is The Savior Of The Body

THE BIBLE AT EPHESIANS 5:23 teaches that Christ is the Savior of the body. Now what is the body? It says the body is the church. Speaking of God, the apostle Paul said, "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the **church, which is His body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Again, speaking of Christ, the apostle said, "And He is the head of **the body, the church**, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:18). In verse 24 of the same chapter, the apostle again says, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of **His body, which is the church**." So the body of which Christ is the Savior is the church. In saying Christ is the Savior of the body the apostle in effect was saying Christ is the Savior of the church. Now the question is which church, as there are hundreds, and perhaps thousands of churches on earth today, with different names, following different patterns of worship, teaching different doctrines? In the first century when the apostle wrote these words there was only one church that Christ had promised to build, and He had said its going to be "My church". (Matthew 16:18). The Bible says that those who are saved by believing in Him and obeying His command (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), He adds them to the church. (Acts 2:47). Evidently, He adds



the saved ones to His church, and not to many different churches. Some have wrongly imagined that all different denominations represent the one Church or the one body of Christ. Does He know His church? His church wears His name (1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 16:16); the members of His spiritual body, the church, are called after His name—Christians (Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16); they worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24); and they endeavor to abide only in the doctrine of Christ in everything (2 John 9). The apostle, in 1 Corinthians 12:13, also taught, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.” Centuries before any Catholic or Protestant denominational churches came into existence, they were all, by the direction of the Spirit of God through the word, baptized into one body—that is, into one church. Since Christ adds all the saved people on earth to His church, the church therefore is the body of the saved ones on earth.

The church Christ established is like Noah’s Ark. Noah and his family was ordered by God to get into the Ark to be saved from the flood that was going to destroy all living beings on earth except those in the Ark that was constructed according to the specifications God had provided Noah. (Genesis 6, 7). The Ark was not the savior, but only those who got into the Ark were saved through water. Similarly the church is not the savior, but only those who are in the church will finally be saved, since Christ is the Savior of the body, which is the church. The apostle Peter, reminding Christians about Noah’s Ark and the eight souls that were saved in it and the destruction of those who were outside of the Ark, wrote, “Who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah. While the Ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 3:20-21). The point the apostle was making was that those who were in the Ark were saved through water. It was the water of the flood that separated Noah from the disobedient generation of his time, and it is the water of baptism that separates the saved of today and the disobedient. As Christ commanded, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16). The water which was the means of destruction to others became the very means by which Noah and

his household were delivered from the old world of corruption. He sees a resemblance between the two deliverances in that Noah was delivered by means of water and the hearers or the believers have been saved through baptism in water. Baptism, the apostle says, is the antitype of the water through which Noah was saved in the Ark. In both cases water is involved. In baptism there is a picture or portrayal of Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). The person being baptized realizes that baptism saves in the sense that it is a condition required by the Savior and that, in reality, salvation comes through the resurrection of Christ. The efficacy of baptism for salvation depends not upon the work done but upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ which supposes His death and is the foundation of our faith and hope. It was the water of the flood that washed away the filth of that evil generation, and it is the water of baptism that washes away sins. The former affected the flesh and not the conscience, the latter affected the conscience and not the flesh. But how can one have good conscience if he refuses to be baptized for the remission of sins or to wash away sins as The Bible Teaches? (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

DOES GOD DIRECTLY PUNISH MAN TODAY?

J.C. Choate

WHENEVER SOME NATURAL TRAGEDY, such as a flood, tornado, earthquake, famine, or disease, hits man many conclude that this is God's way of punishing the wicked. If so, what would he do with all the rest? Is he a respecter

of persons in sending his wrath on some while sparing others who are no better, if as good? Does he go about striking man here and there at his pleasure?

Some people in the days of Christ thought that certain people who had been the victims of disaster had been made to pay for their evil deeds. The scriptures record it like this: "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen,



upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:1-5). The Lord in both of these cases is clearly showing that these people had not sinned any more than the others of their day, so therefore it could not be said that they had been punished because of their sins. He is also saying that since these people were no greater sinners than the others, then why would it be supposed that they would be singled out from all the rest to be punished while the others were allowed to go free? The conclusion was thus reached that the sins of these people had nothing directly to do with their suffering and death. But the Lord turned to his listeners and said, "But, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He is saying that all of you will eventually perish unless you leave your sins. He is not saying that they will perish physically because of their sins, but nevertheless they will perish spiritually if they continue in their sins. He is not saying that some will be punished here and there in one way or the other, but he is saying that all of them will be destroyed unless they repent. The cases of example with which he dealt had to do with this world, but this point of emphasis concerns eternal punishment.

The Lord said, "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." (Matthew 5:45). This means, then, in terms of nature that the Lord blesses all with the sun, rain, and so on. This can also be turned around to say that famines, floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters come upon both the good and the bad. Certainly the Lord has not taken nature to use as a common tool of punishment against the wicked. With such massive damage and destruction it would be most difficult to single out the wicked and to punish them alone while bypassing the righteous.

The fact is that in any given area of the world where climatic conditions reach a certain point the result will be a flood, tornado, earthquake, or some other calamity, with the natural results following. If man is there, whether good or bad, he must suffer the consequences. It is not that he has been singled out for punishment. There have been many stories of both good and evil people suffering much because of these natural disorders. There have been many other stories of both the godly and ungodly escaping almost certain death in spite of these things. Surely the Lord could hit the ones he wanted to hit and leave, unharmed the ones he wanted to by-pass

if he intended to punish the wicked directly in a physical way.

But, although God may not be sending these physical disorders directly as a means to punish man, still many lessons may be derived from such experiences. In the first place, they should remind one and all that God is still in control of things and that he is very powerful. He may not be working directly through the law of nature to send punishment upon man, but nevertheless he is still behind nature. He made the world and all things therein. This includes the rivers, the sun, the rain, fire, and all else. These things are controlled through the law of nature to the extent that they are controlled. But God is the one who put it all together and set it into operation. Hence, these floods, tornados, etc., should bring man back to his senses and help him not only to realize that God is still in charge of things but also that he is in need of God and His help. Think of the many people who have no time for God when things are going well. They even curse him, mock him, and go as low in sin as possible. But when the forces of nature hit a violent blow, they are ready to bow down before God and to ask for his mercy and help. If man could keep this posture, just think of what it could do for him. Perhaps some do, and therefore even out of tragedy many are helped. Not only is God looked to more by one and all in times of trouble, and not only do various ones find their way back to God on a permanent basis, but these times also help neighbours to get together to help one another, cause States to send support to other States, and result in countries assisting each other in times of emergency. So even disasters in these ways turn out to be blessings in disguise. Therefore, don't accuse God of striking you down with natural forces but if you are down, look up for help. It could make all the difference in the world.

Do You Bring Out the Best or the Worst in Others?

W. T. Allison

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO a sociology professor at John Hopkins University assigned a research project to his class. He told them to go to one of Baltimore's worst slums and study the environment of 200 boys. After they studied the habits, homes, and education of the boys, they were to predict how many of them would

become criminals. The students' research predicted that of the 200 boys studied, 180 of them would wind up in jail.

Twenty-five years later the same professor assigned another class the job of locating the 200 boys to test the validity of the earlier predictions. Most of them were found. The students were amazed to learn that only 4 of the 200 had ever been in jail. The majority were solid, decent citizens.

In talking to these men, it was discovered that there was a common denominator in their lives. Each had been taught by the same school teacher. The sociology class located the teacher, now well over 70 years old, in a nursing home. When asked how she made these boys into such fine men, despite their disadvantages, she answered, "Why, all in the world I ever did was to be kind to them and love them!"

Love, when properly understood and applied, will produce changes in the life that intimidation and fear can never make. Successful human relations can be boiled down to a single sentence: You will perform better for people who expect the best from you than you will for those who expect the worst.

That's how God treats us! When we were sinners, without hope, He looked at us and thought we could do something better. He saw potential in us. We were worth something in His eyes. That's why He took the great risk. That's why He sent His Son!

As a child of God, redeemed by the blood of His Son, do you bring out the best or the worst in others? Love and kindness change people. Such a simple thing to do! Will you help change the world?

BYSTANDERS IN CONTRAST

Michael L. King

THE OBSERVERS OF THE LIFE and death of Christ were divided from day one as to who He really was. Some looked upon Him as Emmanuel, which means "*God with us*," but Herod and his followers sought Him to "*destroy him*," possibly due to the threat of having his kingship threatened (Matthew 1:23; 2:13).

Peter, speaking of Jesus, emphatically stated, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*," while some of His other disciples viewed Him as John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, or one of the prophets (Matthew 16:13-16).

As Jesus began His ministry, confirming His words with miracles,

"his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11), but the Pharisees, when they observed the works of Jesus, declared they were done *"by Beelzebub the prince of the devils,"* in spite of the fact that *"all the people were amazed and said, is not this the son of David?"* Their division prompted Jesus to further proclaim that *"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand"* (Matthew 12:22-25).

More confusion arose during the final week of Christ's existence than any other time during His earthly pilgrimage. Some said, *"Let him be crucified,"* and others asked, *"Why, what evil hath he done?"* (Matthew 27:23). While He was suspended on the cross, the scribes, chief priests, and elders challenged His ability to come down from the cross, denying His being the Son of God. Yet, at a distance were numerous staunch supporters, women who had followed Him from Galilee to minister unto Him. Among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome (Mark 15:29-32;39-41). The women were decisive about Jesus and are often referred to as being *"The last at the cross and the first at the tomb."* They surely witnessed the diversity of opinion of the two thieves. One doubtfully *"railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us,"* while the other thief said, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"* (Luke 23:39-43). Finally, observers could not agree as to whether the body of Jesus had actually been resurrected or stolen (Matthew 28:7,8; 12,13).

We are now separated by almost two thousand years from these historic events surrounding the life and death of Jesus. As we observe, can you see a contrast in the onlookers which could cause division and leave those who are unbelievers confused and in a quandary? Christians must give consideration to the potential for mixed signals being given by their lives. Paul instructed the Corinthians to avoid divisions and to *"be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment"* (1 Corinthians 1:10). James reprimanded his readers for allowing their mouths to speak both *"blessing and cursing"* (James 3:10). Have we reached the time in our own personal lives when we *"ought to be teachers"* but *"have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat"* (Hebrews 5:12-14)?

The Hebrews writer insists that we need to leave *"the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us go on unto perfection (maturity)."*

If we are unable to do so, then we are not any different from those who crucified Christ. Those who *"were made partakers... and tasted the good word of God ... and fall away; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."* *"Let us go on unto perfection ... and of faith toward God"* (Hebrews 6:1-6).

Are we active in bringing souls to Christ or are we repelling them by having an obstinate and divisive spirit? Which of the malefactors flanking Christ's cross do we most closely resemble?

Kindness To The Dead

Glenn Colley

AFTER WIDOWS NAOMI AND RUTH journeyed to Bethlehem and were first beginning to enjoy the benevolence of Boaz, Naomi praised his goodness with these words: *"Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead"* (Ruth 2:20).

It is easy to see what is meant by "kindness to the living," but how was Boaz kind to the dead? The answer, of course, is that by seeing to the needs of Naomi and Ruth, Boaz was honoring the desires and memories of their deceased husbands, Elimelech and Mahlon. When caring for their wives, he was showing kindness posthumously to them.

The thought of kindness to the dead becomes practical and even sweeter to us when we consider those Christians who will be tenderhearted to our mate, children, or parents we leave behind when we die. Our Lord spoke through the agony of the cross to ask John to care for sweet Mary after His death (John 19:26,27). Few desires are deeper or more sentimental than this.

The Holy Scriptures contain many commands regarding the care of widows, for our Lord is very serious about how we treat those left behind when husband or father dies. Even before the Law of Moses, a Hebrew widow who had no children by her husband was allowed (and assumed) to marry the brother of her deceased husband, in order to be cared for and to raise up children (Genesis 38:6-11). Deuteronomy 25:5-7 commanded this union, and called it the brother's duty.

Exodus 22:22,23 shows us the Fatherly eye from Zion guarding the interests of those left behind when a husband dies. God says,

"Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry." Deuteronomy 10:17,18 says, "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment."

In our Lord's stinging rebuke of the wicked Jews He said, *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation"* (Matthew 23:14). While it would, of course, have been wrong to "devour" the house of anyone or to have defrauded others, Jesus specifically noted what His listeners did to the widows.

How much less does God care for the widows in our dispensation? No less. Paul teaches us to honor widows who are widows indeed, and desolate (1 Timothy 5:3-5). There were widows in the early church who, because of their poverty and need, were cared for at the expense of the Christians. This is proper and right today. We practice an impure religion if we do not care for widows and orphans. *"Pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world"* (James 1:27).

Naomi, in praising the goodness of Boaz, taught us an added motivation and benefit for caring for widows: When we care for widows, we are caring for the living and the dead.

BE STILL

Jessie Granville

ONE DAY, I WAS DRIVING down the highway with a friend. Glancing at the speedometer, I noticed that I had unknowingly accelerated to well over the speed limit. "Man, I didn't know I was going that fast! It felt like we were only going 55." He looked over to see how fast we were going and laughed. "You got velocitized!" he said, grinning.

I tried to look the word up in the dictionary, but it was not there. Yet, it is such an appropriate word for our modern age.

The world is caught up in such a whirlwind of activities. We rush here so we will have time to rush there. We fall exhausted into bed

late, and rise early to get a jump on the new day so we can get more done. We aren't content to pile up phone messages on answering machines. Now we carry phones with us wherever we go to be interrupted wherever we are.

Even our children are caught up in the rush. They have school and band practice and football practice and cheerleading practice and drama and chorus and yearbook. We rush them from place to place so they can do more and more.

We have become "velocitized". We are unaware of how fast our lives have become. We just know that we have less and less time to do more and more things. We have no time to exercise. We have no time to eat right. How else do you explain the proliferation of all the fast food restaurants? We have no time to talk to our friends. We have no time to spend with our families. Even more tragic, we have no time to pray. We have no time to commune with God. We have no time.

We are exhausted. We come home and flop in front of the TV, hardly able to fix dinner. We stare at the TV in a mindless stupor, knowing that we should be doing, doing, doing; but we are so tired, we can hardly move. We know that we should be reading our Bibles and studying. But our minds are numb with fatigue.

Some strong souls manage to get up earlier in the morning to get some quiet time to pray. Others stay up later. However, most of us, I'm afraid, don't do anything. So the church has once more drifted into a time of depending on the preacher and brotherhood papers to tell us what we should believe. We hold on to old traditions, because this brother says we should. We grab on to new traditions-in-the-making because that brother says we need to change. We are once again in an age of being *"tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine"* (Ephesians 4:14 NKJV).

How do we regain our equilibrium? The world is pulling us back and forth all day long. Our brethren pull us left and right all day long. It is time for us, again, to learn to be still. *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10).

What good is it if we gain the whole world and lose our souls? (Matthew 16:26) What has all the rushing around accomplished?

If all we had was the hope of this world, our fever of activity would almost make sense. If all we had were these few years to do everything that had to be done, sure, let's get it done!

But for the Christian, the pressure is off. We are in a state of preparation. We have as much as 80 whole years to prepare for

living eternity with God and our Savior, Jesus. What we do every day helps or hinders that preparation.

What then is more important than taking the time to study God's word? What is more important than communing with your family and with God?

Let us take the time to stop the pull of outside forces and listen to God's word, *from* God's word. A Bible collecting dust on your coffee table is going to do you no good in Hell.

Stop expecting the world to condense all learning into a few magazine articles or sermons that can be inhaled in a few brief minutes. God's word cannot be condensed. It is rich and full. It is not a fast-food snack, but a full course meal. It needs to be savored slowly to be appreciated.

No doubt, it is a fast-paced world, and realistically, we have to keep up. But do take time for God. He is the only sanity in this insane world, the only quiet in the tumult. **Be still!**

The Will To Discipline

Dale Grissom

PARENTS ARE MAKING A SERIOUS mistake when they fail to discipline their children. As a result, many children grow up to be very rebellious and selfish, bringing much heartache to their parents. We can read in 1 Samuel chapters 2 and 3 that Eli's children brought shame upon him because he failed to discipline them. Often, today, we see parents sacrifice to give their children everything they want, even if it is something they don't need. Parents sin against their own children when they do not teach them to be respectful, responsible, obedient, and hard working.

It seems we have forgotten what the Bible teaches about raising children, and we are following the ways of the world. I think we should take a serious look at the number of murders being committed by young people, as well as the thefts, and the sexual promiscuity that is prevalent in the world. Many couples are living together out of wedlock, many have children born out of wedlock, and some choose abortion.

It's later than we think; we have become a society that no longer blushes at the awful sins of an undisciplined nation. Many have become so hardened by sin that they will not respond to the teaching of the Gospel of Christ.

We are living in a difficult time to raise children. Many young people are out all hours of the night and their parents have no idea where they are. The parents should have told them "no" consistently. Instead, drinking, drugs, and prostitution have become a way of life for many. It is going to take the best we have to offer to discipline and control our children. Their peers are unrestricted and are participating in all kinds of sins, making the job of Christian parents much harder.

Parents, please do your best to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4) *"And ye Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but, bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Daily devotionals, prayer, and Bible study need to be a part of our lives and our children's lives. Parents, take back the control of your homes, and love your children enough to discipline them.

Holy Ghost Baptism and Water Baptism

Basil Overton

THE LORD SAID, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:16). Some say they believe that "baptism" saves, but that it is "Holy Ghost baptism" that saves. But, the baptism of the foregoing scripture is not "Holy Ghost baptism," but water baptism. Not very many people were ever baptized with the Holy Ghost. The twelve apostles, and Cornelius and his household were overwhelmed, or baptized with the Holy Ghost. (See Acts 1:1-6; 2:1-5; 11:15.) Baptism in the Holy Ghost was such a rare occurrence even in the days of the apostles that Peter was amazed at its occurrence at the house of Cornelius. The fact that Peter said that the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and his household, *"as on us at the beginning,"* is evidence that it was not a common event (Acts 11:15). (The "beginning" was the Day of Pentecost; the "beginning" of the Christian dispensation; the beginning of the church.) If Holy Ghost baptism was a common event, why did not Peter compare the case at the house of Cornelius with cases more recent than the one that had happened about ten years before in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost?

Holy Ghost baptism was designed for special purposes in the apostolic age. By it, the apostles were guided into all truth (John

16:13). By it, Jews were convinced that Gentiles were Gospel subjects (Acts 10:45). No one was ever baptized with the Holy Ghost in order to be saved. The Lord saves men when they follow the directions of the Holy Ghost as given in the Bible. Holy Ghost baptism was a promise of the Father to certain ones for certain purposes (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,5). The baptism of the Great Commission of Christ (Mark 16:16) is a command of God to be obeyed by people that they may reach the blood of Christ and have their sins remitted (Acts 2:38). A thing cannot be a command and a promise both! Men were to administer the baptism of the Great Commission, and they did administer it, and it was baptism in water (Acts 8:35-39)! Only our Lord administered Holy Ghost baptism (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33). Holy Ghost baptism had ceased when Paul wrote the Ephesian letter, which was about A.D. 64, for he said: "*There is one baptism,*" referring to water baptism (Ephesians 4:1-6).

WISDOM

Johnny Ramsey

PARENTS MUST EVER BE REMINDED of the principle of sowing and reaping. This does not mean that every person who chooses of his own will to go astray from the truth is a product of ungodly parents. Just as children brought up in evil homes can later choose to be righteous (Joshua 24:15), so can offspring of spiritual homes decide later to leave the Lord (Romans 11:22). After all, Romans 14:12 tells us that "*each one shall give account of himself to God.*"

However, parents who fail to both teach and live the genuineness of Christianity before their children will one day answer for such tragic blunders. We build today the house we and our children will live in tomorrow. As the psalmist said, "*Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it*" (Psalm 127:1).

Young people who choose worldly associates will reap the whirlwind of such poor decisions (1 Corinthians 15:33). Rather, wisely, should all youth heed the admonition, "*Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth*" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). To be an example of purity (1 Timothy 4:12) will make their sojourn upon this earth one to glorify God (Matthew 5:16). Such wisdom will evince itself in a life of peace and joy that no earthly wealth could provide (Philippians 4:7,11,13,19).

There is never any peace for the wicked (Isaiah 57:12), and all temporal wealth will someday be dissolved (2 Peter 3:11). Let us, therefore, cease to sow the seed of mundane pleasure, lest we reap the dividends of our shameful emphasis. No verse says it better than this, *"What reward have you in those things you are now ashamed of?"* (Romans 6:21).

Let us ever **be alert** to the fact that we do reap what we sow. May we ever be dedicated and disciplined as we march toward eternity.

HONORABLE PARENTS

Clarence DeLoach, Jr.

IT IS TRUE THAT GOD HAS commanded children to "honor" their parents. But, no one can teach your children to honor you! That's the parents' responsibility! There are no perfect parents, but parents can be honorable! The ideal situation is honorable parents and honoring children.

How can parents gain their children's honor? Let me suggest five ways:

First, *love them.* Love gives what they need, not what they want. Give them your affection. Children need hugs! The tender touch of loving parents gives confidence and a sense of security. Love them by believing in them, dreaming, hoping, and praising them. Love them by listening and by praying for them.

Second, *lift them.* Build them up! *"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged"* (Colossians 3:21). Just as a plant needs, and must have, water, children need encouragement.

Third, *limit them.* It takes *firm restrictions to set children free.* So, you liberate them by limiting them. Eli failed to do this and paid dearly for his neglect (1 Samuel 3:13). Children will push to see if their parents will move. Every child needs discipline to have a sense of security. But, always keep in mind that limits must be drawn with love. Sadly, our society is being deceived into thinking that there are no limits. Parents, don't be afraid to say with firmness—"There are certain TV programs you will not watch; there are certain movies you won't see; there are places you won't go; and there are things you won't do without my approval!"

Fourth, *laugh with them.* Lighten up! Learn to laugh! Blessed is the family where joy and laughter are heard. Humans are the only creatures in God's creation who can laugh, weep, and blush! Laughter is like sunshine in the house.

Fifth, *lead them.* Don't just *tell* them what is right, *show* them! Show the meaning of character by demonstrating it. Train them by going before! Demonstrate contentment, courage, courtesy, fairness, honesty, friendliness, self-control, generosity, gratitude, and thrift. And by all means, lead them to the Lord.

The bottom line is: be honorable parents by believing, obeying, and honoring God in your life!

With What Body?

T. Pierce Brown

SOME ARE STILL RAISING THE QUESTION that was raised in Paul's day as suggested in 1 Corinthians 15:35, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In our opinion, the same answer that Paul gave should still be given, but it seems apparent that Paul's answer still needs some explanation. Some very astute scholars have, in my judgment, assumed some things that are not so about the answer and related matters.

We may want to note that when Paul said, as in the KJV, "Thou fool" he was not using the word that Jesus used in Matthew 5:22, when he said a person who calls his brother a fool shall be in danger of hell fire. But he does use a word that indicates that a person is not reasoning properly who assumes that the resurrection of the body means that the same body that was put in the grave would come out. If a body were put in with a leg missing, the leg would be missing throughout eternity. If the body had been nailed to the cross and had the prints of the nails in its wrists, we would see those prints in eternity. This is clearly not the case, even if the song says, "We shall know him by the prints of the nails in his hands."

He specifically says in verse 37, "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain." It is clear that the body that comes out is not the body that was put in, but it is identified with the same person. If you sow wheat, it is proper to say that wheat comes up,

yet it is not in the same form as it was put in the ground. A person is certainly "foolish" if he does not know that much.

Sometimes it is assumed that the resurrected body of Jesus proves that our resurrected bodies will look like the body that was buried, eaten by the fish, burned, or otherwise destroyed. This is a false assumption. The resurrected body of Jesus was the same body that was put in the grave. Paul specifically says that ours will not be. Not only is that so, but I John 3:2 says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Note carefully that John indicates that we do not know what we shall be like, although we shall be like him. They knew what Christ's body was like when he was raised from the dead, but they do not know what it is like now, for John says so. It must be that his body was not yet glorified as John 7:39 says. Romans 8:17 indicates that we will be glorified with him, which agrees with John's statement that we shall be like him. The logical conclusion is that while he was on the earth, with flesh and bones, able to eat and digest fish (Luke 24:42), he had the same body with which he was buried and raised. But since flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50) he was changed when he ascended to heaven out of their sight (Acts 1:9), much like Enoch (Hebrews 11:5) or Elijah. (2 Kings 2:11.)

So it is certain that we will be the same individuals when our bodies are raised, but it is also equally certain that the body will not be the same structure any more than a stalk of corn is the same structure as the grain of corn that is put in the earth. But it is still proper to say, "We put corn in the earth, and corn came up."

However, the "bottom line" (if there is one) should be, "What difference does it make? If we are to be like him why should we even bother wondering and speculating about the exact details?" Are you satisfied to know that it will be glorious beyond our ability to understand?

The Unity Of God's People

W. A. Holley

"AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which believe on

me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me" (John 17:3,20-23).

Here we have Jesus Christ praying for the unity of all Christians, all believers. Jesus knows of the terrible destruction of religious division. He says, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?" (Matthew 12:25-26).

One of the greatest causes of infidelity is the rank and rampant religious division which now characterizes so-called Christendom. If the Holy Bible teaches all the contradictory doctrines and practices of Roman Catholicism and Protestant Denominationalism, how can any sober-minded man believe it? Verily, religious division in the name of God is the seed of atheism!

All sowers of discord have the curse of God resting upon them: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations; feet that be swift in running to mischief; a false witness that speaketh lies; and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

What should be done with those who sow or cause division? "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16 :17-18).

If unity is to prevail, we must all speak and do the same things. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). Many in the church at Corinth were seeking to follow preachers, rather than the Lord. We note: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (Verses 12-13).

It is just as sinful to follow John Calvin or Martin Luther or John Wesley or the Pope, as it was to follow Paul, or Apollos, or Peter or any other human being.

Following Jesus' word is the way of unity. We must follow divine truth without addition, or subtraction, or substitution (Revelation 22:18-19). "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (1 Peter 4:11).

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). It is impossible for people to walk together while following various manuals, disciplines, creeds, all drawn up by sundry leaders (Matthew 15:1-9).

In the Holy Bible, there are seven 'planks' upon which "the unity of the Spirit" is to be built: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:3-6).

The "one body" is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24). One has as much right to worship the 'God of his choice,' as one has to be a member of the 'church of his choice.' One has as much right to follow the 'Lord Jesus of his choice,' or to be led by the 'Spirit of his choice,' as one has to observe the 'faith of his choice.'

Christians are to live in accord, "in the bond of peace," that they may maintain peace and unity among themselves. That state of mind which promotes the unity of the body of Christ is that gentle, long-suffering, forbearing spirit that keeps down all strife and division, that crushes out selfishness, and makes each member seek not his own but another's good (Philippians 2:1-5; Ephesians 5:21).

FAITH AND LOVE

C.E. Mannon

FOR MANY YEARS—OVER A HALF CENTURY—I have been pleased to earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3) that comes from hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17) and the faith by which I am to walk. (2 Corinthians 5:7.) Others around me have done the same. From reflections of events over the years and a more concentrated focus on the holy scriptures in recent years, I am much impressed with the ever present urgency to relate the agape love of God to this faith.

For apart from this love, enjoined by command (Matthew 22:37-39) and exemplified by Christ (John 15:13) few will know or care for the faith to which we are called. (John 13:34-35.)

Apart from this love, our faith to "remove mountains" or bestow benevolence will profit us nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:2-3.)

Apart from this noblest form of love, our faith can succumb to intellectual ritualism or ceremonial approaches with a foreboding future. Without this motivation to identify and temper our opinions as distinct from our faith, we make ourselves more vulnerable to becoming exceedingly judgmental and parties to strife, schisms and unnecessary divisions.

Therefore, we plead for an earnest look at some of the numerous references enjoining love with faith.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith which worketh by love." (Galatians 5:6.)

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers..." (Ephesians 1:15-16.)

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:17-19.)

"Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 6:23.)

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." (Colossians 1:3-5.)

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing brethren beloved, your election of God." (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4.)

"But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you." (1 Thessalonians 3:6.)

"We are bound to thank always for you, brethren, as it is meet,

because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." (2 Thessalonians 1:3.)

"Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 1:5,14.)

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13.)

"All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen." (Titus 3:15.)

"Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; that the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ." (Philemon 5,6.)

Our continuing to combine the intellectual (faith) with the emotional (love) is sure to prompt a togetherness with promise.

Only the obedient will be saved

Rick Cunningham

"ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED," is a common belief today. It is argued that if a person is truly saved, possessing the true Spirit of God, he cannot and will not fall away. If he falls away, he never was saved in the first place.

This "doctrine of perseverance" is simply not true. It is possible, and it is common, for people to be truly saved, lost, restored, and lost again. In fact, even the Holy Spirit warns us not to turn away after being saved:

"So, as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me, and for forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, Their hearts are always going astray, and they do not know my ways. So I declared an oath in my anger, They shall never enter my rest.' See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:7-12).

Our words and actions determine our acceptability with God. Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching" (John 14:23). And, "He who does not love me will not obey my teaching"

(John 14:24). And the Holy Spirit reminded the apostles of this same teaching (John 14:26).

Friend, do not entertain the idea that salvation is certain, regardless of our actions. If we would be saved, we must obey the Lord. Any other doctrine is not the Lord's doctrine,

OBEDIENCE

Tom Kelton

JESUS' RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FATHER also reveals God's expectation of His children. It all comes down to one word: *obedience*.

A brief survey of John's Gospel illustrates how Jesus related to the Father. Jesus often mentioned that He depended on the Father and that He came *"to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work"* (John 4:34). *"I seek not to please myself."* Jesus said, *"but him who sent me"* (John 5:30).

Jesus listened to His Father and told the world what He heard (John 8:26; 12:49-50). He worked diligently at fulfilling the work God had for Him (John 9:4) and He brought glory to the Father.

Jesus claimed to do what His Father did—including miracles (John 10:37-38). Because He loved the Father, He did exactly what God commanded Him to do (John 14:31). Jesus tied love and obedience together in John 15:9-10: *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love."*

Jesus said that the key to remaining in His love is obedience, and He has modeled obedience for us in showing us how He related to His Father. Further, in John 14:21

Jesus said, *"He who loves me will be loved by my Father."* The apostle John reiterated this in 1 John 5:3, *"This is love for God: to obey his commands."* Lest the readers think this is an impossible task, John added an important qualifier: *"And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world."* The message is clear: to know the love of our heavenly Father, we must be obedient sons and daughters.

How important is obedience to the Christian life? Peter explained that we have been chosen *"according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience*

to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood" (1 Peter 1:2). All three persons of the Godhead are mentioned in this remarkable verse. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have orchestrated our redemption, through His blood, so that we may be obedient to Christ.

No one will enter the heavenly kingdom who is not obedient to Christ. Therefore, let us strive with all our beings to learn, to understand, and to do the will of the One who was obedient to death, even death on the cross.

False Teachers

Wayne Barrier

THE BIBLE CONTAINS MANY WARNINGS about the dangers of listening to false teachers. As Paul prepared to leave Ephesus he instructed the Ephesian elders concerning false teachers.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). False teachers, sometimes from within the flock, were a first century problem, and are a problem today. They are self-serving, power-seeking, deceitful, and skillful agents of Satan. Today they are the underlying cause of many disruptive, divisive movements in congregations calling for a "new and fresh" look at some of the basic doctrines that are difficult for brethren to follow. They suggest new ways to interpret the scripture, implying that they have superior ability to interpret the Bible for the rest of us.

The apostle Peter also warned first century Christians about false teachers.

"But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false prophets among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (2 Peter 2:1-3).

"These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Peter 2:17-19).

The false teacher can easily find a following among Christians who are not faithful in Bible study and honest self-examination. They sound impressive and seem to have lots of knowledge and special insight.

We must be careful to recognize the false teacher. If we fail, we and many others will be lost. Peter described the situation for the false teacher and those who follow their doctrine:

"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2:21).

THE DOOR OF FAITH

O.P. Baird

THE DOOR OF A HOUSE GIVES access into the house. Faith is like a door. It gives access into the grace or favor of God. The apostle Paul tells us this in his letter to the Christians at Rome. He wrote, *"Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand"* (Romans 5:1,2).

God is perfect in righteousness and cannot look with favor on sin. All sinners who have not been forgiven by God are *outside* of His grace or favor and are lost. Those *in* God's grace have been forgiven of their sins and are saved from sin and its results.

We have all sinned, and those who have not received God's forgiveness need to know how to get into God's grace. They must go through the door which God has opened. That door is faith, because access into God's grace is by faith. The verse which tells us this also tells us it is through Jesus Christ. Therefore the faith that lets us into God's grace is faith in Jesus Christ.

It is very important to know what faith is and how we get into

God's grace by faith. Faith is believing, but faith in Christ is more than just believing that He is the Son of God. It is believing so much that we trust Him and love Him and want to do everything that is right and pleasing to Him. It also means that we do not want to do anything that displeases Him.

Many people agree that we are saved from sin by faith, but they think they just naturally know *how* to believe without *learning how* from God's Word. They say, "Just believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and ask Him to save you."

The best way to see how faith gives access into God's favor is to read the accounts in the New Testament of people believing in Christ and receiving forgiveness. The first of these accounts is in the second chapter of the book of Acts.

The people we read about in Acts, chapter two, had rejected Jesus and called for His death. They had cried, "*Crucify Him,*" and they got their demand and saw Him crucified on the cross. But Jesus arose from death, and that proves that He is the Son of God. The apostle Peter spoke to the large crowd of people in Jerusalem and told them what had happened. They were convinced that Jesus arose from death and ascended back to God in heaven. They were grieved in their hearts and cried out asking, "*What shall we do?*"

Many people today would have said, "All you have to do is believe." But Peter did not say that. "*And Peter said unto them, 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'... They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls*" (Acts 2:38,41).

They received his word by doing what he told them to do, and when they did that, they received what he promised, the remission or forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. They received his word because they had faith in Christ. If they had not had faith, they would not have received his word. They entered into God's grace by the door of faith.

Read all of the second chapter of Acts and the other examples of conversion in the book of Acts (found in chapters 8, 9, 10, 22, and 26) and see how they all came into God's grace through faith. "*For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God*" (Ephesians 2:8).
