

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

**Vol. 54**

**February 2024**

**No. 10**

## Editorial

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

#### JESUS IS THE WAY TO GOD

MAN WANTS TO REACH GOD, but sin is the great barrier between man and God. The Scripture says, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1,2). To solve man's problem of sin, God from heaven came down on earth in the form of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "Who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2:6-8). Before coming to earth as Jesus Christ, He was, in heaven, with the Deity, in the form of God. Speaking of His eternal existence, the Scripture says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1, 14). The Word, who was God in heaven in the Godhead, became flesh, or a human. The sole purpose for which Jesus came into this world was to save man from sin, and thus to provide man access to God. The apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1Timothy 1:15).



The Bible says Jesus is the propitiation for our sins. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10). To propitiate means "to satisfy the wrath of God against sin." Or "to offer a sacrifice that appeases God's just judgment and righteous anger against us and our sins." Jesus, by the will of God, did exactly the same, when He offered Himself to die on the cross for the sins of the world. We read, "For He", that is God, "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).

Therefore, said Jesus, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6). As the way, Jesus is the answer to man's sin problem. He has, through His death on the cross for humanity, (John 3:16), paid the penalty of man's sin. As the truth, He is the answer to man's ignorance. Man is clueless about how to reach God, how to be saved from sin; and become worthy of God's acceptance. Jesus is the answer. As the life, He is the answer to man's mortality. Man fears death, he wants to know, what will happen to him after he dies. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25, 26).

When man sinned he forfeited his life and was sentenced to die. (Romans 3:23). But Christ by the sacrifice of His own sinless life satisfied the demand of the law which had been violated, (Romans 6:23), and thereby made it possible for man to live. Man is lost in sin. He knows nothing about how to get back to God. Jesus is the way to God. Is man listening!



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## DEFINING THE CHURCH

**J.C. Choate**

OFTEN WHEN SPEAKING OF THE Lord's church the question is asked, "What is the church of Christ?" That most certainly is a good question and deserves a scriptural answer.

However, before telling what the church is let us begin by telling you what the church isn't. Too many people are confused about the church because they often think it is something that it isn't.

The church of Christ is neither Catholic, Jewish, nor Protestant in origin or in practice. It is not a denomination or a group of denominations. It is not the meeting house or a material building. It is not a political organization. It is not just a social club. No, it is none of those things at

all, although you would be surprised to know how many people think of the church as being such. Because of such a misunderstanding they are led to be a part of groups, promote organizations, etc., that are entirely out of harmony with the will of God.

But someone may want to know, "If the church is none of these things then what is it?" Well, that is the thing we want to find out. According to the way the term is used in the Bible the word "church" comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* which means "the called out." That is, the church is composed of those who have been called out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13, 14). Another way of putting it, the church is composed of those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ and are thus saved from their past sins (Acts 2:38; 2:47).

In the Bible the church is given many descriptive titles. For instance, it is spoken of as a vineyard, stressing the need for more workers. It is called the kingdom, showing its dominion over all earthly kingdoms. It is spoken of as the sheepfold, a place of safety. It is described as the bride of Christ, and signifies the fact that it ought always to be beautiful, awaiting the return of the bridegroom, Christ. It is called the house of God, with the Lord as builder of the house. It is declared to be the family of God with God being the Father, Christ being our brother, and we as members of the church being brothers and sisters in Christ. It is referred to as the body of Christ, with Christ as its head and the body being composed of many members, individual Christians. This is the church, yea, the church of Christ.

To help better explain what the church of Christ is, please notice these facts:

1. It is spoken of in prophecy (Daniel 2:44).
2. It was promised by Christ (Matthew 16:18).
3. It was to come with power (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:8).
4. It was established on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
5. The time was A. D. 33 (Acts 2).
6. The place was Jerusalem (Luke 24:49; Acts 2).
7. It was to wear the name of Christ (I Corinthians 12:27; Romans 16:16).
8. It was built upon the rock, Christ (Matthew 16:18).
9. It was a blood-bought institution (Acts 20:28).
10. Christ is head (Colossians 1:18).
11. He is Saviour (Ephesians 5:23).
12. The obedient are added to it, and thus saved (Acts 2:47).
13. Its work is to preach the gospel and help the needy (Mark 16:15; James 1:27).

14. It is to worship God each first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
15. It is composed of individual Christians (Acts 11:26).
16. Its headquarters is heaven (Acts 1:10-12).
17. Its guide is the Bible (I Peter 4:11; James 1:25).
18. It is governed by elders and deacons, and has preachers, teachers, and members following God's word (I Timothy 3; Titus 1).
19. It will never be destroyed (Hebrews 12:28).
20. The Lord is coming back for it one day (Ephesians 5:27).
21. There is but one (Ephesians 4:4).
22. Members of the church are called Christians (I Peter 4:16).

The church of Christ is the greatest institution on earth. It has the greatest being to serve. It has the greatest work to perform. It is unique, but it is simple. It is not the Saviour, but one must be a member of it to be saved. It is the only one of its kind. There are many imitations but only one true church.

The church of Christ is to be found around the world. And yet, the majority oppose it. This church is not popular because it seeks to preach the truth only. It is persecuted because it opposes all evil and false religion. But those who are Christians are the most blessed people on earth because they not only have hope in this life but in the world to come, eternal life.

This, then, is the church of Christ.

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## THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

**V. P. Black**

THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD is the most glorious institution in the world. The prophets of God prophesied about the church hundreds of years before the church was established.

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-3)*

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall*

*not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever (Daniel 2:44).*

When the church was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel were being fulfilled.

*When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:13-18).*

If there were no other statements in the Bible concerning the founder and builder of the church, the fact that Jesus said He was going to build His church (Matthew 16:18) is enough to convince anyone who respects the Word of God that Jesus did build His church. If anyone admits that Jesus built His church, and He did, then any church that you cannot read about in the New Testament cannot be the church for which Jesus died.

One does not have the scriptural authority to build a church of his own. Yet, there have been men through the ages who have built their own churches. The Lutheran church bears the name of its founder. Joseph Smith built his church. Mary Baker Eddy founded her church. And on and on we could go, naming those who founded their own church. The simple truth is this: any church built by anyone other than the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be the church we read about in the New Testament.

It is sad indeed that millions of people never ask themselves such questions as: "Is the church to which I belong found in the New Testament? Was the church to which I belong founded by Jesus Christ? Does the church to which I belong wear the name of Christ?"

If the answers to these questions are "no," then let us read what Christ said about these churches that He did not build. "*But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*" (Matthew 15:13).

Isaiah said many years ago, "*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord*" (Isaiah 1:18).

Let us reason together about the cost of the church.

*"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).*

We value a thing by the price we pay for it. How can anyone come to the conclusion that the church is non-essential, in view of the fact that Jesus gave His life for it?

*"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).*

Let us picture Christ hanging on the cross. The pain is so excruciating that God sent a blanket of darkness over the earth. In the midst of that darkness, Christ cries out, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* Let us ask Christ while He is on the cross, "Christ, why are you dying?" He replies, "I am dying for the church." "Is the church essential?" Christ says, "No." Can you believe this?

Would Jesus suffer, bleed, and die for something that is non-essential? Can't you see, my friend, that if Christ died to purchase the church, and one can be saved outside the church, what was the purpose of His death? Notice these expressions: *"Christ gave Himself for the church", "He purchased the church with His own blood", "Even as Christ is head of the church", "Upon this rock I will build my church."*

One cannot separate the church from the blood of Christ. One cannot separate the church from the death of Christ. If the blood of Christ is essential, the church is essential, for He purchased the church with His blood. If the death of Christ is essential, the church is essential. The church is essential, because He died for the church.

When one speaks lightly of the church, he is speaking lightly of the blood of Christ. When one teaches that people can be saved outside the church as well as in the church, he is teaching that the death of Christ was not necessary. Why? Because Christ died for the church.

The mission of the New Testament is to evangelize the world. Jesus said, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mark 16:15).

The early church realized the importance of proclaiming the Gospel, obedient to the summons of the Master to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

The apostles, and their co-laboring saints of the cross, embarked on their sublime and hazardous journey, beginning at Jerusalem. They went forth to regions beyond, and preached Jesus and His resurrection. In a few years after they started, the Gospel had sounded its report all over the Roman Empire, even in the ranks of Caesar's household.

Many churches are very unconcerned about the preaching of the

Gospel to those who have never heard it. Many churches are like the one in Laodicea. This church was not disturbed by heresies. No one seemed to be of a contentious disposition to disturb the peace. Laodicea was lukewarm about everything. It was dying, as churches can die, of moderation and respectability and apathy.

Let us pray that the Lord will send forth more preachers to the parts of the world where people have never heard the Gospel.

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## FELLOWSHIP OF THE BODY

**Tom Kelton**

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BODY is the mutual care and concern its members have for each other. That care and concern is expressed in the “*one another*” passages of the New Testament. We are to confess our sins one to another (James 5:16); build up one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11); bear one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2); pray for one another (James 5:16); be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32); submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21); show hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9); serve one another (Galatians 5:13); comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18); restore one another (Galatians 6:1); forgive one another (Colossians 3:13); admonish one another (Romans 15:14); teach one another (Colossians 3:16); encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13); and, above all, love one another (1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 4:7, 11).

There is a lot more to biblical fellowship than drinking coffee and eating sandwiches in a fellowship hall. True fellowship takes place when Christians come together to minister to one another.

In a normal, healthy human body, all the members work together. If they don’t, that body is disabled, unable to function normally. No single part functions independently of the rest. So also is the body of Christ. All the members must work together if the body is to function normally. And no member was meant to function in isolation from the rest of the body. The New Testament knew nothing of Christians who weren’t part of a local assembly. God never intended the assembly to be a place where lonely people come on Sunday, sit alone among the crowd, and leave, still lonely and hurting. Rather, in the assembly, warm, intimate fellowship should take place.

When each member functions properly, the body is strong and healthy. And that will be a powerful example that the world can’t help noticing.

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# PAUL'S VIEW OF THE CHURCH

Jerry Jenkins

THIS ARTICLE BEGINS WITH A disclaimer: "By Paul's view of the church this writer does not intend to infer that his view was different from that of Jesus or any other of the apostles." Let it be noted, however, that we have more teaching from Paul than any other person concerning the church. With this in mind, consideration is given to his concept of the church.

First, Paul envisioned the church as the body of Christ. In numerous settings, Paul made reference to the church as the body of Christ; i.e., *"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another"* (Romans 12:4,5). *"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ:"* (1 Corinthians 12:11,12). *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (Ephesians 1:22,23).

In these passages Paul represents the church as an organism rather than an organization. An organization consists of parts mechanically related to one another; an organism consists of parts vitally related. In an organization there is no dependency on one another for life and growth, but in an organism the members are bound together in a common whole.

Paul depicted the church as a school in Christian living. To the churches of Galatia, Paul indicated the law was their tutor. He appealed to the Roman Christians to mark those who caused divisions by advocating "teaching" contrary to that which they had "learned" (Romans 16:17). In the church we learn the lesson of love, the lesson of usefulness, the lesson of worship, the lesson of prayer, the lesson of forbearance, the lesson of humility, the lesson of teaching others, etc.

Finally, at least for this brief article, Paul perceived the church as the family of God. He told Timothy, *"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God..."* (1 Timothy 3:15). In Philippians, Paul outlined this beautiful picture of the church as God's family. The following qualities should characterize this family: Unity, Humility, Obedience, Service, Exemplary Living, Joyful Cooperation, and Sacrificial Sharing.



# THE MEANING OF SONSHIP

Gordon Hogan

HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO have a father and a family. Surely when we have a loving, caring physical father and family, life is full and rich. This is even a much greater truth when we are children of God and are a part of His family, the church of Jesus Christ.

The evidence of sonship is seen in us when, having been born of the water and Spirit (John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38), we take on a new nature. The apostle John tells us about this new nature:

*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

*Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3:1-9).*

The apostle Paul tells us that evidence of sonship is that we are led by the Spirit, that is, the instruction of the Spirit through the Word of God. We are free, delivered from the bondage of sin, and have a special close relationship with our heavenly Father. Notice what Paul writes:

*Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be*

*that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8:12-17).*

Further evidence of sonship is God's wisdom in supplying discipline, and our willingness to receive it. The writer of Hebrews explains:

*Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

*If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Hebrews 12:4-11).*

Praise God our Father who promises, if we keep His will, that we will share the riches of heaven with the only begotten Son, Jesus, our elder brother.

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## THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD

Wayne Barrier

THE BIBLE DESCRIBES SATAN AS a deceptive (Revelation 12:9), **lying** (James 8:44), **scheming** (2 Corinthians 2:11), **cunning** (2 Corinthians 11:3), **wicked** (1 John 2:13), **proud** (1 Timothy 3:6), **powerful** (Ephesians 2:2), and **fierce** (Luke 8:29) **adversary** (1 Peter 5:8) of God. He is the father of evil and the eternal enemy of God and man.

We are repeatedly warned concerning Satan's power and influence. If his will is obeyed, we will be eternally lost, doomed to Hell forever. But we can win the struggle with Satan even though he is stronger than "flesh and blood," if we follow God's guidance. One comprehensive passage giving instruction to help with this struggle is Ephesians 6:10-

18.

Paul says *“Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against power, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore having girded your waist with the truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...”* (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Satan’s handiwork can be seen everywhere, every day—murder, adultery, child abuse, corruption, war, human starvation, hatred, idolatry, drunkenness, drug abuse, and strife. Man tries, usually with no success, to address these problems with solutions based on human wisdom and power. The effective weapons for overcoming them seem simple, yet they are powerful and profound because they come to us from God—truth, righteousness, preparation of the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the word of God, prayer, perseverance, and watchfulness.

Satan can be defeated in our lives if we rely on the Lord and the power of His might. Only in this trust do we have the assurance of victory.

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## ***Be Quiet, And Listen To God!***

**Bill Keele**

GOD HAD THE PSALMIST SAY, *“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth”* (Psalm 46:10). And further, Habakkuk said, *“But the **Lord** is in His holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Him”* (Habakkuk 2:20).

To be quiet means to slow down in your life enough so that you are not dominated by human activity. Some are unable to be quiet, because they have thirty-six hours of activity packed into every twenty-

four hour day! They have so filled their life with earthly activities that there is no time to take in any more messages.

To be quiet means to refuse to let your own feelings and attitudes dominate your life. This kind of person is so tuned in to himself that there is no room for openness to tune in to anything or anyone else — God included! For such a person, being tuned in to his own feelings is a thin disguise for simple selfishness.

To be quiet means to stop justifying what you are doing because you are caught by circumstances beyond your control. Blaming others, blaming circumstances, blaming God — all of these things help keep a person from being quiet before God.

To listen to God means to get into the Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16,17). It means to pay attention to the truth once delivered to all the saints (Jude 3). It means to reject the religious traditions and doctrines of men. It means to know His book. To listen to God means to meditate upon His law, so that you find the practical application in daily living that God, in Scripture, intends.

To listen to God means to refuse to let feelings, intuitions, and inexplicable events make the written Word void! Dreams, omens, cloud formations, and strange voices do not change the written Word. Even a good conscience does not change the Word.

To listen to God involves an openness to apply God's written will to one's life. One argues, another seeks to understand. One avoids, another seeks to apply. One delays, another seeks to implement. To be quiet and listen to God means to get into the Bible, the Word of God, and obey it.

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## “A LITTLE BIT OF SUGAR INSIDE”

**Betty Tucker**

A MOTHER HUGGED HER six-year-old daughter. She asked Laurie, “What makes you so sweet?” The little girl answered, “I think when God made me, He put a little bit of sugar inside.”

Listen to the advice of Jesus, “*Give and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again*” (Luke 6:38).

He tells us that goodness returns dividends. His thought is echoed in Proverbs 21:21, “*He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.*”

## SOME RELATED ATTRIBUTES

**Courtesy:** Courtesy is the universal language. Peter advises us in the third chapter of his first letter, *“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous”* (1 Peter 3:8).

Ruth found herself in a strange land, with her beloved Naomi for support. She worked in the fields in the heat of the day, gleaning behind the reapers. Her good manners and ready smile won the heart of Boaz (Ruth 2:11). At last, the two were married. This happy story might easily have taken another direction if Ruth had not shown herself to be sweet and courteous to all.

**Tact:** One blessed with this attribute has the discernment to approach opposition at the least sensitive spot.

The wise man tells us in Proverbs 25:11, *“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”* Some have a gift for always saying the right thing at the right time.

Searching the pages of the Bible, we see Esther employ tact to great advantage. She prepared a feast for the king and invited Haman to attend. Haman was the avowed enemy of the Jews. He planned to kill every Israelite who lived in Persia, even the women and children. Queen Esther showed great strength of character as she tactfully waited to tell the king what her desire was. She invited proud Haman to another banquet. When the time was right, she pointed the finger of accusation and said, *“... The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman ...”* (Esther 7:6).

**Patience:** For a study on the patience of God, we look to His promise to the Amalekites. In Genesis 17:14 we hear Him say, *“... I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.”*

One hundred years passed, 200 years, 300 — and still the Amalekites pursued their campaigns of hostility. **Four hundred and three years** passed before God made good His promise. In 1 Samuel 15:2 we read, *“Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel...”* He then tells King Saul to utterly destroy them all.

James instructs Christians to *“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord ...”* (James 5:7). He had earlier told us that, *“... the trying [testing] of your faith worketh patience”* (James 1:3).

We know that to have good children, we must work patiently with them. Even the prettiest flowers and the best music require diligent, patient work.

Let us so live that we may say with the little girl who introduced our study, “There’s a little bit of sugar inside.”

# WHERE WILL YOU LIVE IN ETERNITY?

J. A. McNutt

EVERYTHING ON EARTH, ALL material possessions, every relationship, every pleasure, and even our lives are limited. Experience has taught us that everything physical has a beginning and a limited existence. How can we comprehend “eternity,” which has to do with infinite duration, eternal existence, and our state after death?

**Life Is A Journey:** All men are like travelers, pilgrims, and sojourners on this earth (1 Peter 2:11). This earth is not our home, and we seek a heavenly country and that eternal city (Hebrews 11:13-16). We are swiftly passing through time and are well on our way toward our eternal destination. It may be later than you think. Have you ever stopped and asked yourself the question, “When I get where I’m going, where will I be?” Agnostics offer no comfort or consolation, because they say, “We do not know that God exists, or that men will live again.” Infidels say, “There is no God, and man is destined for dust and annihilation, death ends it all,” while the Bible affirms, “*The spirit returns to God who gave it*” (Ecclesiastes 12:7), death is the gateway to life eternal, and the faithful will wear the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

Let no man deceive you, both **heaven** and **hell** are definite realities, and Jesus plainly says of the wicked, “*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal*” (Matthew 25:46). Check your destination, **NOW!** The pathway to salvation, entrance into the kingdom, and eventually entering heaven must begin with being born of **water** and the **Spirit** (John 3:5). Being **born again** is best understood by reading Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38.

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## HELP LORD

Demar Elam

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN A situation in life where you simply shouted, “Help, Lord!”? David the Psalmist did so, saying, “*Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases to be. For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men*” (Psalm 12:1).

Man's sinful condition today makes one want to cry out those same words. The righteous are at times discouraged when wickedness prevails among men. It is disheartening when men of spiritual stature are swept along with the flow of an evil society and fail to walk upright. When the children of light fail to walk in that light, man's future appears dark and threatening.

Where are the "Davids" of our day who cry out, "Help, Lord!"? Shakespeare once said, "The common curse of mankind — folly and ignorance." The folly of man is great in the earth today, and it condemns those engaging in it. The wise man wrote, "*Like a dog that returns to its vomit, is a fool who repeats his folly*" (Proverbs 26:11).

No doubt this is the reason we see foolish, evil actions being repeated over and over again in the lives of some individuals.

So, the righteous cries out, "Help, Lord!", and then he remembers the many Biblical passages assuring him that God has never forsaken the righteous, such passages as Isaiah 41:10-14.

Just as God heard and helped Jacob and the men of Israel, let us be of good courage and know that, today if the righteous will cry out, "Help, Lord!", God will uphold them with that same right hand of righteousness. We must grow and develop spiritually. Each Christian has the individual responsibility to mature in Christ. Where are the great men of God today who will cry out, "Help, Lord!" and wait for the Lord's mighty hand to deliver them?

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## *A Requiem Worthy Of Our King*

**Mark Hall**

The most beautiful piece of music I have ever heard is Brahms' Requiem. A requiem is a composition dedicated to someone after death, to commemorate the meaning of the person's life and to wish him peace. Brahms' Requiem, the composer said, was written for all of mankind, and the words are taken from Isaiah 40:6-8. It reads:

*A voice says, "Call out."*

*Then he answered, "What shall I call out?"*

*All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.*

*The grass withers, and the flower fades,*

*When the breath of the Lord blows upon it;*

*Surely the people are grass.*

*The grass withers and the flower fades,*

*But the word of the Lord stands forever.*

The music Brahms wrote is extraordinary and so majestic. The chorus sings with great feeling, and the harmony is flawless. When I listen, I think to myself, “The singing in heaven must be closer to this than anything else I have heard on this earth.”

The requiem, as a form of music composition, is more or less a thing of the past, because it was generally written for royalty. As I think about the greatest King who ever lived — Jesus — and all of the songs we sing to Him and about Him, I’m left wondering *how one would begin to write a requiem that would be worthy of the Master?* If one could assemble all the composers in the world and have them write the grandest scores that had ever been written, would they be adequate? If one could hire every orchestra in the world to play the finished music, would that do Him justice? If every person on the face of the earth joined in to sing this masterpiece, could their voices be beautiful enough or their harmony perfect enough to properly honor the King?

Brahms’ Requiem was written in German. In which language would we write our tribute? We sing a song from our hymn books which says, “What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest Friend?” Clearly, the message in these words is that there is no language that can adequately express to Jesus the thanks in our hearts. No language in the world has words that are beautiful enough or that could really convey the meaning behind the thoughts.

It becomes obvious that writing a requiem is not the proper medium for expressing our thanks for what Christ has done for us. How can we respond to this love He has shown? Micah 6:6-8 reads as follows:

*With what shall I come to the Lord  
And bow myself before the God on high?  
Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings,  
With yearling calves?  
Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams,  
In ten thousand rivers of oil?  
Shall I present my first-born for my rebellious acts,  
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
He has told you, O man, what is good;  
And what does the Lord require of you  
But to do justice, to love kindness,  
And to walk humbly with your God?*

And in John 14:15 Jesus explains, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

These verses demonstrate that it is our hearts which God wants, our inward obedience rather than just outward expressions that are



sometimes empty of meaning. This is true obedience — and the highest praise we can offer our Creator.

“What language shall I borrow, to thank thee, dearest Friend?” *The language of obedience.*

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## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

**Harvey Porter**

IT IS INTERESTING THAT THE Bible has so much to say about the home, husband and wife, rearing children, loving each other, and having a good life. The problem is that many will not seek this instruction, and many who know what it says will not follow it because of selfishness and disregard for God’s authority.

I recently read the following words from a fine Christian teacher and preacher: “Beautiful is the marriage of Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice. They are both servants of the same Master. Nothing divides them, either in flesh or in spirit. They are two in one flesh, and where there is one flesh there is also one spirit. They pray together, they worship together; instructing one another, strengthening one another. Side by side they visit God’s church; side by side they face difficulties and persecution, share their consolations.” It was written by Tertullian in the third century after Christ.

The amazing thing about the Word of God is that it is timeless. It is never out of date. The twentieth century home still needs what the third century home needed. The Bible teaches that one man and one woman, by love and purpose, are joined together for life before God. This was His plan. The man is the head of the home in the same loving manner that Jesus is the head of His church. The wife submits to the husband as the church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:21-32). Children obeyed their parents in the Lord in New Testament times as in Old Testament times (Ephesians 6:1-3). And parents were loving and considerate in bringing up their children (Ephesians 6:4).

God planned the home for our good and for our fulfillment. There are no unreasonable demands. Love is at the center of the home. Authority is basic to any relationship. Everyone cannot do “his own thing.” All have to love, honor, and respect one another. They communicate, they give in to one another, they reconcile, they conciliate. They respect God’s authority, the parent’s authority, the father’s authority.

There is no relationship devoid of problems. Where humans are concerned we will have problems. As humans, we have problems with God, but let it be remembered that God is always right. While He is patient and kind toward us, we must always bend our will to His will. If every home in trouble would seek God's will for their marriage and children, there would be no separations, single-parent homes, disturbed children, and hurt loved ones. It takes time and real effort to work out marital problems, but God has the solutions if we are willing to follow them. If the Bible is not the solution, then what have we that will work? I have known those who would not follow what God says. They broke up the home. They went separate ways. They lost money, health insurance for the children, and it takes twice the amount to maintain two households. They broke the hearts of their children and the hearts of family members who loved both of them. They had personal misery in the process; some had emotional breakdowns. And, I have heard many say after having married a second or third time, "I wish I had worked it out the first time!"

Tertullian was right when he wrote, "Side by side they visit God's church; side by side they face difficulties and persecution, and share their consolations." Let's all try it!

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## THE CHRISTIAN WIFE

Jennie Cariaga

GOD, IN HIS INFINITE WISDOM, created man with a need not only for his Maker, but for a companion and spiritual partner on earth as well. Thus woman was provided for man: "*Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.*" (Genesis 2:24) It was God's design from the very beginning for man and woman to live together as husband and wife.

Today, thousands of years later, it is still God's design for men and women to marry and begin new families, and within that design God has a specific plan for each individual family member. As Christian wives, we ought to be concerned about our role within the family. How does God wish and expect Christian women to behave? What is God's message for the Christian wife?

### ***THE CHRISTIAN WIFE BELONGS TO HER HUSBAND***

The apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 that "*each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband*" (verse 2), and that each should respect each other's rights and wishes. Then

he explains, *“For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; like wise, the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does.”* In other words, you both literally belong to one another: you belong to your husband, and he belongs to you. Therefore, we should be giving to our husbands, and understanding of their needs.

### ***THE CHRISTIAN WIFE TREASURES HER MARRIAGE***

Paul writes further in verse 10 of 1 Corinthians 7 that *“the wife should not separate from her husband.”* It has never been God’s will that a husband and wife should part ways or break up the family that they have created. Jesus himself admonished us, *“What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.”* (Matthew 19:6) As Christian wives, we must bear in mind that God sanctified our marriage, and it is a holy union that we should not treat lightly. It is something to be treasured and cultivated, not tossed aside or destroyed.

### ***THE CHRISTIAN WIFE STAYS WITH AN UNBELIEVER***

But what about those wives who find themselves bound to a man who does not share their faith? Are they to do the same as those who are married to Christians? Paul addresses this problem in verse 13 of 1 Corinthians 7, saying, *“If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him.”* Even this union is sanctified by God through the believing partner, and should not be put asunder unless, according to Paul, *“the unbelieving partner desires separation.”* (verse 15)

### ***THE CHRISTIAN WIFE TEACHES THROUGH HER ACTIONS***

There are many reasons why God desires such a marriage to continue, and Paul states one of these clearly in verse 16 of 1 Corinthians 7: *“Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband?”* It is very possible that a husband who is not faithful will be converted, not so much by nagging or insisting, but by observing his wife’s Christian behavior. The apostle Peter also stresses this point in 1 Peter 3:1,2 when he writes, *“Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behavior.”*

### ***THE CHRISTIAN WIFE IS SUBMISSIVE TO HER HUSBAND***

This reverent and chaste behavior should dominate the life of a Christian wife, regardless of the beliefs of her husband. The apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:21,22 *“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the*

Lord.” And again in verse 24, “As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands.” Our love and reverence for Christ should lead us to a submissive and respectful relationship with our husbands, not because we are inferior to or have less value than they, but because they are the head of the family, just as Christ is the head of the church. A husband has God-given authority which it is wrong for a wife to try to usurp.

### **THE CHRISTIAN WIFE IS FAITHFUL TO HER HUSBAND**

Not only should we be reverent towards our spouses, but we should behave respectfully. We are told in Hebrews 13:4, “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous.” If we have the true respect for our husband that God wishes, we will never consider being flirtatious or unfaithful. It is a sin against the husband, and a sin against God. Certainly a Christian wife should avoid such conduct, especially if she wants to win an unbelieving partner to the Lord.

### **CONCLUSION: WHAT IS A GOOD WIFE?**

King Solomon summarized the qualities of a good wife in the last chapter of Proverbs, and I will let his closing remarks be my closing remarks. “Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all, charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.’” (Proverbs 31:25-30) This is what God desires of a Christian wife: respect, submissiveness, and faithfulness, both to her husband and to God.

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## **Paul Preached A Certified Gospel!**

**Dillard Thurman**

PAUL STAUNCHLY DECLARED: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Rom. 1:16). The gospel of Christ is the most precious commodity entrusted to man! It is our access to eternal salvation through Jesus Christ! Surely we should expect that message from God to be kept pure and inviolate! But it was not so! That gospel was soon corrupted and altered by human forgeries and

counterfeits! Paul was soon writing, *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.”* (Gal. 1:6-7). In so short a time the vanity of sinful men was perverting that gospel, setting forth a message, that was counterfeit and spurious. The pure gospel was made unholy and evil! It was no longer the gospel of Christ, but the devilish work of sinful men, spawning creeds and dogmas!

### **PAUL LABORED IN THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL!**

Concerning his arduous labors for Christ, Paul stated, *“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!”* (1 Cor. 9:16). There was nothing that could shake him from the message of salvation. *“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”* Nor did Paul corrupt that gospel with the vain show of worldly wisdom! He had been educated at the feet of a foremost teacher of his day, yet could say, *“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”* (1 Cor. 2:1-5). Paul diligently warned of an imminent departure (Acts 20:28-31). He warned his son in the gospel, Timothy; *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”* (1 Tim. 3:1-3). But Paul also pointed out the remedy which the certified gospel afforded: *“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”* (1 Tim. 4:6).

### **WE MUST BE ON GUARD EVEN TODAY!**

When we shop at the market, we seek for the seal of certification on the carton of milk! We want to know that what we buy is pure, and not corrupted with pollutions and impurities. We look for the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval on things we use in our home. We search the Consumer’s Guide in buying appliances and automobiles. We want a guarantee that will protect us! We have coined phrases that warn us: “Accept no substitutes,” “Look for the Trademark,” “Seek the Seal of Approval,” “Look at the Label,” and “Ask for Certification!” But

isn't it strange that we forget these words of caution when we come to that which matters most? Paul stated: *"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* (Gal. 1:11-12). Friend, you can have utmost confidence when you accept the gospel of Christ certified by Paul! But don't be suckered into some off-brand religion touted by some guru on the "lunatic fringe." The beloved apostle said, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* (1 Jno. 4:1). Rather than being led astray by false teachers, why not accept and trust the certified gospel which Paul preached?

### **THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL IS THE ORIGINAL!**

Paul guaranteed that the gospel he preached was the one and only, the certified gospel! (Gal. 1:6-7 above). The counterfeits were not another, but only a cheap imitation of the real thing! So Paul warned, *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."* (Gal. 1:8). That curse still rests upon any who would preach another gospel! Don't be satisfied with anything less, anything more, or anything different than that original gospel certified by Paul! He had those who stood by him, *"knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."* (Phil. 1:17). All those other doctrines were doomed to failure: the original one will stand! Jude finally penned, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints."* (Jude 3). That original, certified gospel was to stand by their staunch defence!

### **THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL IS ADEQUATE!**

The original, certified gospel stands entirely and wholly adequate for all time! It will never have to be amended, revised or up-dated! To the elders of Ephesus, Paul said: *"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."* (Acts 20:32). Friend, if that word can obtain all this for me, what need I more? James said, *"And receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."* (Jas. 1:21). This can be said of no message that man has spawned in religious circles! Man does not have to reach for further help in this field! Just thank God that *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,*

*through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”* (2 Pet. 1:3). We stand wholly adequate in that word which supplies us the *“exceeding great and precious promises.”* (v. 4). Saints are equipped with this certified gospel: *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* (1 Tim. 3:16-17). You don’t have to look beyond the certified gospel for your spiritual growth and development!

### **WHAT IS THAT CERTIFIED GOSPEL!**

Paul clearly identified the gospel, and what it can do: *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”* (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The gospel presents facts to be believed: namely, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But this also portrays what is to be obeyed, as well! Study this with Rom. 6:3-4 for a complete picture: *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”* As Jesus died, so one must die to sin; as He was buried, so one must be buried in the watery grave of baptism; as He arose from the dead to die no more, one must rise from baptism to walk a new life—*“the old man is crucified with him;”—“body of sin is destroyed”—“one should not serve sin”—*and all because we have obeyed the gospel! *“Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”* (Rom. 6:17-18). What was *“that form of doctrine”*? As Paul pointedly stated, it was the death, burial and resurrection!

### **THE GUARANTEE HINGES ON OBEDIENCE!**

The certified gospel still calls for obedience! We cannot ignore Christ’s words with impunity! Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”* (Mt. 12:35). Again He said, *“The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”* (Jno. 12:48): What a tragedy awaits if after having received a certified gospel, we ignore it until it confronts us at the judgment bar of God! What tragic words are these: *“And to you who are troubled, rest with*



us, 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: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.” (1 Thes. 1:7-9). Friend, ask for the certified gospel (the one with the guarantee), believe it and obey it for God’s eternal reward!

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## “WHO IS MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN?”

**Basil Overton**

*“AND A MULTITUDE WAS SITTING about him; and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren outside seek for thee. And he answereth them and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking around on them that sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother” (Mark 3:32-35).*

Obviously, Jesus taught that those who do God’s will sustain a relationship to Him that is more valuable than the relationship that He and Mary sustained as mother and son. This certainly places a lot of emphasis on the importance of doing the will of God. *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21). To enter heaven at last we will have to do God’s commandments (Revelation 22:14). God’s mercy is extended to those who remember His commandments to do them (Psalm 103:18).

Jesus had a mother, and brothers and sisters. *“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon; and are not his sisters here with us?”* (Mark 6:3). Jesus was the first of several children; He is called Mary’s “firstborn son” in Luke 2:7. As dear as the ties in His family were, Jesus taught that those who do the will of God are His “mother and brethren” in a dearer sense than those who were literally His flesh kin. Those who do the will of God become members of God’s family, the church that we read about in the Bible. Being in that family is more important than anything else in the world. Those in God’s family have to do God’s will to have the promise of going to heaven (2 Peter 1:5-11).

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