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THE SWORD AND TRUMPET monthly magazine is a faith ministry directed by a Board representing various constituencies of the Mennonite Church. It is committed to defending, proclaiming, and promoting the whole Gospel of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. It emphasizes neglected truth and contends for "the faith which was once delivered to the saints." This publication exposes and opposes doctrinal error which compromises that faith and leads to apostasy.

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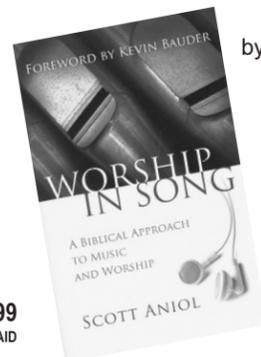
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COUNSELING TIPS

1. Seek to understand human motivation from a Biblical perspective. Begin by further studying passages like: Matthew 6:19-21; 6:24; Romans 8:5-8; James 4:1-8; 1 Peter 1:14-16; Ephesians 2:1-3; and Galatians 5:16-18.
2. Seek to answer the questions:
 - Who or what is mastering this individual's heart?
 - What does this person desire most?
 - What desires dominate this individual's life?
 - Why does he or she desire these things so intensely?
 - How does your counselee respond to such desires?
3. Consider the saying by Dr. David Powlison, "Even desires for good things can become evil in God's analysis of what makes us tick." What makes the person with whom you are working "tick"?
4. Expose the love/hate themes outlined by Jesus in Matthew 6:24. Have counselees consider their own hearts in light of these verses, and have them journal their thoughts. Read the journal aloud together.
5. Utilize the "Heart of the Matter" series offered at www.christiancounseling.com.
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Worship in Song

A Biblical Approach to Music and Worship



by Scott Aniol

281 pages

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While not from an Anabaptist perspective, this book is an excellent doctrinal and practical exposition of the Biblical principles of both personal and corporate worship, together with an in-depth examination of present-day music issues. Michael Harding gives the following review:

Worship in Song is one of the most insightful explanations of Biblical worship that I have ever read. Pastor Scott Aniol harmonizes the concepts of God's beauty, aesthetics, affection for God, accurate theology, and musical expertise unlike any other book on this subject. I enthusiastically recommend *Worship in Song* as a must read for pastors, church music directors, and all Christian musicians who sincerely desire to lead their congregations to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Available from: *Sword & Trumpet* • P.O. Box 575 • Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Person of the Month:

Isabella “Lilias” Trotter (1853-1928)



Isabella Liliat Trotter was born in London, England, to Alexander and Isabella (Strange) Trotter on July 14, 1853. Alexander Trotter had six children by his first wife and three by Isabella, of which Liliat (as she was called) was the first. Liliat's godly parents expressed their faith in acts of compassion and generosity to the poor and others in need.

Being born into a family of high station, Liliat and her siblings received teaching from both French and German governesses. Her father encouraged the children to strongly pursue studies pertaining to science and the arts. As a result of many trips to the Continent, Liliat and the other children developed poise in handling themselves.

In 1865, when Liliat was 12, her father died, which caused her to turn in prayer to her loving Saviour.

In 1874, at the age of 21, Miss Liliat and her mother attended a Christian conference where the messages were about God's precious gift to us of His Holy Spirit, along with messages about being consecrated to the Lord. Liliat came to see Christ's loveliness in a new way, as well as His rightful claim over her life as a Christian.

The following year Miss Trotter attended D. L. Moody's evangelistic meetings in London with one of her sisters. The winning of souls in this way made a great impression on Liliat. The ministry of the Y.W.C.A. in the lives of working girls spurred Liliat and a friend to rent a building to use as a hostel for these women "of the night." As a result, prostitutes were brought to the Lord.

Miss Trotter's innate artistic talent had made itself known in drawings she had done. Through a set of circumstances in 1876, Mrs. Trotter introduced her daughter to well-known art critic John Ruskin, asking him to evaluate Liliat's artistic ability. Ruskin was very surprised and pleased when he saw her drawings and strongly encouraged Miss Trotter to devote her life to her art. He honestly believed that she could easily become an artist of renown.

Although Liliat loved art, she loved her Lord and the girls to whom she ministered more. Mr. Ruskin was never able to understand her choice to forsake a fabulous career in the world of art for a life given wholly over to working with these women.

Having worked with the women for ten years, Liliat expected to spend the rest of her life in that ministry, but the Lord had other plans. Miss Trotter never envisioned herself as a missionary but God placed two women into her life who had a strong vision for missions and an intimate relationship with the Lord, which Liliat greatly desired. As a result of this acquaintance, Liliat Trotter began to get a burden for North Africa.

In May of 1887, at the age of 33, after attending a meeting where the need for the field of North Africa was presented, Liliat Trotter knew God was calling her as a missionary to that field. She applied to North African Mission that same year but was turned down due to her

(continued on page 36)

Interesting Facts About the Bible

Compiled by Oliver B. Greene (1915-1976)
Sources unknown

The Bible is an unusual Book from every aspect. It consists of 66 books. All 66 books combine to make one book. The Bible contains approximately 773,692 words, and these words contain approximately 3,566,480 letters.

The Old Testament is composed of 39 books, and these 39 books combined contain 929 chapters. These chapters contain 23,145 verses.

The New Testament is made up of 27 books, and in these combined books there are 260 chapters composed of 7,957 verses.

The Bible is one of the first books printed with moveable type, leading to printing as we know it today. This occurred in Mainz, Germany, shortly after A.D. 1450, and was done by Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press.

Our English word *Bible* is derived from the Greek word *biblia*, meaning “the books.” The word *Scriptures* is derived from the Latin *scriptura*, which means “the writings.”

The shortest book in the Old Testament is Obadiah.

The shortest chapters in the Old Testament are Psalm 117, containing only two verses, and Esther 10, containing three verses.

The shortest verse in the Old Testament is 1 Chronicles 1:25. It reads, “Eber, Peleg, Reu”—exactly twelve letters in the entire verse.

The shortest verse in the New Testament is John 11:35: “Jesus wept,” containing nine letters.

The longest chapter in the Old Testament is Psalm 119, with 176 verses.

The longest chapter in the New Testament is Luke 1, with 80 verses.

The central chapter in the Bible is Psalm 117.

The sixty-six books of the Bible were written by approximately forty different men in all stations of life, from kings to plowmen. The work spread over a period of about sixteen hundred years—from circa 1500 B.C., when Moses wrote the first five books in the Old Testament, to the writing of the Revelation by John the Beloved in about the year A.D. 96.

All forty writers wrote in perfect harmony, because the Holy Spirit gave them the message that they wrote.

The hand of God directed the writing of His Word, and the men to whom He gave it penned down His Word in widely separated places, including Babylon, the holy city of Jerusalem, Rome, Ephesus—even the Isle of Patmos.

In a very real sense, it may be said of the entire Bible, as it is said of the Ten Commandments, “The writing was the writing of God” (Exodus 32:16). In 2 Kings 17:37, we read of “the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he [God] wrote.”

Time is the greatest test of literature, and the Bible has stood this test. What book do you know today which was written a thousand years ago—or even five hundred years ago—that is still being read by the masses?

Books are published, they may gain popularity for a season, and then they are forgotten. Today they are high on the shelves in public or private libraries. Literature of the past was born, much of it “boomed,” and then it died. The cold hand of oblivion was laid upon it—but not so with the Bible, the Word of God.

The Bible confirms itself. We do not need a historical critic, a university professor, or the spade of the archaeologist to prove that the Bible is the Word of God. The Holy Ghost is the Author and the Giver of that conviction.

If the Holy Ghost does not convince you that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, then certainly you could not be convinced by the historical critic, the university professor, or the archaeologist. If you will listen to the voice of the Spirit, you will be assured beyond any doubt that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God.

As we read the Word of God, there are seven things we should recognize about it.

Its credibility. The Bible is a book of facts and should be accepted and believed as fact.

Its inerrancy. The Bible is free from error. It should therefore be accepted as perfect and without flaw.

Its authenticity. The Bible is the truth of God, and whether or not we understand all that it has to say, we should accept it without question.

Its adaptability. The Bible is suited to everyone—the millionaire or the pauper, the professor or the child who has just learned to read. All can receive from it, and there is not another book on earth of which this can be said.

Its reliability. The Bible is the voice of God; therefore, we can rely on what it says.

Its inspiration. The Bible is the Book of God; the Holy Spirit is its author; therefore, we should not question one word of it.

Its revelation. The Bible reveals the Lord Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God and Saviour of sinners. He is the sum and substance of the Scriptures. Therefore Christ and the Bible must not be separated. Without the virgin-born Son of God, the Bible is empty, vain, and dead.

We also note these further characteristics of the Word of God.

It is indestructible (Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23, 25).

It is invincible (Isaiah 55:11).

It is indispensable (Deuteronomy 8:3).

It is infallible (Joshua 21:45; 23:14; Matthew 5:18).

It is inexhaustible (Psalm 92:5; Romans 11:33).

It is inestimable (Psalm 119:72; 19:10).

It is infrangible (John 10:35).

The most unlearned believer, if he can read his Bible and will take the time to read it prayerfully, will not only attain all practical knowledge which is essential to salvation, but, by God's blessing, he will become learned in everything relating to his faith to such a degree that he will not be liable to be misled by false teachers. The only possible way to understand the Scriptures is to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us, for we cannot understand the Bible through man's wisdom:

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:9-14).

The Word of God is the only record the world has of its wonderful past creation. If you attempt to explain Creation in any other way except by the Bible record, Creation becomes the riddle of the present.

The Bible is the only book that reveals the mysteries of the future, the things having to do with the church of God, the nation of Israel, the Gentile nations, the earth and the powers of light and darkness.

These titles are found in the Bible, speaking of the Word of God itself:

The Scriptures (John 10:35; 2 Peter 3:16).

The holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15).

The Word of God (Hebrews 4:12).

The oracles of God (Romans 3:2).

The living oracles (Acts 7:38).

The first mention of faith in the Old Testament is in Genesis 15:6, where we are told that Abraham “believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

The first person to be called a Hebrew was Abraham, in Genesis 14:13: “And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew.”

The first altar spoken of in the Bible was built by Noah when he came out of the ark and “builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar” (Genesis 8:20).

The Bible contains the mind of God; the state of man; the simple, clear, understandable way of salvation; the inescapable doom of sinners and the happiness of born-again believers.

The doctrines of the Bible are holy, the precepts of the Bible are binding, the histories of the Bible are true, and the decisions

of the Bible are immutable.

Read the Bible to be wise. Believe the Bible to be saved. Practice the Bible to live a holy life.

The Bible is a light, a lamp to direct your pathway.

The Bible is milk, bread, meat, living water—it will feed your spiritual being and quench the thirst of your soul. It will comfort and cheer you.

The Bible is the pilgrim’s map and staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the believer’s charter.

In the Bible, Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell are closed.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the grand and glorious subject of the Bible. Our salvation is its design. The glory of God is its end.

We should allow the Bible, the Word of God, to fill our memory, rule our hearts, and guide our footsteps.

When we read the Bible, we should read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.

The Bible contains a mine of wealth, a Paradise of glory, a river of pleasure. Its message brings life. All who reject its message will be judged by its words. The Word of our God will stand forever! ■

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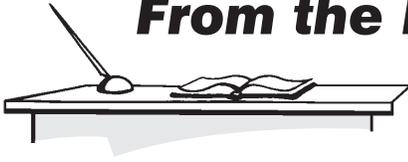
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From the Editor's Desk



Paul M. Emerson

GUEST EDITORIAL

Lord, Give Us Christian Homes

by Paul L. Miller

Christian homes don't just happen. Even when parents are careful, sly enemies lurk that resist their best efforts. And if parents are not careful, children can stray into lawlessness. Some years ago (before the internet), Jacob M. Brande, who served on the circuit court of Cook County, Illinois, listed what he saw as fifteen causes of juvenile delinquency. Here is his list:

- Destructive toys and games
- Working mothers
- Moonlighting [having more than one job]
- Improper literature
- Gambling
- [Improper use of] automobiles
- Drugs and Narcotics
- Alcohol
- Movies, Radio, and Television
- Unsupervised Group Activities
- Idleness and Unemployment
- Lack of Religious Training
- Lack of Discipline in the Home
- Lack of Discipline in the School
- Lack of Love in the Home

(From Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, Assurance Publishers, Rockville, MD, 1979, #2903).

According to this list, juvenile delinquency mostly starts with adult delinquency. Parents certainly need wisdom that's higher than their own. Good parenting is not easy. If parents choose the course of least resistance, they let down the children given by God to be brought up.

Watch out for hazards to the children. Dr. Manuel Suarez Perdeguero, who was at one time president of the Spanish Pediatrics Association, said that a child's brain can be permanently impaired if it is exposed to television at an early age. He said, "The damage is both structural and chemical," explaining further that the cells undergo a change in their structure and chemical makeup which, though slight, definitely affect the child's normal intellectual development. A child is left with a picture imprinted upon the mind that works only one way. The picture—usually one of violence or tragedy—lingers in the child's mind without being processed, because the child is incapable of clear thought or constructive imagination. The

light waves, moreover, damage the child's sight cells, and can leave a permanent distortion if the child does not comprehend the picture. (Tan, *op.cit.*, #6994)

This seems to say that a child will be able to read and learn better in school if he has been spared unrealistic, dazzling images like those common in today's entertainment fare. Such distortion of reality hinders good development of the young child's mind.

In 2008 an evangelist who has often preached in Spanish and English told me that he now seldom preaches for 40 minutes, because people here and in Latin America seem to have shorter attention spans than in former years. Formerly he could hold his audience's interest while preaching 40-minute sermons, but now is advised to preach for only 20 minutes. He places the blame for this reduced attention span on modern entertainment.

I think today's entertainment produces more than one problem. I suspect several: a weakened work ethic, compromised morals, obesity; but also physical harm from watching lots of fast-moving images that present sinful lifestyles as "the new normal."

Parents need to take back the task of godly nurture. Here's my list of ten goals for parents, if their children are to have Christ in first place.

1. Jesus loves the little children and we parents can do so too. Undivided, sympathetic parental regard conveys unconditional love.
2. The children's health is precious. Their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and should be cared for by worship, work, study, exercise, nutritious food, sleep, and proper rest. Their minds thrive by exploring God's wonderful creation and by worshipping Him.
3. Children need to obey both parents. A child specialist said, "When it comes to serious illness, the child who has been taught to obey stands four times the chance of recovery

than the spoiled and undisciplined child does." (Tan, *op. cit.* #634.)

4. Parental direction is best when given in a calm voice. When giving directions, once is enough, if it's done clearly. Direct disobedience is not acceptable. Unpleasant consequences follow direct disobedience. If correction is too light, it stirs anger; if it's too severe, it conveys rejection.
5. Malachi prophesied that John the Baptist would avert a curse when turning the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers (Malachi 4:6). Such nurture excludes cruel, heartless methods but it includes parental direction and correction that is both diligent and compassionate.
6. God is good—all the time! If parents praise God, the children see how it's done.
7. Charitable giving is part of worship and service to God. No one is so poor that he can afford to stop giving to others.
8. Satan has many flashy substitutes, but God's treasures are found in God's world and God's Word. God's treasures help build a transformed life.
9. Parents are to nurture young children in a way that prepares them to give their hearts to Jesus Christ. Only He can give the new birth and the new life. We must talk to them about God and talk to God about them. Prayer is absolutely vital.
10. Parents must cooperate with God to keep the glow in their marriage. Marriage is designed to improve character. By God's design, the longer marriage goes the better it gets.

The Christian home is God's idea. He will bless and guide parents who sincerely want their home to be genuinely Christian. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *The Calvary Messenger*, January 2011.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS



A Devotional Commentary



by David L. Burkholder

Introduction to Quarter's Lessons

The lessons for June, July, and August are taken from the historical books of the Old Testament. They describe the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, the time of the Judges, and conclude with three lessons from the Book of Ruth which introduces us to one of Jesus' ancestresses. The underlying theme of these lessons is a focus on community and how individual actions impact community life.

These lessons should alert us to the implications of our decisions and actions on the lives of other individuals and the Christian community at large. Let's be alert to learn lessons from the history of Israel and determine by God's help to not repeat the mistakes we see there.

It will be helpful to not only read the immediate context of the lesson passages, but the broader context of Israel's move from Egypt, into the promised land, and their struggles at forming there a cohesive community.

Remember: "All these things happened to them for examples, and are written for our admonition."

JUNE 5, 2011

God Fulfills His Promise

Joshua 1:1-6; 11:16-23

Our first lesson from the Book of Joshua establishes Joshua as Moses' successor and the one to whom God gave the responsibility to lead the Israelites into and conquer the promised land. Joshua had had his training as Moses' right-hand man. Now God spoke directly to him and gave him instruction to move the people forward to their ultimate goal. In addition to outlining the geographical scope of the conquest, God also gave Joshua the assurance of His continual presence and direction. (More specific directions to Joshua and for the preparation of the people are given in next Sunday's lesson.)

Israel was encamped in the plains of Moab just across the Jordan from Jericho (see Deuteronomy 34:8). They had fulfilled the days of mourning for Moses and now God was ready to move them forward on a crucial step of their long journey. It was time to take possession of the land promised to Abraham some 700 years before. The mantle of leadership passed to Joshua and God assured him of his invincibility as he conquered and divided the land among the ten and one-half tribes.

Israel's possession was to extend from the southern wilderness to Lebanon in the north and from the land of the Hittites in the east, westward to the Mediterranean Sea. However, it wasn't until the days of David and Solomon that this entire area was under the control of Israel. As we observe from the subsequent history of

JUNE 2011

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Israel during the time of the judges, there were still those in the land who troubled Israel.

Moses' leadership would certainly be a tough act to follow, but God assured Joshua that just as He had been with Moses, so He would be with him and that no man would be able to prevail against him. God encouraged him to be strong and courageous in his task. He was now God's spokesman and leader for the people.

Our text now skips ahead to Chapter 11 where we see the results of the conquest. Intervening chapters show some of the highlights of the period of conquest. (Our next four lessons detail some significant events in that period.)

Verses 15 and 16 tell us of Joshua's faithfulness and success in carrying out God's plan. He left nothing undone. He was thorough in his task. He took the land, he smote the kings (see 12:24). This conquest spanned a period of approximately six or seven years. Joshua's success was due to God's intervention in hardening the hearts of the inhabitants and sending them into battle against the people for whom He fought.

Except for the cunning of the Gibeonites (see Chapter 9) and some of the Anakims (see Numbers 13) who fled to Philistine strongholds, Joshua conquered everything outlined by God through Moses. The dividing of the land among the tribes had been carried out and there was now a time of peace (see Joshua 21:43-45). God had made a promise and now many years later His people were at rest in their own land. God is faithful in the fulfillment of His promises.

For thought and discussion

1. You might want to discuss leadership qualities of men like Moses and Joshua. Why were they so successful? What was their secret?
2. Think of all the experiences Israel went through from the promise to Abraham till their settling in the land of Canaan. Why were these experi-

ences necessary? What did they do for the children of Israel?

3. Reflect on the promises God has given to His New Testament children. Have some been fulfilled to you? What confidence do you have of those yet unfulfilled?
4. What corresponding action is necessary on our part to receive the blessings of God's promises? Discuss.
5. What is God's purpose in delaying the fulfillment of His promises?

Lesson emphasis: The faithfulness of God to His promises, and His faithfulness in calling and equipping competent leaders for His people.

Key verses: 6:2 and 11:23

JUNE 12, 2011

God Expects Obedience

Joshua 1:7-18

Obedience is crucial for success. Benjamin Franklin aptly said: "Make a child's first lesson obedience, and the second may be what you wish." Obedience begins in the mind with a disciplined will and is carried out by determined action. In our text for today we note both the importance of Joshua's obedience as leader, and the success of their venture through the strict obedience of the people. Obedience implies following rules someone else has laid down. In this instance God spoke and it was man's duty to listen and obey.

If man's first lesson is obedience, the second is diligence. In God's instructions to Joshua he was commanded to be strong, courageous, and unwavering. These qualities were prerequisites to success. Another aspect of success was to be his constant adherence to and meditation on "the book of the law" given by God to Moses. This book of the law contained God's directions for ordering the life of His people. It contained social and religious restrictions and guidelines. It would

equip Joshua with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead these people.

God assures Joshua that if he is strong, courageous, and diligent in following and applying the book, he will have success. God reminds him that He, the Almighty, has made this promise and that He will be with him throughout the invasion, conquest, and division of the land. That assurance certainly brought comfort and courage to Joshua.

After receiving God's directions, Joshua then gives commands to the people through his officers. Another principle for success is organization. We see here where there was a chain of command in place to pass information from the top to the bottom. The instruction to the people was to prepare to march. In three days they were to be ready to move. Imagine the thrill that went through them as they realized the close fulfillment of 40 years of waiting since their fathers had left Egypt.

Moses had given permission to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh to settle in conquered lands on the east side of the Jordan. However, that permission came with the stipulation that they would provide armed men to lead the advance into Canaan (see Numbers 32). Joshua now reminds them of their promise and they consent to the terms. According to Joshua 4:13 there were 40,000 men in this advance army. We note in Joshua 22 where they returned to their families, their flocks, herds, and farms. The conquest took approximately seven years.

Notice the strict obedience (verses 16-18) promised by these men to Joshua. They accepted him as God's appointed leader and pledged their unwavering loyalty to him, just as they had to Moses. Their loyalty was so strong they pledged death to any who might rebel against him in disobedience. They also encouraged Joshua to follow God as Moses had, and to be strong and courageous for the task.

With God's blessing and the people's respect and support, Joshua was prepared to move forward.

For thought and discussion

1. What are the qualities necessary for successful leadership? What about those necessary in followers? Discuss.
2. Joshua had a huge task. What encouraged him and gave him confidence to move forward?
3. What had happened to convince the present generation it was time to move into Canaan? Discuss.
4. The commitment of the two and a half tribes to assist in conquering the land speaks to a crucial element in the success of any cooperative venture. What is it? Why is it so vital? What does it accomplish?
5. There may be times when God asks us to perform a difficult task. What is necessary on our part for success, and what are some attendant encouraging elements?

Lesson emphasis: The importance of obedience to God's instructions to achieve success.

Key verse: 9

JUNE 19, 2011

God Protects His People

Joshua 2:1-9, 15, 16, 22-24

As a wise strategist, Joshua sent spies across the Jordan to assess the potential resistance to their invasion of the land of Canaan. Chapter 2 tells the story of the spies and their encounter with Rahab. (Read the entire chapter for context.) Jericho lay right in the path of Israel's advance and a decisive victory there would lend courage to Israel and strike fear into the hearts of the inhabitants of the land. Joshua's caution in no way reflected a lack of faith in God's promise to give him success. It was simply a wise move to give confidence to the people.

The two young spies (6:23) slipped into the city, but not without being recognized. Their presence caused the king of Jericho

great consternation. He was aware of their purpose and was anxious to capture them before they could get away with damaging information. However, unbeknownst to him there was a traitor in their midst. Rahab had heard how the God of Israel had miraculously provided for them and admitted that she and her countrymen were afraid. She was prepared to cast her lot with them.

In spite of her unsavory occupation, Rahab was a person of insight and foresight. However, she was not above a bit of subterfuge to protect her self-interests. So she told a boldfaced lie concerning the whereabouts of the spies. She further misled those searching for them by sending them on a futile search.

So Rahab hid the spies, but also extracted a promise from them—her future protection in exchange for their present protection. She understood that Jericho was doomed and expressed faith in the God of Heaven and earth (v. 11) before whom no man could stand. They sealed the deal with guidelines and pledges from both parties. The spies were safe and she and her family would be preserved upon destruction of the city.

Then, from her convenient location on the wall of the city she let them down by a rope and told them where to hide themselves until their pursuers gave up the hunt. They followed her directions and went to the mountains, away from the river, for three days. When it was safe, they crossed the river back to the camp of Israel and reported to Joshua.

The report of the spies affirmed the fear of the inhabitants of the land as expressed by Rahab. They had heard of the acts of this great God and their hearts melted in fear of His great power. The report of the spies also confirmed to Joshua the promise of God to go with him, protect him, and make his endeavor successful. God had set the stage through His leading and providence. The people were ready. Their leader was assured. Another crucial step in Israel's history was about to be taken.

PAGE 10

Next Sunday's lesson from Chapter 6 details the taking of the city of Jericho. Read the intervening chapters to see how the multitude got across the Jordan, the setting up of a memorial, and their first act of worship in the promised land. These people experienced God's protection firsthand. We who read of their experience can have the same confidence of God's protection in our lives.

For thought and discussion

1. Wrong motives aside, why was going to Rahab's house a wise move on the part of the spies?
2. In spite of Rahab's highly questionable moral character, the fact that she was a member of a heathen nation, and lied without apparent compunction, God chose to include her in the human lineage of His Son Jesus. How do you explain that? What does that really tell us? Good for discussion.
3. Was it necessary for Joshua to send out spies when God had promised His presence, protection, and the success of their venture? What do you think? Discuss.
4. Is it ever right to resort to questionable actions in order to preserve life? What does the New Testament say?
5. Rahab put her life in jeopardy to be true to her convictions. What lesson does that carry for our day?

Lesson emphasis: How God works through people and circumstances to protect and provide for His people.

Key verse: 24

JUNE 26, 2011

God Gives Victory

Joshua 6:2-4, 12-20

Israel was now in the promised land. They had successfully crossed the Jordan, celebrated the Passover, and were eating of the fruit of the land. However, there was still much work ahead of them. The

SWORD AND TRUMPET

inhabitants of the land must be expunged, both to make room for Israel and to diminish the potential influence for the worship of false gods.

Jericho was right in Israel's path. It had been assessed by the two spies and now God gave Joshua specific instructions for its conquest. We note in verse 1 that it was shut up tightly against the expected assault (see 2:9-11, 24). The people were afraid and no doubt had prepared themselves as best they could to repel the expected attack.

God's instructions for taking the city may have been somewhat perplexing to the Israelites, to say nothing of the inhabitants of Jericho. But God had His purposes. Instead of a direct frontal attack, resulting in the likelihood of much bloodshed, the army of Israel was instructed to march quietly around the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day they were to march seven times and, at the special blast of the trumpet, to shout. God would do the rest. Note that the ark of the covenant was included in the procession. God was with them.

Undoubtedly the wall of Jericho, estimated to be perhaps 30 feet high, was lined with curious spectators as well as the fighting men of Jericho, observing this strange sight unfolding below them. And indeed this may have been part of God's strategy, to have many people on the wall where they would have been killed as the walls fell. No sound was heard save the tramp of marching feet and the steady rhythm of the trumpets. Curious indeed. But then this was no ordinary conquest of human design. This was God's battle, not man's.

Then came that fateful day, the seventh day. It has been estimated that it would have taken approximately 45 minutes to march around the city. Starting at first light and encompassing the city seven times would put the destruction at about midday. No doubt tension was mounting within the city as the Israelites on that day continued marching, marching, marching. Then without warning, at the blast of the

trumpets and the shout of the soldiers, the wall crumbled under them. When the dust cleared, Joshua's army marched straight in and took the city, killing every living thing.

However, faithful to their commitment, Rahab's house and household were spared. Joshua instructed the two spies to go in and take her and her family to safety outside the city. And, as the writer here says, "she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day" (v. 25). Through her act of faith and God's providence she was included in the human lineage of God's Son Jesus (see Matthew 1:5).

God had placed several restrictions on the taking of Jericho. Every living thing was to be destroyed, both man and beast. All the precious metals were to be consecrated to the Lord. There was to be absolutely no taking of spoil for personal use. However, as we will see in next Sunday's lesson, that restriction was violated and resulted in defeat for Israel's attempt to conquer Ai.

For thought and discussion

1. The instructions for taking Jericho may seem a bit odd. Why do you suppose God did it this way? What was He trying to teach His people? Good for discussion.
2. What purpose did the ark of the covenant serve among the marching soldiers?
3. Does God ever give strange "marching orders" today? How should we respond to them? Why is it important that we obey explicitly?
4. Through the simple act of obedience Rahab not only saved her own life, but the lives of her family as well. What lesson does that teach us?
5. What was the purpose for God's restrictions on the inhabitants and the spoil of Jericho? Discuss.

Lesson emphasis: The importance of strict obedience to God's directives to achieve success in life.

Key verses: 2 and 19 ■

Newslines . . .

by Hans Mast

incidents events occurrences facts illustrations episodes committees vignettes proceedings problems
experiences crises adventures transactions meetings tragedies scoops reports conferences happenings
bulletins questions reports affairs dramas encounters personages actions tidings et cetera

USA: Pastor Chooses to Become Homeless

“Realtor and local pastor Ryan Riddell has sold hundreds of homes, but he spent the month of January homeless. Not because he was behind on his mortgage, but he willingly took to the cold streets of Dayton, Ohio, leaving behind his wife and three children, to follow his heart in a campaign to raise awareness of homelessness. ‘I felt the Lord leading me to do this,’ Riddell says, still sporting the beard that grew on his face during his experiment. ‘I felt convicted to do more than just talk about people that are hurting, dying, and lost. Jesus became like us in order to reach us. For me, this was a spiritual renewal.’

“Riddell slept in an old paneled van for 30 days in Dayton’s freezing weather. He experienced homeless life, including searching for public restrooms. Before the end of the 30 days, he appeared like his homeless brethren. ‘I learned through this that people have a face and a name. We drive through town and think they have self-induced problems,’ Riddell says. ‘A lot of times they do, but, man, sometimes they do not. I’ve not been very sympathetic to their needs and had ignored them. But the Lord showed me that these people are real and they all have a story, a face, a name, a soul.’

“Riddell developed relationships with a number of homeless people during his 30 days on the streets. He posted daily video

blogs to document his journey. ‘The homeless people embraced me because they have no voice. There is no one crying out for them. They hug me, love me, and thank me,’ Riddell says. ‘Now, my goal is to raise support for the homeless through speaking engagements. I’m also working directly with nine kids to help them find homes and jobs.’”

—Reprinted with permission from *Joel News International*, Vol. 769 (www.JoelNews.org)

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Bangladeshi Girl Beaten to Death

A 14-year-old Bangladeshi girl was convicted of adultery after being raped by her cousin. The local imam applied Sharia law (Islamic religious law) and issued a fatwa ordering that she be lashed 101 times (and the man that raped her be lashed 201 times). The girl dropped after 70 lashes, was taken to the hospital, and died there.

CNN writes further: “Bangladesh is considered a democratic and moderate Muslim country, and national law forbids the practice of Sharia. But activist and journalist Shoaib Choudhury, who documents such cases, said Sharia is still very much in use in villages and towns aided by the lack of education and strong judicial systems. The Supreme Court also outlawed fatwas a decade ago, but human rights monitors have documented more than 500 cases of women in those 10 years who were punished through a religious ruling. And few who have issued such rulings have

been charged. . . . The United Nations estimates that almost half of Bangladeshi women suffer from domestic violence and many also commonly endure rape, beatings, acid attacks, and even death because of the country's entrenched patriarchal system." It is ironic that while Sharia law is ostensibly illegal in a Muslim nation like Bangladesh (a country that understands and lives with the ramifications), there are credible efforts to introduce sharia law as an alternative legal system in Britain and the United States. —Source: CNN

* * * * *

Muslim Unrest

All across the Muslim world, people are dissatisfied with their rulers. In Egypt protestors have already ousted their autocratic leader who has reigned for twenty years. In Tunisia the 25-year ruler was ousted. There are also ongoing massive protests in Algeria, Bahrain, Iran, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Oman, and Yemen.

In Libya, autocratic ruler Colonel Muammar Gaddafi has reigned for forty-two years. When Col. Gaddafi began using violence and military force on protestors, the United Nations authorized the use of military force to protect civilians from Gaddafi's military. The protests turned into a rebellion and civil war with NATO airstrikes paving the way for rebel victories.

Also, U. S. and Egyptian Special Forces are reportedly training rebel forces. Gaddafi was behind the Lockerbie Pan Am 103 bombing which killed 270 in 1988. He also financed and planned many other acts of terror. The rebels and Gaddafi seem to be in a bit of stalemate at the moment.

Joel News International (Vol. 765) writes, "God sets up kings and deposes them, He changes times and seasons. Let's pray this week for the historic shifts that take place in North Africa and the Middle East, that these will bring glory to God and extend His kingdom among all

peoples. Pray for opportunities for the gospel, for real heart hunger in every individual throughout the Arab World, particularly among those with the least access to the gospel, that they will find true freedom in Jesus. Pray for God to soften the hearts of people, heal the hurts, and break down every dividing wall. Pray for believers to be ready to give an answer for the hope within them, boldly and sensitively. Pray for protection for our sisters and brothers as they continue to be light and salt in these difficult environments. Pray for believers who are willing to live international lives among these groups, no matter what the challenges may be."

—Sources: *Wikipedia, New York Times, Joel News International*

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Wachovia Lauanders Drug Money

Wachovia (now owned by Wells Fargo) settled a criminal case brought against it by federal law enforcement for ignoring banking laws and squashing internal alerts, which allowed drug cartels to launder a breathtaking \$378.4 billion (1/3 of the annual economic output of Mexico) of drug money through Wachovia accounts.

A former cop whom Wachovia hired to work in its anti-money-laundering department noticed the suspicious transactions shortly after beginning work, but when he pointed them out, he was shushed. When he persisted, he was basically fired. Federal law enforcement moved against Wachovia and the accounts only when he went directly to them as a whistleblower.

Wachovia ended up only paying \$160 million in fines, an incredible 0.04% of the money laundered. An anti-money-laundering expert believes the reason that they got off scot-free was because the banking sector in general (and Wachovia in particular) was desperately short of liquidity at the time and the drug money was some of the only liquid cash inflows.

—Source: *UK Daily Guardian*

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U.S. Soldiers Murder Afghan Civilians

“The disturbing allegations that American soldiers were involved in ‘acts of unspeakable cruelty’ toward Afghan civilians, compounded by an alleged cover-up by Army officers, has already led to charges against a dozen soldiers, a guilty murder plea by one Army infantryman, and a statement by a former Defense secretary calling the actions ‘worse than Abu Ghraib.’

“*Rolling Stone* magazine deemed the Kill Team’s actions part of a disturbing ‘front-line culture among U. S. troops in which killing Afghan civilians is less a reason for concern than a cause for celebration.’

“On Tuesday, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld called the actions—which allegedly involved, among other grotesque acts, cutting off the fingers of innocent victims as souvenirs—heart-breaking and worse than the criminal activity in the Iraqi prison because this time people died.”

—Excerpt from “Donald Rumsfeld says ‘Kill Team’s actions are worse than Abu Ghraib” (<http://j.mp/AfghanKillTeam>) in the *Los Angeles Times*

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Genetically-Modified Cows Produce “Human” Milk

“The scientists have successfully introduced human genes into 300 dairy cows to produce milk with the same properties as human breast milk.

“Human milk contains high quantities of key nutrients that can help to boost the immune system of babies and reduce the risk of infections.

“The scientists behind the research believe milk from herds of genetically-modified cows could provide an alternative to human breast milk and formula milk for babies, which is often criticized as being an inferior substitute.

“They hope genetically-modified dairy products from herds of similar cows could

be sold in supermarkets. The research has the backing of a major biotechnology company.

“The work is likely to inflame opposition to GM foods. Critics of the technology and animal welfare groups reacted angrily to the research, questioning the safety of milk from genetically-modified animals and its effect on the cattle’s health.”

—Excerpt from “Genetically-modified cows produce ‘human’ milk” (<http://j.mp/GMCowsMilk>) in the *UK Daily Telegraph*

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News Snippets

Police in Moscow confiscated most of the first printing of a book by a *Forbes* journalist that exposed corruption in government. —*BoingBoing* and *Moscow Times*

GOP propose \$4 trillion in cuts to federal budget over next decade. —*AP*

The chairman of the panel of experts that produced the damaging Goldstone Report which condemned Israel for purposefully harming civilians in the Gaza War has retracted his claims due to further evidence that has emerged.

—*New York Times*

A missing 22-month-old from Kershaw County, South Carolina, was found the morning after the search began; the family’s dog was watching over the boy and had kept him warm during the night.

—*WISTV*

A 22-year-old mentally handicapped (she had fetal alcohol syndrome) Utah woman was abused and then crucified by her caregivers (like foster parents for adults unable to care for themselves).

—*AOL News*

The skin of a Southwest 737 ruptured with a loud noise causing depressurization, oxygen masks deploying, a rapid descent of 25,000 feet, and an emergency landing at an Air Force base; four months ago Southwest settled a lawsuit against it for inadequate safety maintenance.

—*NDTV*

Feedback: hansmast@hansmast.com

Giving Yourself to God Is the First Step Toward Healing

by Keith Kaynor

The first step toward healing is yielding your will, mind, and life back to the One who created it. I assume most of you reading this have already come to Christ for salvation. However, some of you have not.

What we need in life is a fresh start. It would be great to be new again, wouldn't it? Let's think about becoming new.¹

For some, pleasure is life's ultimate good (hedonism). Others have faith in themselves, another person, some mystical experience, a force of nature (wind, sun, earth, fire), a political/social movement, or a utopian scheme like Communism or Nazism, evolution, scientology, or some other *ology*. Without necessarily calling it such, all people have some kind of religious orientation—something they crown with ultimate authority, some way to salvage life, some philosophy of ultimate meaning and reality. Such are the characteristics of a “religious faith.” Many seem to be trusting in themselves to determine ultimate truth or meaningfulness in life.

The Bible says there is one all-powerful, all-knowing, all-present Creator God.² The Bible claims for itself that God caused men to write it and that God has preserved its purity and message down through the centuries as it has been translated.³

The Bible claims for itself that it is God's message to humanity—God's loving, authoritative invitation to all mankind.

“The worldview of the Christian faith is simple enough. God has put enough into this world to make faith in Him a most reasonable thing. But He has left enough out to make it impossible to live by sheer reason alone.”⁴

Ask yourself, “Why don't I sense God's love and care in daily life? Why is there so much injustice and misery? Sorrow and fear? War and anger? Why am I so unhappy? So angry?”

What is the difference between Hitler's grab of the Sudetenland in 1937 and a three-year-old swiping the toy of a two-year-old? Hitler's consequences were greater, but the basic greed and selfishness of sinful human nature is the same. Along with all other people (even though each person is the apex of God's creative genius) you and I were born on the devil's team. We have a nature inside us that is selfish and opposed to God. Let me explain.

The apple-ness of an apple—where does it come from? The root of the tree. What is our “root”? Our nature?

Think about a small four-footed creature that barks. Does this animal become a dog because of bark #10? Bark #100? What about the 500th time this animal makes a bow-wow noise, does that make it a dog? No. It *is* a dog, so it does things natural to a dog. It barks. The barking does not make the animal a dog.

Does an individual act of sin make us a sinner before God? Does our tenth sin condemn us? Our 1000th sin? Our 10,000th sin? No. We do individual acts of sin because that is our nature. All people are sinners by nature, birth, and choice.

The Christian doctrine of sin does not mean a given person is as evil as he can possibly be. It means every part of our lives is tainted and corrupted by sin, ruined, twisted, out of sync—our emotions, our reasoning process, our physical bodies, our attitudes, our logic, and our evaluative skills. It is not surprising that we push God away and crown ourselves the god of our own lives. Given our fallen minds, it is “logical” that we

1. 2 Corinthians 5:17

2. Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 8:20

3. 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 5:13

4. *The End of Reason*, Ravi Zacharias, page 75.

would crown our own reasoning process as capable of finding and recognizing ultimate truth. Being flawed by sin, we decide we are the true ones (surprise, surprise!). And our sinful nature deceives us into believing in ourselves, without realizing that sin is in the driver's seat.

A young man asked one of his professors an old question: "If God is all-powerful and all-good, why do bad things happen to good people?"

The professor replied, "I am not going to answer the question until you ask it correctly."

"What do you mean, 'Ask it correctly?' It's my question. You can't tell me how to ask my question."

To which the professor replied, "I will answer your question when you ask it properly."

Since the professor had answered this question many times over the years, he was ready to help the student phrase the question correctly: "Look me in the eye and ask me, 'How can a holy and righteous God know what I did and thought and said yesterday and not kill me in my sleep last night?' Ask it that way and we can talk. Until you ask it that way, you do not understand the issue. Until you ask it that way, you believe the problem is *out there* somewhere. Until you ask the question that way, you believe there are some individuals who, in and of themselves, deserve something other than the wrath of Almighty God. When you ask, 'Why are we here today? Why has God not consumed us? Why does judgment tarry?', then you truly understand the issue."⁵ Sin has fooled us so we do not ask ultimate questions properly.

The Bible speaks about the deceitfulness of sin. My sin nature leads me to "start with myself as the measure of all things."⁶ That is, I judge God based upon how well He carries out my agenda, and what I think He should and should not be doing."⁷

It would be easy for God to make robots to worship Him. But God so values a free, uncoerced response that He gives each person the responsibility of repenting and believing. And He gives a person 40, 50, 60, 70, or 80 years to yield their lives back to their Creator. If persons do not get honest and choose the Redeemer during that time, they suffer the consequences of that continued allegiance to the evil one in the next life. As their wish in this life, so is their doom in the next.

What would cause a person to "choose the Redeemer"? Sometimes there is a "felt need," like fear, guilt, loneliness, emptiness, or a haunting sense of incompleteness. Sometimes people become so sick of themselves, they cry out to God to help them change. "Felt need" or not, God expects us to recognize that we are proud, lazy, selfish, greedy, angry, bitter, and materialistic. Because we want to be well-thought-of by others, we suppress these attitudes, but surging through our minds, these self-oriented attitude sins give us clear proof that we are sinful, needy people. If what we think were suddenly flashed on a computer screen moment-by-moment in bold type, we would immediately be fired, divorced, abandoned, or alone. If sin had an odor, we would not be able to be in the presence of anyone and no one would want to be with us. We just barely keep our sin out of sight. Civilization depends on it.

And God is angry at sin—yours and mine. Yet He loves you. How could God solve this dilemma without compromising His absolute holiness, purity, and truthfulness?

The answer is the Gospel—The Good News. God became a person. Jesus Christ was and is God in a human body. On earth, He was perfect! He never sinned. Therefore He could die to atone (to pay) for our sinfulness. The Almighty's anger at my sin and yours was directed toward Jesus Christ. When Christ died on a cross, He became sin for us.⁸ *(continued on page 23)*

5. Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Truth and the Supremacy of Christ*, Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois, page 63.

6. *Ibid.*

7. We say to God, "No more airplane crashes, no more sexual predators, no more hurricanes, God, or the deal is off." We want to indulge in our respectable sins, but draw the line comfortably below ourselves and have God deal with all injustice we deem below that line. However, God says we are all guilty! We are all damaged goods. Needy. Selfish. All in need of the salvation available only through faith in God's one appointed means of redemption—Jesus Christ.

8. 2 Corinthians 5:21



Sermon of the Month



Each month we will feature a Biblical sermon in this column. We would like to emphasize expository preaching and ask our readers to submit good expositional sermons for consideration. Please send typewritten copies by "snail mail" or E-mail to: Editor, Sword and Trumpet, Box 575, Harrisonburg, VA 22803; swandtrump@verizon.net.

God's Answer to the Skeptic

by Dr. Jack MacArthur (1914-2005)

"[Jesus Christ was] declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." —Romans 1:4

Nothing is more critical and crucial in the entire field of Christian evidence than the question of the deity of Jesus Christ. And nothing is more essential in the establishing of the deity of Jesus Christ than the fact of His physical, literal resurrection from the dead, for this is the pivotal point of Christianity, the historical event on which the whole structure of Christian revelation rises.

If Jesus Christ were still lying in the tomb somewhere under the Syrian skies today in Palestine, He would only be a victim of death, as all men are. But on the other hand, if we can prove conclusively, at least sufficient to our own hearts, that Jesus Christ lives today; that He literally, physically, bodily rose from the dead; if we can know beyond the shadow of successful contradiction, without so much as a doubt, that Jesus Christ *did* rise from the dead, then we also know, with the same kind of certitude, that He was the fusion of humanity and deity in indivisible oneness, and that He is none other and no other than the enhumanated God!

Unanswerable Demonstrations

There are unanswerable demonstrations to the fact that Jesus Christ did rise from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ rests not only on faith, but on fact. Repeatedly, the Old Testament Scriptures foretold His resurrection. Emphatically Jesus Christ

over and over again told the disciples He was going to be killed, but that on the third day He was going to rise from the dead.

In six different and independent accounts, in the four Gospels and again in the Book of Acts from the pen of the Apostle Paul, we have a recounting of His triumph over death. Scores of passages in the remainder of the New Testament speak of His resurrection with such conclusiveness that it tolerates no uncertainty.

I do not believe there is propagated in the name of Christianity any fact which has as much support as that of our Lord's literal, physical, bodily resurrection from the dead.

Historians whose scholarship and reputation is unquestioned, accept thousands of what are referred to as facts for which they can only produce shreds of evidence. In contrast with respect to the resurrection, in the New Testament, we have the personal testimony of those who were eyewitnesses of our Lord's post-resurrection appearances. Lest there be the argument of failure on their part to identify Him, we must remember that those who gave such testimony concerning His being alive after His resurrection were those who had walked with Him, ate with Him, knelt with Him in a circle of prayer, and whose recognition of Him could not possibly be doubted. As many as 500 people, on a single occasion, saw Him after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6). Yet, enigmatically the enemies of our Lord are

not willing to admit His resurrection, even though there is overwhelming evidence He rose from the dead as He said He would! If the resurrection truth is not history then there is no history.

I believe if any man is honest in his skepticism and will face the facts, using as his authority the Word of God, he cannot possibly come to any other conclusion but that Jesus Christ did rise from the dead.

How He Died

In the first place, let us consider how He died. When Jesus was crucified, it was under the supervision of Roman soldiers who knew how to do their job and do it well. It has been estimated that at that time something like 30,000 Jews were crucified around the walls of Jerusalem, in the same identical cruel manner Jesus was. That being true, His death on the cross was not unique because of the manner in which He died, but because of the strange, supernatural phenomena that accompanied His death, for there was more than one evidence of supernatural intervention.

We know loving hands took Him down from the cross and tenderly laid Him in the rock-hewn tomb of a wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathaea. Evidently he very much wanted Jesus to have this special tomb, which, no doubt, he had prepared for himself and his family. Perhaps he thought this was where the body of Jesus was to repose in eternal sleep (?).

Interestingly, because of some of the declarations Jesus had made concerning His resurrection, Roman guards were placed outside the tomb with bristling bayonets to prevent anyone from attempting to roll back the huge stone that blocked the entrance and steal the body, claiming He had risen from the dead. Matthew relates the story: *“Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall*

be worse than the first” (Matt. 27:62-64).

So Pilate gave his consent and dispatched a band of Roman soldiers to stand guard over that tomb. He also put the seal of Rome on the tomb so that if anyone tampered with it they would be immediately seized and the penalty for such an act would be death. How fascinating it is that the enemies of our Lord remembered the words His disciples seemingly forgot. They were expecting He would inaugurate His Kingdom during His earthly ministry and they evidently refused to accept the idea of His death and resurrection.

The reason the tomb was guarded and sealed with the Roman seal was, perhaps, a confession on the part of the priests and Pharisees that there was something about the death of the Lord Jesus Christ which must have given them profound anxiety. Perhaps, down deep in their hearts they may have believed that it was quite possible they had crucified their own Messiah. It is difficult for us to find any other reason why they would send strong men to guard the tomb of a dead man.

The Resurrection—a Reality

Certainly the dark world of Satan and his demons wanted to keep that body forever within the confines of that tomb. When we read that those who were guarding the tomb fell back as dead men on that glorious morning, we know that nothing short of the hand of God Almighty could have produced such an effect. The Roman guard was part of God’s providence, because when they were sent to guard that tomb, they removed all possibility of the resurrection of our Lord being a lie and left an assurance to all the ages that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was an undeniable reality.

Two days passed and during those two days we can believe the Pharisees never slept. Perhaps the Sadducees were not concerned because they did not believe in the integrity of the Old Testament Scriptures so they were not expecting a Messiah; they were like present-day theological liberals! Some of the Pharisees must have had some understanding of the Messianic prophecies that were found all through the Old Testament. Indeed, Orthodox Jews today are

looking for the coming of Messiah, not realizing that He has already come.

On that third day, as the Apostle Paul said to the Romans, [*Jesus Christ was*] “*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead*” (Romans 1:4). With the dawning of that third day the darkness of the tomb was filled with light as our Lord Jesus Christ snapped asunder the bonds and chains of death, and went through the tomb and out the other side in the glory of a literal, physical, bodily resurrection.

The Survival of the Roman Guard

The very fact that the Roman guards lived to tell their story is proof they could never have fallen asleep while watching the tomb. Roman law demanded that if a soldier on duty ever fell asleep he forfeited his life as a penalty, and the continued existence of these Roman guards gives evidence that a crooked bargain had been made to cover up the fact of the resurrection—but the fact could not be covered up. It became a blazing truth!

The Empty Tomb

Consider, secondly, the evidence of the empty tomb. There *was* an empty tomb! It is still empty! There can be no question but that the dark tomb in Joseph’s garden was empty that first Easter morning twenty centuries ago.

The empty tomb is the great evidence of a risen Christ. The Mohammedans are fond of redressing the Christians because they cannot point to the place where the remains of their founder lie. The Mohammedans make pilgrimages to Medina where the dust of the prophet Mohammed lies, who died in A.D. 632 at the age of 61. The Buddhists have a temple in which they keep the last remains of what is left of Buddha’s body, a single tooth, testifying to the fact that Buddha is dead, and his remains have gone back to the dust from whence they came.

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, how can you account for that empty tomb? If all of the infidels this side of Hell were going into session for the purpose of exploding and overturning the resurrection of Jesus

Christ, I would put one fact into their midst, and it would leave them without an argument. I would say, “Explain to me that empty tomb!” When you say, *that empty tomb*, you have defeated the most bitter opponent. Even the infidel Schenkel made the statement that, “it is an indisputable fact that in the early morning of the first day of the week following the crucifixion, the grave of Jesus was found empty!”

When we ask infidels for an explanation, they have none that will stand any logical test. If the argument is given that the disciples or His enemies stole His body, the immediate answer is that they would have produced it as soon as possible as the most effective way of putting an end to any preaching that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. Obviously, His enemies never stole His body, neither did His disciples. What use would they have had for His dead body?

Actually, the disciples never expected to see Jesus again; there was no anticipation on their part of His resurrection. It never occurred to them that He had risen from the dead. Jesus reprimanded them for their unbelief. When they met together in Jerusalem and our Lord made His appearance in their midst, the Word of God says they were terrified, and thought that He was a spirit (Luke 24:37).

The Moving of the Stone

When our Lord arose from the dead, the stone was not rolled back to let Jesus out. The stone was rolled back so that those who came to the tomb would see that it was empty. When our Lord appeared to the disciples in the upper room, we are told that all the doors were shut when suddenly He appeared in their midst.

When Lazarus was called forth from the tomb he still wore the grave clothes in which he had been bound. When our Lord arose the grave clothes in which His body had been wrapped were undisturbed. They were left behind like a cocoon of a chrysalis, from which the butterfly had flown. They testified indubitably to the fact of His resurrection.

That is why the Word of God tells us when Peter ran to the tomb with John

following him, “[John] saw, and believed” (John 20:8). And when we ask, “What did he see?” He saw the grave clothes and knew any other explanation would be impossible. However, when the rest of the disciples heard about it they did not believe. Why? Because they did not see what John saw. When Jesus made His appearance in the upper room, then they believed.

Renan, the French infidel said, “You Christians base your faith on the fragrance of an empty vase.” He is right.

Consider the evidence of Scripture. To do away with the fact of our Lord’s resurrection we would have to do away with the entire Bible, both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament prophesied over and over again the Lord Jesus Christ would die but that He would rise again. The resurrection of our Lord is specifically announced in Psalm 16 and is interpreted as referring to His resurrection in the Book of Acts (Acts 13:35).

The Unbelief of the Disciples

In the New Testament, prophecy concerning our Lord’s resurrection is uttered by Christ alone. None of His disciples believed that He would rise from the dead. His predictions were clear! He not only predicted His own resurrection before His death, but He even spoke about what He was going to do after He was risen from the dead (John 2:18-21). He was neither self-deceived nor was He an imposter. His perfect knowledge, His sinless character demands credence, respecting His own testimony.

The Lord’s Day

Consider the Lord’s Day. We meet together on the Lord’s Day. Six hundred million Christians meet together on the Lord’s Day. We admit it is not the original Sabbath. The original Sabbath is the seventh day. The Jews held tenaciously to the Sabbath, so much so that when Titus Vespasian attacked the city of Jerusalem he chose the Sabbath day because he knew the Jews would not fight on that day. As a result, approximately a million of them were slain, and the streets of the city ran with blood.

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During the ministry of the apostles, as a result of their preaching, many thousands of Jews gave up their time-honored seventh day and changed their day of worship to the first day of the week. They began to call that day the Lord’s Day. What made these Jews change from the seventh day to the first day? It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

The observing of the Lord’s Day is incontrovertible proof that Jesus Christ rose from the dead!

There are those who say the Lord’s Day is a pagan institution. They say Constantine changed the day in A.D. 325; but the person who makes that statement is very wrong because historical data is abundant to prove in the earliest days of the apostles and of the early church fathers of the first century, long before Constantine’s time, churches were meeting on the first day of the week—the day that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

Verification of this may be found in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under the word “Sunday” where it states as far back as Ignatius and Barnabas in A.D. 70, the church was recognizing the new day of worship as the first day of the week, the resurrection day. The reason the majority of Christians worship our Lord Jesus Christ on the first day instead of the seventh day is because the old Jewish Memorial is gone in the glorious fact of Christ’s resurrection. The Lord’s day is an effect. What was the cause? The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

The Christian Church

Consider the Christian church. It is an effect. What was the cause? The Christian body of Christ is in the world to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. As the Apostle Paul declared, “*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 also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again*

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the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

Any local church that does not recognize the infallibility, the inerrancy of the Word of God; the Deity of Christ; His vicarious atonement on the cross; His literal, physical, bodily resurrection from the dead; the fact that man is saved by faith in Him and Him alone; as well as the truth of His Second Coming, no matter what it may call itself, is not a church.

Picture those disciples after the crucifixion. All their hopes were shattered. All their dreams were gone. They had left Calvary feeling it was the end of everything.

The two disciples on the way to Emmaus were filled with dejection, despair, and gloom. The One in whom they had placed their confidence, their trust, their faith, was gone—*dead!* Then, see these same disciples just three weeks later. Something dramatic has happened.

For example, consider Peter as he stands before the great multitude gathered in the city of Jerusalem, and fearlessly and uncompromisingly indicts them as he says, "*Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses*" (Acts 3:14, 15). It is noticeable that nobody contradicted him.

What changed these men? What made them so fearless for God? The only answer is they had been endowed with the power of a risen, living Christ and had been changed from cowards into heroes.

Consider how the church began to grow in numbers: 120 in Acts 1; 3,000 in Acts 2; 5,000 in Acts 3; a multitude in Acts 5; myriads in Acts 21, etc. Churches were established at Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, and in hundreds of other places until within two hundred years the whole of Imperial Rome heard the message of a risen Christ. How does one explain it?

Here is another interesting phenomenon: The Romans burned their dead. However, in anticipation of the resurrection, the Christians buried theirs. Underneath the city of Rome today, there are, according to DeRossi, five hundred and ninety miles of tunnels and catacombs. In these catacombs

are seven million graves. Each of these graves is a testimony to faith in Jesus Christ.

Included in the continuity of the church are two memorials—baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both of these testify to two facts: Christ's death and the resurrection. Every time a group meets as a body of believers in any church, they witness to the fact that Jesus Christ arose from the dead.

The New Testament

The New Testament would never have been written if Jesus Christ had not risen from the dead. If Jesus Christ had remained buried in a tomb, that would have been the end of it all. The death of Christ had shattered the faith of the disciples! That is why Jesus, after His resurrection, upbraided them for their hardness of heart and unbelief (Mark 16:14).

The New Testament, with its 27 books, is incontrovertible proof that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Unlike other ethnological systems, largely based on subjective philosophy, Christianity is based on an objective, historical narrative and the central fact of that narrative is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

The Apostle Paul

Consider the Apostle Paul. The wildest blasphemer, the most vigorous denier will not repudiate the historicity of the Apostle Paul. He is living proof of the resurrection of Christ. In his conversion experience he lost his fortune, his friends, his fame; he lost everything and when we ask what did he gain? He gained poverty, hunger, severe beatings, imprisonment, a Roman dungeon, and finally an executioner's axe (Philippians 3:7-14). He wrote fourteen epistles, unexcelled in literature.

No wonder we ask what imagination, nightmare, or spirit visitant would ever carry a man through such consistent suffering if he did not believe that Jesus Christ was alive. Paul believed the story of the empty tomb when their recollection was fresh, when the evidence was there to be examined, when he could talk with eyewitnesses. "Surely common sense requires us to believe that that for which he so

suffered was, in his eyes, established beyond a possibility of doubt” (Kennett).

It was the Apostle Paul who wrote, “*I delivered unto you first of all that which I also 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 Corinthians 15:3, 4). And so we can exaltedly exclaim with the Apostle Paul, “NOW IS CHRIST RISEN!”

Experts have agreed that according to the rules of evidence everywhere recognized in the realm of jurisprudence, it is easier to prove that Jesus Christ rose from the dead than to prove that such a man as George Washington or Abraham Lincoln ever lived.

Crowning Proof of Deity

Why did He rise from the dead? In the first place it is the crowning proof of His Deity. There are those who claim He was merely a man. He was a man—but do not forget, He was the fusion of humanity and Deity in indivisible oneness; just as each of us is the fusion of two progenitive processes, Jesus Christ was the earthly child of a heavenly Father, and the heavenly child of an earthly mother.

He was God manifest in the flesh. He demonstrated His claim to Deity by miracles. He cleansed the leper. He healed the sick. He gave sight to the blind. He cast out demons. He even reversed the laws of decomposition, and brought the dead to life. But the Apostle Paul says the great crowning proof of His Deity is that He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4).

Seal of Redemption

Our Lord’s resurrection is the seal of His redemptive work, which means that His finished work on the cross is acceptable to the Father. If death had held Him captive, then He would have been only a man martyred.

His resurrection is a receipt for a finished transaction. The debt of sin was paid on Calvary, but it was receipted on the morning of the third day. The Word of God says, “[*He*] was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25).

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Pledge of Future Triumph

Also, His resurrection is a pledge of His future triumph. The disciples expected Him to establish a literal Kingdom and that is why they did not understand when He spoke to them of dying. They overlooked the fact of His suffering in their anticipation of His glory. They were willing to accept a reigning Christ, but not a suffering Messiah. The resurrection of Christ assured them of His ultimate triumph.

One of these days He is coming back again. Oh, what a day that will be! And when He comes, that glorious One—King of kings and Lord of lords—is going to seize the governments of this world and they are going to become His, and He is going to reign “where’er the sun does its successive journeys run.”

Bob Ingersoll made a covenant with his brother that in the event of the death of either, the surviving one should bring the funeral address. In 1879 Bob Ingersoll stood over the coffin of his brother to fulfill his promise. He tried to read the address but was overcome with emotion. He tried again. Finally, through his tears and sorrow, he said, “Life is a dark, barren veil between the cold, ice-clad peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights, we lift our wailing voices into the night, but we hear no answer but the bitter echo of our own cry.”

At the same time, D. L. Moody’s brother died, and D. L. Moody was preaching his brother’s funeral. With his face bathed in tears, Moody leaned on the coffin of his brother and he said, “Friends and neighbors, thank God He ever gave me a brother. And thank God that He gave me the privilege of leading my brother to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. And thank God I can look down in the face of my brother and I can know that I am going to see him again in the morning.”

And then looking up as though he were looking out into eternity, D. L. Moody said, “*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

Our Assurances

The fact that Jesus Christ rose from the

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dead assures me of my own resurrection. The Christian can say in triumph, "Rejoice not against me, oh, my enemy, for where I fall I shall rise, because if the grave could not hold Him, then it cannot hold me."

By faith, we are bound to Jesus Christ in an indissoluble union, and if He went through the tomb then we, too, will follow Him. "*Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming*" (1 Cor. 15:23).

The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the present guarantee that someday I shall see Him face to face. The promise is: "*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*" (1 John 3:2).

Have you ever contemplated that moment when you will see Jesus Christ for the first time? No thrill we have ever known will compare to the thrill of seeing Him face to face!

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a guarantee of personal victory over the power of sin. Since Christ has risen, we need not be slaves to sin, nor subject to the bondage of Satan. Because He has risen, the Word of God says "*even so we also should walk in newness of life*" (Romans 6:4). This certainty of the resurrection gives reality to the proclamation of the Gospel. It gives substance to our faith, power to our witnessing, verity to our testimony, certainty to our salvation, joy to our lives, and success to our service.

Warning to Unbelievers

Now, in contrast to the expectation of believers, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a severe warning to unbelievers because of the certainty of their resurrection and judgment. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "*All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*" (John 5:28, 29).

The Apostle Paul said to the Greeks, "*He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead*" (Acts 17:31).

Just as surely as Jesus Christ rose from the dead; just as surely men will face the

record of their sins at the judgment bar of God Almighty unless they find forgiveness; unless they have been born of the Spirit of God; unless they have embraced Jesus Christ as the Lord of life and the Saviour of their souls. The resurrection testifies to the fact that Jesus Christ is "*able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them*" (Hebrews 7:25).

God pity the man who has no resurrection hope. God pity the man who has no living Saviour.

How glorious it is that we have the imperishable hope of the resurrection and can rest in the confidence that because He lives, we too shall live also beyond the sunset and the night consciously, personally, and forever! ■

—Reprinted with permission from *The Biblical Evangelist*, March-April 2011.

GIVING YOURSELF TO GOD . . . cont'd.

It was as though He did all the evil things we have ever done. All the drunkenness, all the wars, all the selfishness, all the bitterness, all the anger, all the greedy things we have ever done were dumped upon Christ.

Jesus Christ is a bigger Redeemer than we are sinners. As God in a human body, His atoning death has infinite value, paying for all human sin.

I made this basic life-decision when I was 20 years old. It was in the month of February 1965, while I was a student at Chico State College in northern California. You can make that same choice. You can agree with God that sin has impacted every area of your life and you can believe that Jesus Christ died in your place. You can pray, giving yourself to God and asking Him to be your Lord and Redeemer. That's the first step toward healing. Then find a local church that preaches the Bible. While many churches will quote the Bible and be under the general banner of Christendom, look carefully. Does the church you are considering regard the Bible as the authoritative, loving message of the Living God for all matters of faith and practice? ■

—from Booklet *Warrior, Wounded, Wisdom* published by Focus Publishers, www.focuspublishing.com. Printed with permission.

What Preachers Keep Forgetting

by Joe McKeever

I was sitting on the platform, ten feet off to the left and rear of the pulpit, studying the 300 people in the congregation. In five minutes, I would walk to the podium and, as the guest preacher, bring the sermon. The thoughts running through my mind were not helpful.

“They know all these things. I’m talking about the Church in this sermon, and these people are at church on Sunday night, of all things. I might as well go to a diner and talk about the joys of eating or to a gym and talk about the need for exercise.”

Then, sanity returned. I knew this was not the case at all.

Nothing cleared my focus better than remembering the times I sat where they sit. Many a time back then I needed a strong reminder from the Lord’s spokesman of the proper value to be placed on the Church, of how solidly God feels about it, of the price Christ paid for it, of the assignments He has given it, and yes, reminders of the sorry way the Church is treated by some of its friends.

There was a great need for this message, and on this night I would deliver it as strongly as I knew how.

I gave it my all. The response at invitation time—not always the best barometer, I know—indicated the sermon had hit its target. The best barometer, and one I am not privy to, would be the behavior of the members of that congregation over the next few weeks and months.

It is easy for preachers to fall into that little sinkhole which had opened up just in front of me, and think, “The people in this congregation do not need this; they already know it.” In such situations, it is good for the man of God to remind himself of three facts:

First, it is amazing how few in the congregation know most of the basic facts of the Christian life and Biblical doctrine.

A friend who is a college professor sat at my dining room table one day and shared some of his recent experiences in teaching. He said, “Our standards are high and our kids are all excellent students who graduated at the heads of their high school classes, and yet, you would be amazed at their ignorance in some areas.”

One day, just as a test, he asked one class, “How many states are there in the union?”

A hand went up. “Fifty-three?”

In the next class, the first student to answer gave the tentative, “Fifty-four?”

One day he asked a class, “During World War II was the United States of America bombed and its major cities leveled by Nazi planes?”

The student he called on said, “Sir, history is not my strong suit.”

“They’re even worse in geography,” he said.

We laughed at these examples of ignorance in smart people, but I wonder if we would laugh as heartily at the spiritual and Biblical ignorance of the men and women and young people occupying the pews in our churches week in and week out. The pastor must never assume the members know more than they do.

Second, the fact that they may know these things does not necessarily mean they are living by them.

Jesus said, “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them” (John 13:17). The object of a lesson or sermon or any training we do in church is never simply to transfer knowledge. “Knowledge puffeth up,” said Paul in 1 Corinthians 8:1.

The end result of a sermon or a class is to change behavior. Over and over in Scripture, our Lord puts the premium on doing the will of God—never on knowing it or loving it or finding it or hearing, studying, teaching, or

praying for it. “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” (Matt. 7:24).

Third, even those who know these things and are doing them faithfully will appreciate the occasional reminder of their value.

As a tither, I enjoy a good hearty sermon on giving. As one who prays daily and often, I love hearing a sermon on prayer. As one who loves the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, I appreciate a message on the role of the people of God in the world. There’s always more to be learned, deeper insights to be gained, ideas to be shared on how to serve the Lord better.

I have sat in stadiums on several occasions when Billy Graham would be the preacher of the evening. Walking around and talking to people, observing the church groups arriving and listening to their conversations, reading the T-shirts and banners, it was clear that an extremely high proportion of Graham’s audience were solid believers and active members of churches. Yet the sermon which we were confident we would be hearing would be an evangelistic message, one directed toward only a small percentage of the audience. We were thrilled to be in the stadium and to hear that message.

The people of God—those born of the Holy Spirit, who love the Lord Jesus and are serving Him—tend not to be highly critical of the messages they hear from the pulpit. They can enjoy hearing George Beverly Shea sing “How Great Thou Art” for the one-thousandth time. They hear the preacher of the hour proclaim the love of God for the fallen and their spirits soar. Tears flow, hearts are filled, praise ascends.

A major failing of mine as a young pastor was to constantly search for something new in the Scriptures, themes I had not heard “preached to death,” facts and insights I felt the people in the pews would find fascinat-

ing. I am embarrassed to admit I shied away from preaching texts like Ephesians 2:8, 9 (salvation by grace) or John 3:16 because, “everyone knows those.”

Bad wrong. Not everyone does, and even those who do need the reminder. The rest of us—those who know and abide by these texts—enjoy hearing them preached again.

One day I made a discovery that brought me up short. The second missionary journey of Paul brought him and his team to Athens, Greece. Luke made this observation: “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21).

It was the pagans who were addicted to new doctrines. That was a needed comeuppance. Reflecting on that, I thought of how many times the Old Testament would say things like, “Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16), and “Remove not the old landmark” (Proverbs 23:10).

A hymn I first learned to love as a small child in a tiny church in a West Virginia mining camp said, “I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love.” One line goes, “ ’Tis pleasant to repeat what seems each time I tell it more wonderfully sweet” (Katherine Hankey).

The pastor must never fall prey to the thinking that the congregation needs to hear new things. To be sure, there is much in the “old, old story” which will be new to many of his hearers, and that must be preached, but even those “born and raised” in the church need to hear the old message again and again.

So, preach it, preacher. Keep telling yourself, “They need this. I have a message they are dying to hear.” ■

—From *Pulpit Helps*, published by AMG International.

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A General Resurrection?

by Jason H. Martin

“**F**orasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God, in His wise providence, to take out of this world the soul of the departed, we commit the body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, and commit the soul to God who gave it, looking for the general resurrection in the last day and the life of the world to come through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming, in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed, and made like unto His own glorious body; according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto Himself.”¹

Does the Bible teach a general resurrection? The word *general*, as it is used in the above quote, has the idea of including all people that are in the graves. Indeed all shall rise. The Bible teaches that the righteous dead will rise at a different time than the wicked dead. It is very specific. “*But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection*” (Revelation 20:5). Jesus spoke clearly of two distinct resurrections. “*And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*” (John 5:29). Notice the order; the resurrection of life is before the resurrection of damnation.

The first resurrection is not a spiritual resurrection. It is physical bodies coming back to life. Consider Jesus’ resurrection. His resurrection was a literal, physical raising to life, and it will be the same when the saints rise. The first resurrection is the resurrection of the just. Jesus said: “*But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just*” (Luke 14:13, 14). Jesus

did not say that we will be repaid at the general resurrection. Even creation reveals that God does things in an orderly fashion.

The Bible does not teach that the righteous will experience judgment at the Second Coming. “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life*” (John 5:24). This means that believers will not come into judgment. They will stand before the judgment seat of Christ but that is not the same as the great white throne judgment of the wicked. They have the promise of ever being with the Lord from the moment they rise to meet him in the air. “*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

Someone may say, “But I thought the Bible says gather first the tares.” The parable of the wheat and tares is about reapers (angels) gathering the sinners that will be living on this earth at the time when Jesus returns to this earth in power and great glory to judge the nations. The rapture of the church is before that. When Jesus returns to this earth, the wicked will be rooted out (see Revelation 19) and the saints will then reign with Him a thousand years.

Others may ask, “What about when Jesus said He will raise us up at the last day?” “*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day*” (John 6:54). The point Jesus was making is that not only is there spiritual life now but there will be a future resurrection. The details of that last day are found in other portions of Scripture. ➤

1. *Confession of Faith and Ministers’ Manual*. Compiled by J. F. Funk.



Counseling From the Word

Loving Self and Hating God

by Jeremy Lelek

Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other” (Matthew 6:24). James echoes these sentiments when he warns, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

As counselors working with the hearts and lives of others, whether through formal counseling (as in an office setting), or what someone has referred to as “coffee house counseling” (i.e., friend to friend, brother to brother, sister to sister, etc.) it is always a good idea to pose the question to self and others, “What or who is mastering this individual’s heart?” Is it success, beauty, popularity, power, security, love, acceptance, approval, or happiness? Is it revenge, anger, hate, or jealousy? Whatever the case may be, anything that takes precedence over a desire to serve and honor God essentially becomes a competing master. As a result, these intruders of the heart begin to drive behavior, thinking, desires, and perception away from God and towards self and sin. Paul described it this way, “Do you not know that if you present

A GENERAL RESURRECTION? . . . cont’d.

Thank God for showing us these things. These bodies are giving out and sometimes we get discouraged, but there is a brighter day coming. May we always be ready and serve God with a true heart. The catching away is closer than we think. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

May we continue to let our understanding be according to the Scriptures. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *The Watchword Messenger*, 1st Qtr. 2010.

yourself to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?” Paul’s words must be heeded, therefore good counseling should always seek to get at the heart of this question: “Who is master?”

Additionally, when love for another master (i.e., security, acceptance, significance, etc.) is present, it immediately exposes the heart’s attitude before God. While modern Christians tend to water down issues by using politically correct or psychotherapeutic phrases when ministering to others, Jesus spoke directly. He clearly states, if you “love” one master (security, approval, acceptance, etc.) you simultaneously “hate” the other master (God). Both cannot serve as master. Both cannot drive the heart. Two opposing desires cannot both be followed simultaneously. Only one is friend and master: either God or self. James follows this line of thought as well by saying that befriending worldly passions (i.e., security, approval, acceptance, etc.) is to position one’s self as enemy before God. The line is very clear, and it is placed in precise “either/or” terms. Therefore, as counselees and Christians offer their hearts and lives to be mastered by desires that either counter or compete with God’s desires (as revealed in His Word), it is a blatant act of hatred towards God, and must be addressed in love.

To truly love those who profess faith in Christ is to point them to these verses, and ask them to interpret their own hearts through the very words of Jesus Christ. As they abide in these words with brokenness and sincerity, it is in them (the words of God) that they will find truth that will forever set them free (John 8:31, 32). ■

(Counseling Tips on last page)



Song of the Month

Douglas A. Byler, Music Editor

“... singing with understanding!”

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”



by Scriven/Converse

Lyrics: “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” is one of the most well-known and best-loved hymns of our time. It was written by a man who knew much of the “trials,” “griefs,” and “sorrows” that are described in the text of the hymn.

While there are a few conflicting reports about the actual circumstances of his composing this poem, the basic story of the poet’s life is fairly well assented to. Joseph Scriven (1819-1886) was born and raised in Ireland. He received his formal training at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. When he was 25, he was engaged to be married, but the marriage was tragically prevented by the death of his fiancée the day before the ceremony was to take place. Whether he was primarily influenced by the lingering memories of his fiancée or the onset of the Irish Potato famine we don’t know, but in 1846, Scriven left his native Ireland and sailed for Canada. Settling in Ontario, Scriven eventually landed a tutoring job in Ontario. He soon fell in love with a relative of one of his pupils, and again started down the path toward matrimony. In a tragic déjà vu, his second fiancée died of pneumonia shortly before the scheduled wedding.

Some sources suggest that the death of Scriven’s second wife-to-be was the context for the composition of this hymn.¹ However, it is more likely that the hymn evolved over time, and originated as early as a year after his first thwarted attempt at marriage. The first time the hymn actually appeared was in

a letter of encouragement from Scriven to his mother. The proposed dates for this letter range from 1846 to 1857, and there is some disagreement about the actual year of his second engagement, as well. Most hymnals date the composition of the hymn to the year 1855. Originally titled “Pray Without Ceasing,” this hymn was first published anonymously. A friend, while visiting Scriven shortly before his death, found the poem and inquired about its origin. Scriven is said to have answered, “The Lord and I did it between us.”

Scriven was exposed to the Plymouth Brethren during his years in college, and became a devout member of the fellowship for the rest of his life. He spent much of the last twenty-five years of his life caring for the local sick and poor people.

Music: The music that accompanies this hymn was composed by Charles Converse in 1868, 13 years after Scriven allegedly wrote the poem. An attorney by trade, Converse dabbled in the arts as a composer. Like the author of the text, he was not a prolific hymn writer, and this is the only hymn tune of his that is still in circulation today. The tune was paired with this hymn text by Ira D. Sankey shortly before Scriven’s death in 1886.

Musically the tune is very simple and easy to sing. The melody outlines the form AABA, with the first, second, and fourth scores being essentially the same, contrasted by different material in the third score. The harmony is limited to the three

1. http://www.raymondscountydownwebsite.com/html/joseph_scriven.html.

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

ERIE 8.7.8.7.D.

JOSEPH MEDLICOTT SCRIVEN, 1855

CHARLES CROZAT CONVERSE, 1868

1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, All our sins and griefs to bear;
2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
3 Are we weak and heav - y la - den, Cum - bered with a load of care?

What a priv - i - lege to car - ry Ev - ery - thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged: Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our re - fuge, Take it to the Lord in prayer!

O what peace we of - ten for - feit, O what need - less pain we bear,
Can we find a friend so faith - ful, Who will all our sor - rows share?
Do thy friends de - spise, for - sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!

All be - cause we do not car - ry Ev - ery - thing to God in prayer.
Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak - ness; Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a sol - ace there.

major triads of the key of F, with really no chord that could be classified as anything

but a variation of the tonic, dominant, or subdominant triad.

Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business

Author: Neil Postman
Publisher: Penguin Books, © 1985. 192 pp.
Available from: Barnes & Noble and Borders.

If you are looking for a book with which to curl up on a Sunday afternoon and, in a few short hours, edify, encourage, or instruct yourself with relative ease, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* is not the book for you. Edify and instruct you it will, but the process will not be comfortable. You will very likely be astonished and insulted by the difficulty you encounter in the simple reading of Mr. Postman's intricately constructed sentences, to say nothing of understanding and assimilating their content. This, as I realized some chapters into the book, is exactly his point.

Mr. Postman references two works of futuristic writing (Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*) in which the authors suggested that people will in the future be deprived of their autonomy, their maturity, and their capacity to think. The two authors differed in their assessment of how this would take place. Orwell felt that we would be overcome by an external oppression which controlled us through pain and violence. Huxley feared that we would be ruined from within through indulging ourselves in pleasure, irrelevance, and trivialities. Mr. Postman points to steps of "progress" in human media of communication to illustrate the possibility that Huxley was right.

What connection is there between a culture's forms of communication and the quality of that culture? We are currently undergoing a great shift from the era of

communication primarily by writing to an era of communication by electronics; what effect will this have on the content of our communication? Mr. Postman demonstrates a number of ways in which our image-centered media have been significant shapers of our society's way of thinking—and thus of the culture. Stating bluntly that much of public discourse has become "dangerous nonsense" and "shriveled and absurd" when compared to the serious, coherent, and rational written discourse of the "Age of Typography," he proceeds to show both how this has evolved and how it affects us.

In the chapter entitled "The Typographic Mind," Mr. Postman uses examples of religious oratory, political debate, and commercial advertising to illustrate the decline of the American mind. From the sermons of Jonathan Edwards to the Lincoln-Douglas debates and back to the advertising techniques of Paul Revere, one gathers that using language to stimulate conceptual, deductive, and sequential thought was an important and enjoyable part of American life. While there was frequently a "carnival spirit" present in the listeners at political assemblies, and while politicians did employ such juvenile techniques as name-calling and exaggerated generalities, it was obvious that the people addressed were accustomed to oratory lasting up to seven hours and filled with coherent, orderly arrangements of ideas (often expressed in long, complex sentences.) Religious pamphlets, sermons, and books were likewise intellectually engaging; and advertisements, presented without visual

images, relied upon persuasive appeal to the rational decision-making processes of the reader. (Picture by way of contrast a modern political debate; a television evangelist; and an ad for the latest model of automobile.)

Mr. Postman points out how the telegraph changed people's perception of information. Instead of information that fitted logically and usefully into a relevant and connected environment about which one could think and decide on a course of action, people now had impressive amounts of de-contextualized "news" which served to dignify irrelevance and fragment public discourse. No longer was it considered valuable to discuss, evaluate, and act on the news received; it became impossible. Photography contributed its images worth the proverbial thousand words; those thousand words no longer needed to be expressed in carefully crafted sequence. It is significant, Mr. Postman says sarcastically, that at this point a new form of entertainment had to be invented to utilize these bits (may we transpose "bytes"?) of information—the crossword puzzle.

How has this shift in thought processes affected the entertainment world? It would logically follow that people who do not think will need to be amused—and that has followed. In "The Age of Show Business," it becomes obvious that "the demarcation line between what is show business and what is not becomes harder to see with each passing day." Our sources of news have joined the game of Trivial Pursuit with an increasingly fragmented, disordered, and even primitive use of language to present information that is, for all practical purposes, nonsubstantive and noncontextual.

The medium of television (we must remember that this book was written in 1985, so there are other media which could be added) has also affected the content of religious and political presentations. Mr. Postman says charitably that today's television preachers are probably not much worse than the men who preach in churches and synagogues; it is the televis-

ing of their message that changes its social and psychological meaning. The bias of the screen towards secularism and triviality makes it difficult for it to be perceived as a frame for anything significant or sacred. Likewise, presenting political ideas of any mature, rational perspective is unlikely. The commercial has become the means of presenting political ideas; the politician sells himself as a celebrity rather than as a man of ideological integrity.

If you are not yet becoming alarmed, there remains Mr. Postman's chapter on the effects of the electronic age on education. When individual pleasure and entertainment take precedence over perplexity, exposition, and continuity; when attention to images replaces systematic development of language; when the character and cognitive habits of our youth are inspired and trained by exposure to the above sorts of trivial irrelevance, what must inevitably be the outcome? (Lest we console ourselves with the thought that Anabaptists have been slow to embrace television, I will quote one statement from the closing chapter, "A Huxleyan Warning": "[Q]uestions about the psychic, political, and social effects of information are as applicable to the computer as to television.")

Mr. Postman does not write from a Christian perspective. As a critic, writer, educator, and communications theorist, he is not concerned so much with the effects of modern media on the heart as on the mind. As Anabaptists, we have traditionally focused on issues of the heart as evidenced in behavior; I finished this book wondering where we appear on the continuum of the development or underdevelopment of the mind. If we are, as suggested in the final paragraph, engaged in "a race between education and disaster," how well are we doing? If in this generation we hope to grow sound theologians, articulate writers, and enthusiastic apologists, what must we emphasize in our educational systems? Pick up a copy of *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (and a dictionary) and prepare to be stimulated, challenged, and disturbed! ■



Beginning Issues



Back to the Beginning

by John Mullett

The title of this little corner is called *Beginning Issues*, and in some form or another, most of the articles appearing here pertain to beginning issues. However, many of them have done so indirectly. For the next number of articles I'd like to take us back to the beginning, quite literally, and review the Genesis origins record directly while being considerably more expositional in nature. While there are a number of good reasons for doing so, my primary reason is to make sure we stay on course. So having said that let us begin . . . (no pun intended).

Genesis 1:1 begins with what may be the most important phrase in all of the Bible: "In the beginning God." What is the significance of this simple phrase? How can I possibly be justified in saying it may be the most important phrase in the Bible? If you would, pause with me for a moment and ponder the Lord's opening statement in His record/revelation to us. The first thing I'd like to point out is the word *beginning*. It points to finite beginning—a definite starting point. Many different belief systems (religions) believe in some form of evolution (in a broad general sense) and give various explanations on the origin of life and the relationship between its many different forms, but are left struggling for a way to explain the origin of matter in the first place. Any belief system that believes in eternal matter finds itself in direct conflict with Genesis 1, not to mention, it's simply illogical to believe that something could create itself out of nothing before itself even

existed. In the Bible we have record of a definite beginning for all things including life and matter. Additionally this record of beginning plays a key role in verifying such teachings as Jesus' teaching on marriage and the first man and woman. Jesus framed His teaching in time as at the beginning.

Probably the most important part of our phrase however, is its faith aspect. Each and every one of us has a bias, a set of beliefs from which we begin as we interpret the world around us and life's events as we experience them. This set of beliefs can be described by a number of different terms including axioms, presuppositions, and worldview. We also use various analogies to describe this with examples such as, "the set of glasses I'm looking through" and "the grid" or "framework" through which we interpret everything. In western culture we're bombarded with a message that says evolution is science and Biblical origins is religion, but this is simply not true. Any origins position requires a faith-based beginning point due to the historical nature of the issue. The origins belief that can be "proven" by science does not exist; we simply cannot duplicate historical events scientifically (especially when there is no omniscient eyewitness account, which the Bible actually does have) with any kind of guaranteed accuracy, because there are so many variables and moving parts (unknowns) that we have to make assumptions about when dealing with the past. In regards to faith and beginning points, we

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SWORD AND TRUMPET

How to Get Assurance

(Part 2)

by B. Charles Hostetter

IV. IF YOU DOUBT

The old gentleman was crossing the living room when he suddenly groaned and fell to the floor. A paralysis had seized one side of his body. With strenuous effort his wife helped him to the sofa nearby, then quickly called the doctor. After making a number of checks, the doctor motioned to the wife to join him in the next room.

The sick man, observing the gesture, stopped them by saying, "Doctor, if you are going to tell my wife that I am to be paralyzed and talk out of one side of my mouth all my life, tell her in my presence; I can take it. If you are going to tell her that I am about to die, I want you to tell her that in my presence also. I'm a Christian and ready to die. Death will mean a glorious exchange for me. If I am dying, Doctor, I want you to stay and watch a Christian die." It is possible when leaving this world to know where you will spend eternity.

It is a very serious matter for saved people not to have assurance in their hearts.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING . . . cont'd.

only have two choices: "In the beginning God" (i.e. God is the determiner of Truth and our Authority) or humanism. Any explanation that starts outside of God puts us in position to determine for ourselves what is true and what is not. As Frank Peretti once put it, "It's either my way or God's way." Ultimately there simply are no other alternatives. "In the beginning God" means we must begin all of our thinking from His Word and allow God to tell us what it means, not vice versa; yet when we modify the Scriptures or interpret them with man's ideas we are telling God what He means. ■

Without it one could imply that God is lying. You ask, "How could I imply that God is lying if I am saved and don't know it?" The Apostle John says, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son" (1 John 5:9). When men report in newspapers and magazines and tell us news on the radio and television, we believe them. We plan our travels by the airline, railroad, and bus schedules they print; we take the medicine that men prescribe for us; we eat the food given to us; and in many other ways we show that we believe men. John argues, if we act in faith on what men say, how much more ought we to act in faith on what God says! Certainly what a perfect God says is more certain to be true than what imperfect men say; so our actions should reveal that we believe God. The Lord is telling us about His Son Jesus Christ and we are to have faith that what He says about Him is true.

John continues, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10). What does this mean? We are told in the Scriptures that when we accept Christ in living faith, God gives us His eternal Spirit. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Repentance brings to us a gift, the Holy Ghost. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). When we with vital faith receive Christ, God saves us and gives us His Spirit, and this "Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the

children of God” (Romans 8:16).

Going on, John says in the latter part of verse 10, “He that believeth not God hath made him [God] a liar” (1 John 5:10). Then he tells us why we make God a liar: “Because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” In other words, if we won’t believe what God says, we are saying in effect, “God, you lied to me; it isn’t true what you say.” The Lord emphatically says in the next verses, “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11, 12). How positive a declaration!

Let me put it into my own words. I, with a sincere heart and living faith, repent of my sins and accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour, so God says, “On those conditions I’ll save you and adopt you into My family.” Having met the conditions on which God said He would save me, for me to doubt or reject what God says is true is simply to question His honesty. This is serious, for it casts a shadow on the character of God. To know you are saved is not boasting, or exalting man, but rather glorifying God and taking Him at His word.

A number of years ago a young lady about twenty years old was working in a candy factory on the three-to-eleven afternoon shift. She was not a Christian but was under deep conviction of sin. While working one evening she became so sick of her sin that she finally asked her employer if she could leave the job early. He permitted her to go and she came over to the church where I was speaking. When the invitation was given to receive Christ that evening, she accepted Him. After the service I spoke and prayed with her. She returned several nights later and reported to me that she had not succeeded in becoming a Christian.

“Why aren’t you a Christian?” I asked.

“I don’t know,” she said, “but the Lord just didn’t save me.”

She had a preconceived idea that when one gets saved he will have an overwhelm-

ing experience of some kind. She wanted some great feeling or emotional reaction before she would believe that she was saved. I spoke with her a long time and asked her if she believed the Bible and if she felt God meant what He said in His Word.

“Yes, of course,” she replied.

So we looked at some Scriptures that tell us what we must do for God to save us. Then I asked her if she had met those conditions of faith and repentance.

She said, “Yes.”

“Were you sincere?” I asked.

She said, “Definitely.”

Then I asked, “Why aren’t you saved?”

“I don’t know, but I am sure I am not saved.”

“Do you mean, Friend, that God is lying and didn’t do what He promised?” I asked.

“No, but I just know I am not saved,” she answered.

This poor girl, whether she realized it or not, was making God the author of a lie, because she wanted the evidence of her salvation in her preconceived way. She wouldn’t accept salvation by simple faith on the promises of God. Because of her doubts this girl later on tried almost everything to get this great emotional experience which she believed was salvation. Nowhere in my Bible do I read about salvation by feeling. If you meet the conditions whereby God promised to save you, you must believe He has done it, whether the evidence comes according to your preconceived ideas or not. The Bible simply says, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

Those who base their confidence of salvation on an emotional thrill or supernatural manifestation face another danger. Some think that their unusual and mysterious experience at conversion is their guarantee of eternal life. Even though they voluntarily live in sin now, they are not worried because years ago their dramatic conversion was proof that God saved them. Now they feel secure even while

they practice sin.

A number of times in the Scriptures we are told to take account of our present standing with God. Paul said, "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5, RSV). God's servant David prayed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24).

I don't understand the Bible to teach that a saved person has been given indulgences, or freedom to sin, without its affecting his salvation. When we were saved, we had to repent and trust our lives to Christ for the forgiveness of our past sins. We were committed to maintain that attitude all through life. We can never accumulate merit by righteous living. When we get God's guarantee of eternal life, Glen McKinley says, "It is in no sense a blanket forgiveness for future crimes any more than the pardon by a judge is pardon for future crimes of the criminal."

When Jesus died for the sins of the world, it was like putting forgiveness on deposit so that whoever wanted to could draw from it for personal use. While the atonement was sufficient for all sin, yet it must be appropriated by each individual. If this were not true, then universalism would be true and all would be saved because Jesus died for the sins of the world. But the Bible says forgiveness is conditional upon the individual's attitude of faith and repentance. It says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

No matter how sensational your original experience of conversion may have been, it doesn't provide automatic victory over sin in the future. Neither does it make you immune from the devil's testings. H. A. Ironsides says, "The child of God . . . still has an enemy within: the old fleshy nature which is in constant warfare with the spir-

itual nature imparted in new birth. Then outside, our adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. We are called upon to resist him, being stedfast in the faith." The Bible says to Christians, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13). Jesus said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

One is not saved by his works, nor will he ever attain perfection. He can, however, attain a perfect standing with God through the merits of Christ's death and resurrection by repentance and faith. As long as one maintains that attitude he is secure, but if he renounces his former decision, then he has departed from the grace of God.

Your relationship to God today is the one that counts—not what you were yesterday or ten years ago. God told the Prophet Ezekiel to tell Israel, the Old Testament church, "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness" (Ezekiel 33:12). Beware lest you backslide as Israel did. The Prophet Isaiah speaking to Israel said, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

The Gospel forgives our past sins and gives us power to overcome sin. It does not give liberty or license to keep on living in known sin. The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This says we get forgiveness when we meet the condition of confession and repentance.

To be continued in next issue

— ISABELLA “LILIAS” TROTTER . . . cont’d. from page 1 —

bad heart; but she was invited to work alongside the mission. On March 5th of 1888 she, along with two other ladies, left the shores of Great Britain bound for Algiers, Algeria, arriving on March 9th.

Although none of the three women were in good health, they had embarked on a pioneer mission to Muslim women. It was the hardest field but that’s where Lilias wanted to be. The ladies knew no one there nor did they know the language. They did not know how to do this task the Lord had given them but they were assured in their hearts that their God was all-powerful!

They rented a big house in the city of Algiers and began the task of trying to reach these women. For seven years they faced strong opposition, hostility, hatred from the people, and extremely warm temperatures, as well as being distrusted by the authorities. In spite of these and other difficulties Lilias and her two friends found ways of reaching the people with the Word. After learning some of the language they would do such things as making decorated note cards, printing Bible verses on them in Arabic, and leaving them in public places, such as restaurants, where they could be read by the waiter, often to the whole room of diners! Eventually, they were able to move to the Arab Quarter of the city where they could, on occasion, be with the women.

On one occasion, as Lilias shared John 3:16 with a Muslim woman, the woman responded that God only loves the men, not the women, not even the world. There were some converts but two of them were poisoned because of their faith, one came under the spell of witchcraft, and several backslid due to being drugged by those who opposed Christ. Not only was it hard for the women to understand the Gospel but there were also cultural barriers, and illiteracy. Lilias and the other ladies visited in the homes of the Muslim women, had Bible and embroidery classes, produced Christian literature for the women, and other such things in order to reach these unreached.

Seven years later, in 1895, Lilias returned to England for a rest but she also experienced a deepening spiritual understanding of what it means to be buried with Christ so that nothing of the “I” would be done but only that of the risen Christ working through her.

Throughout the 40 years of missionary service abroad Lilias Trotter had a one-time opportunity to present the work of the Algiers Mission Band to six hundred delegates from America who were traveling to a world Sunday School Convention. These delegates became friends of the mission for many years.

Centers of operation were opened in strategic places to many inaccessible parts of the country where the Gospel could be shared. Using trains and camels, this was a real feat for the three missionary women, as travel through the desert was extremely difficult.

Due to her poor health, Lilias used her time of illness to do much writing of booklets and pamphlets—17 in all—which were particularly geared for Muslims by the language and her beautiful artistic illustrations which she used. She helped her friends revise the Bible in classical Arabic and as a result the Gospels of John and Luke were distributed widely in the area. Her literature was very effective in presenting the Gospel because Lilias knew the country, the language, and had experience dealing with the opposition to it. Her ministry through this literature accomplished more than her actual contacts with the people.

Sister Lilias Trotter had such a far-reaching ministry as a missionary because she totally gave her life over to the Lord for His use.

Isabella Lilias Trotter went home to Heaven to be with her Lord August 28, 1928, at the age of 75, in El Biar, Algiers, Algeria.

—Gail L. Emerson

NOTE: For a fuller “picture” of this woman of God read *Faithful Women & Their Extraordinary GOD* by Noël Piper.