

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 83

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

No. 4

**“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.  
Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”**

*See, "The Resurrection," page 20*

**April 2025**



## THE GREATNESS OF JOHN 3:16

**T**HE GREATEST book in the world is the Bible, and the greatest verse is but 25 words which sums up God's message to man. Nicodemus came to Jesus one night and Jesus revealed God's remarkable plan to him and all mankind. For God—the *greatest Giver*—so loved—the *greatest motive*—the world—the *greatest need*—that He gave—the *greatest act*—His only begotten Son—the *greatest gift*—that whosoever—the *greatest invitation*—believeth in Him—the *greatest opportunity*—should not perish—the *greatest deliverance*—but have everlasting life—the *greatest joy*.

I would like to break John 3:16 down to reveal to our readers how totally great this truth really is. It begins with THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. Jesus doesn't go into a great discourse trying to convince Nicodemus that God exists. He simply states, "For God ..." Jesus assumes it is common knowledge that there is a God in heaven. Scripture relates to mankind that a supernatural being is responsible for creating and ruling all things. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." John 1:1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Psalm 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Next, this great verse declares that this God is A GOD OF LOVE. *For God so loved*, I John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." I John 4:16, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." God not only loved, He SO loved! This is an extreme love.

John 3:16 further reveals that THIS GOD LOVES EVERYONE IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD, for Jesus goes on to say in the next verse (John 3:17), "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 12:47, "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." And Psalm 33:8 proclaims, "Let all the earth fear the Lord." By John 3:16 we are told, "For God so loved the whole wide world ..."

Then it goes on to say, "that he gave ..." This love cost God dearly. HE IS A GOD WHO GIVES—"For God so loved the world, that he gave ..." He is a giving God. He gives and gives and gives. The apostle Paul pointed this out to the Athenians in Acts 17:23-25, "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things ..."

Reading in Matthew 5:45, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he

maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." I Timothy 6:17 confirms God's generosity: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

Back to the greatness of John 3:16. HE GAVE HIS OWN SON. God gave the dearest gift He could give—His only begotten Son! Romans 8:3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Romans 5:8-10 declares, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." I Timothy 2:5, 6 confirms this: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

Another truth that makes John 3:16 so great is the fact that GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS! ... that **whosoever**—Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Acts 10:34, 35, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

MAN MUST BELIEVE ... *that whosoever believeth in him*. John 3:18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 5:24, "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 6:47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Romans 10:10, 11).

John 3:16 is so great because it declares that MAN DOES NOT HAVE TO PERISH—in fact, he *should not perish*, God doesn't want one soul to be lost! II Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness;

### ABOUT THE COVER

The gospel story reached a glorious climax when the sisters found that the tomb where Jesus' broken body was buried was empty. Through the fact that God resurrected Jesus from the dead, it was forever affirmed that Jesus Christ was indeed the Father's only begotten Son!

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

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## THE GREATEST VERSE ...

God the greatest Giver  
so loved the greatest motive  
the world the greatest need  
that He gave the greatest act  
His only Son the greatest gift  
that whosoever the greatest invitation  
believes in Him the greatest opportunity  
should not perish the greatest deliverance  
but have eternal life the greatest joy

## THERE IS A GOD

HE IS A GOD OF LOVE

HE IS A GOD WHO GIVES

HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

HE IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

MAN MUST BELIEVE

MAN DOES NOT HAVE TO PERISH

EVERLASTING LIFE CAN BE YOURS!

*O Love that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be. †*

but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Mark 16:16 points out that, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” In spite of the fact that God gave His Son as a sacrifice so all men could be saved, many reject the Lord’s proffered grace and die lost! Matthew 23:33, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”

One final promise in John 3:16—EVERLASTING LIFE CAN BE YOURS—but have everlasting life.

Look at these scriptures which back up the truth that eternal life is available for you! John 3:15—“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John 17:3—“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Romans 2:7—“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.” Romans 6:23—“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Galatians 6:7, 8—“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

**John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”**

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# JUST AS I AM

Message by Bro. Doug Shenberger



**T**HE TITLE of the message is “Just as I Am.” I’d like to share a story of the author of that song to begin with this morning—

*Charlotte Elliott spent the first thirty-two years of her life in Clapham, England. As a young woman, she was gifted as a portrait artist and a writer of numerous verse. Then in her early thirties, she suffered a serious illness that left her weak and depressed. She was an invalid and suffered much during the last fifty years of her life. But during her illness, a well-known preacher from Switzerland came and visited her, and he asked her, “Do you have peace with God?” She was facing a lot in her struggles and problems in dealing with feelings of uselessness, and she refused to even talk to him about it. I’ll come back to this story a little bit later.*

As I said, I’ve entitled the thoughts “Just as I Am.” When we hear these words, we tend to think of this beautiful song, but the thought of *just as I am* is a biblical thought. Unfortunately, I believe that thought has been somewhat perverted by modern religion and modern thinking. It’s come to be where it means more, along the line of just as you are God will accept you as being correct and right, rather than just a thought of coming to God as you are. There’s a thought that’s being implemented throughout our society in modern religion, and that is: you can just be as you are and God will accept you that way.

## THE POWER OF THE THOUGHT

The real thought of *just as I am* is expressed in the song “Just as I Am,” but as expressed in the Bible, it is so much more beautiful than that. It’s so much more powerful than that. It speaks to the power of God to change a human being, to make him a new creature in Christ, and be able to do what no human being in his own human power and strength could do.

I’d like to look at some thoughts from the song “Just as I Am.” It’s on page 152 in our hymnal. The first verse says *without one plea*. There’s no goodness in ourselves. There’s no righteousness in ourselves. There’s no reason that we could express or claim that we could come before God and be accepted by Him. There’s no justification in ourselves and in our humanity for believing that the almighty God, the Creator of the world, would acknowledge us or pay attention to us except for two things, and that first verse deals with those two things. It goes on to say, *But that thy blood was shed for me*. The blood of Jesus Christ was shed for me.

The Bible tells us in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” It’s not to a privileged few, but to whosoever will come to Him who can experience salvation and forgiveness of sins. He gave His only begotten Son. He didn’t just give Him in the sense of He sent Him to earth to visit and give us some instructions, but He gave Him in the sense that He came to earth and

suffered and bled and died. The blood of Jesus Christ.

In Hebrews, chapter 9, verse 14, it says: “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” This whole passage of scripture in Hebrews 9 deals with the New Covenant and the New Testament. I don’t have time to go through that in a lot of detail this morning, but the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for us. In verse 22, it says: “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” There’s no remission of our sins without the shed blood of Jesus Christ. So when the song says, *without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me*, that’s our plea, that’s our reason! That’s why we can ask, why we can have, why we can seek salvation, because the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for us. The last part of that first verse says the other reason: *And that thou bidd’st me come to thee*. He’s asked us to come to Him.

In Isaiah 1:18, it says: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Jesus set the example when He came to earth by calling His disciples. He bid them, “Come, and follow me.” That was the message He taught. His Word calls people to Him. The gospel message calls people to Him.

## “WHOSOEVER WILL”

In Revelation, chapter 22, is the beautiful passage of scripture in verse 17: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.” Come to Jesus Christ. He bids us to come to Him. The Bible tells us that through the foolishness of preaching, God calls us, and the Spirit calls to people. The Spirit calls people to Himself. He convicts of sin and wrongdoing. He endeavors to draw people through the love of God to come to Jesus Christ. We have no plea in ourselves, but because the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for us, and because He bids us come to Him, we can come just as we are. It’s a beautiful, beautiful truth.

Verse 2 of “Just as I Am” starts out and says: *and waiting not*. There is no need to wait. The devil desires to get people to wait. One of the most critical things in coming to Christ is not to wait. You don’t want to wait. You don’t want to wait till you’re older, till you’re on your deathbed, till your heart is more hardened, and till you’ve suffered more. You’ll hurt more people. You’ll damage yourself more. *To rid my soul of one dark blot*. You know, most of us are taught from a young age to clean up after ourselves. If we make a mess, we’re sup-

posed to clean it up. If we get something dirty, we're supposed to clean it up. We think about that in terms of, if we do something wrong, we need to make it right. Guilt causes regret. We feel responsible for the actions and the things that we've done. But this is something we can't fix. We can't clean those spots off our souls. We can't get in there with the most powerful chemicals and scrub brushes and efforts of humanity and clean off those spots. We can't wait while we try to fix ourselves, while we try to clean up the things that we've done and the damage that we've caused. You can't do enough good works. You can't help enough other people. You can't be a nice enough person all the rest of your life to rid your soul of one dark blot, but there is Someone who can. *To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot.* The blood of Jesus Christ. There's power in the blood of Christ to save a soul. That salvation of the soul is the blood of Jesus Christ cleansing that evil and wrong and guilt from the human soul. The shed blood of Jesus Christ cleanses each spot. It makes it new, as Isaiah said, "White as snow." It was red like crimson. It was blotted and stained, but the blood of Jesus made it as white as snow. Thank the Lord! We need to have a vision and an understanding of the power of Jesus Christ.

### CHRIST WILL WELCOME YOU

Verse 3: *thou wilt receive.* Do you believe that? Do you believe that God will receive you? John 6:37 says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He won't cast you out. There's a welcome there. The Bible tells us that the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who seeks repentance, over one person who desires that the blood of Jesus Christ be applied to his heart and life. The angels in heaven rejoice with those who receive salvation. We need to have faith to believe that, to grasp that truth and the power of it. The very God of heaven will receive each and every one of us when we come to Him. *Wilt welcome.* Do you like to be made welcomed? Do you ever go to visit somebody, and they just welcome you in? Maybe it's your family or friends, and they welcome you in with a hug, with a smile, and with joy at seeing you. You just know that there's a whole spirit there of welcome. They're better because of you being there. You just feel it. It does something in our hearts to be welcomed.

I can't imagine anything more powerful than the welcome that Jesus Christ gives to a soul when they come to Him. When you come to God, He welcomes you with open arms. He sees you coming, and He comes to meet you. There's an example in the Bible of the prodigal son and how he came back to his father's house. His father saw him coming from afar off, and he ran to meet him. He just welcomed him. There was no animosity. There was no holding back. "You're my son. Welcome!" That's what God does. He welcomes. He's excited to have us with Him.

Continuing in verse 3: *pardon, cleanse, relieve.* People who are in prison and found guilty of a crime, sometimes the only thing that would set them free again is that they would be pardoned by a governor or a president or someone of power and authority. When a person is actually pardoned, they are set free of the

consequences of their actions or the verdict that was handed down upon them. Sin brings death on the human being. The whole human race is under the sentence of death for sin. There's guilt. There's responsibility, but when you come to Jesus and receive the pardon, God forgives. He said, "I'll cast your sins in the sea of forgetfulness to remember them against you forever no more." He doesn't bring them up to you. He doesn't torment you with them. He's cast them into the sea of forgetfulness. You're pardoned. It's like it never happened. He cleanses you. He makes you a new creature in Christ. He doesn't just leave us in the state where we were before we ever went out into sin, prone to do this all over again tomorrow, but He cleanses us. He puts a new heart within us that desires God, a heart that desires the things of God, and desires to please Him. To be cleansed. You know something about putting on clean clothes. After you've worked hard, and you're dirty, when you're clean and fresh, it's a good feeling. But when we're cleansed in our souls, what a wonderful experience! God relieves us from that guilt. We've read about Christian in John Bunyan's book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, of how he went to the cross. He was carrying that big load on his back. It rolled off. It went away. He was relieved. He could stand up straight. To be relieved of the burden of guilt is a wonderful thing.

The second part of verse 3 says: *Because thy promise I believe.* I believe! He promised to do all those things for us. We're able to claim them because we believe through the eyes of faith. There's something for us to do. We have to believe. We have to have that faith in almighty God. When we believe, all things are possible. Jesus said, "All things are possible to him that believes." May God help us to believe in the power of God to change our hearts and lives.

### DO YOU KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD?

The last verse says at the beginning: *thy love unknown.* When you sing this song and get to that verse, that can just about break your heart. We come to realize that people don't know the love of God. They don't understand it. They haven't been taught. They haven't experienced the love of God. They don't know the power that's there. They don't know how precious it is. They don't really identify with the God of heaven giving His only Son to die. When we come in contact with that love, and it becomes real to us, and we sense and feel the love of God, what a powerful thing! What a wonderful thing!

*Hath broken every barrier down.* What a powerful thing! You know, there are a lot of barriers. There are a lot of things that are barriers in our hearts and lives. One of the biggest things is our own pride. Pride is a powerful thing. It binds us. It blinds us. Human pride is a barrier against God. "I don't need God. I'm good enough in myself. I'm smart enough. I'm capable enough." We could talk for a long time just about pride this morning.

There's also a barrier of fear. People are afraid. They're afraid of what God might ask them to do. Afraid of what some other people are going to say and think. There are all types of fear that are barriers that stand in the way.

There are doubts. Doubts are a big barrier a lot of times. Do you really believe? Do you really believe in God and in the power of God? Do you believe His Word? Do you believe the promises of God? Those doubts might be because of past experiences. They might be because of things we've done. The unworthiness that we feel. So many different things, but they are barriers.

Rebellion of the human heart is a barrier against God. There's addiction. A lot of people are involved in things that are controlling them. They're barriers to them. Human ambition can be a barrier.

### THE BARRIERS ARE BROKEN DOWN

I don't have time to talk about all the barriers this morning. There's no barrier that can't be broken by the love of God if we allow that love of God to touch us, to reach us, to become real to us. There's no barrier on Earth. There's no strength in hell that can stand against the love of God. The love of God can sweep over and destroy and break down every barrier, but we have to open that door to our hearts and let that love in. We have to be able to be willing to hear that still small voice, that little knock on the door by the Holy Spirit and open the door. If we do that, all those barriers will be swept away. They'll be shown for their smallness in reality, the unimportance of them, and the insignificance of them compared to the love of God.

*Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone.* That speaks to the personal relationship with God. To be His. To feel that closeness. To be held in His arms. To be His child. It's a wonderful, wonderful blessing.

In the story I started at the beginning, I left off with how Charlotte had refused to even answer or talk to the minister who was reaching out to her and asking her if she had peace with God.

*But a few days later, as Charlotte thought about it, she called for him again, and she apologized. She said she was sorry for the way she had responded. She said that she wanted to clean up her life before becoming a Christian. He responded to her and said, "Come just as you are." She gave her life to God that day. Some years later, at the age of forty-five, she remembered those five words and she was thinking about it. She began to write the verses of the song "Just as I Am." In spite of being raised in a Christian home, she had reflected and struggled over her conflicts and doubts, and she was unsure of her relationship with God. So she penned these words as an assurance and evidence in expression about how Jesus loved her just as she was.* It's a beautiful song. Some people have said that there are more hearts that have been touched and led to the Lord through the singing of this song than any other hymn that has ever been written. No doubt tens of thousands of people have been moved upon by this song.

There's a verse that we don't have in our hymnal that says: *Just as I am, though tossed about, With many a conflict, many a doubt; Fightings within, and fears without.* That's a good verse, too. That's a reality. Those are some of the barriers that I talked about and some of the things we have to overcome.

The last part of this song at the end of each verse, it says: *O Lamb of God, I come, I come!* It all comes down to that. Will you come? All those beautiful prom-

ises and all those beautiful truths, it all comes down to—Will you come? The Lamb of God taketh away the sins of the world. That's how the Bible describes Jesus. That's who He is. That's what He does. We have to come just as we are, but we have to come to Him as the Lamb of God. Can you see Him? Can you feel Him? Do you feel His Spirit here talking to your heart this morning? Can you look up at Him through the eyes of faith and hope and see Him as the Lamb of God, that precious One that God the Father gave for us? The Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Can you identify with Him? Can you feel and see Him?

### CONCLUSION

When it comes right down to it, you have to come just as you are, and you have to accept God. You have to believe in Him and be able to say these words: "O Lamb of God, I come, I come. I'm coming to you." When you do that and claim His promises, all the beauty of Christianity is there for you to partake of.

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee—  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!*

*Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, thy love unknown  
Hath broken every barrier down;  
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come! †*

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These questions and answers are taken from *The Way of Truth Question and Answer Book 1946-2001*.

**Q**UESTION: John 12:6 speaks of Judas Iscariot. Why was he given the post of treasurership among the apostles? Why was the post not taken from him and given to another person when it was discovered that he did take some amount of money from the apostles' bag?

**A**NSWER: Judas was made treasurer of the band of disciples because he was a capable and trusted man. I would assume that Jesus was the one who gave him that position. We are not to assume he was a thief, or a sinner, from the first.

As to the latter part of your question, we must remember the books of the New Testament were not written for a number of years after the resurrection. The disciples did not know Judas was a thief when he left the upper room, nor did they know he was going out to betray Jesus. So the disciples did not know until later what he did. Jesus did, of course, but He did not see fit to reveal it at the time.

**Q**UESTION: Why was it necessary for Judas to "kiss" Jesus so they would know who He was?

**A**NSWER: I would assume it was to make sure those who came with Judas took the right person, and not one of the disciples. Matthew 26:47 tells us, "And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people."

Note, it was not Pilate that had Jesus "arrested." Those who came into the Garden were from the "chief priests and elders of the people." It is doubtful if Pilate had been informed of this action, though there may have been some Roman soldiers with them. The Bible does not say about this. Also, being night it may not have been easy for the temple guards to recognize Jesus.

Judas being, or having been, a disciple of Jesus was still pretending to be, for in verse 49 we read of him saying, "Hail Master," even though Jesus had already informed him He knew of his intent. Possibly, Judas thought the temple guards could grab Jesus while he was kissing Him, for he told them to "hold him fast."

**Q**UESTION: Please explain Matthew 6:4. (a) Did the rich man go to hell because of enjoying nice food, or mistreating the poor? (b) Did poor Lazarus go to heaven because of illness and long suffering?

**A**NSWER: Jesus teaches in verses 3 and 4 that we are not to give alms to be seen of men, not to receive honor of men, but to give it out of a heart of love.

(a) It is not wrong to have, or to eat good food. Did not the Lord promise the children of Israel a land flowing with "milk and honey"? In other words, good things.

The rich man, spoken of in Luke 16:19, was living a selfish, self-centered life and did not have compassion on the poor man. In other words, he was not obeying the Word of God, not serving God, and that is why he was lost.

(b) No, Lazarus did not go to "Abraham's bosom" because he suffered in his body. There is only one Savior and that is Jesus Christ. There is no way we can "purchase" our own salvation.

**Q**UESTION: Will you please explain Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25?

**A**NSWER: In regard to Romans 8:34, whenever God through Christ, or because of Christ's death, justifies a person, forgives them, and no longer condemns them, then no one else can. Christ not only died but He arose and returned to the Father, and is now making intercession for us. Even though He is in heaven He is still the Head of the church, King of the kingdom, and is concerned for us.

In regard to Hebrews 7:25, the first word "wherefore" calls our attention back to what has been said, and the writer has pointed out that Christ has "an unchangeable priesthood" (verse 24). Because of this, and because He has given His life for us, He is able to save to the uttermost—to save from the power, guilt, nature and punishment of sin.

Jesus said no one could come to the Father except through Him and that is stated again in this verse. We notice that it is also pointed out in this verse as in Romans 8:34 that Christ makes intercession for the redeemed.

**Q**UESTION: Please tell me the writer of John; John 1, 2, 3 and Revelation. Were they the same John, i.e., John the Baptist, as I have heard?

**A**NSWER: John the Baptizer did not write any of the above mentioned books.

The "Gospel of John" does not state the author, therefore the authorship can be resolved only by clues in the book itself. It is evident that the author was present at most of the things related by him in the book, as the apostle John was, and it is generally accepted that he is the author.

There, possibly, is greater disagreement as to the author of the other books, but many believe they were authored by the apostle John. Adam Clarke wrote this:

"Besides the Gospel before us [Gospel of John], John is generally reputed to have been the author of the three epistles which go under his name, and of the *Apocalypse* [Revelation]. The former certainly breathe the genuine spirit of this apostle; and are invaluable monuments of his spiritual knowledge and deep piety, as well as of the Divine inspiration: as the *gospel* and *epistles* prove him to have been an *evangelist* and *apostle*, his book of Revelation ranks him among the profoundest of the prophets." †



**THE POETRY PAGE**

**JOHN 3:16**  
**Christine Welds**  
(Grand Cayman)

John 3:16 is a Bible verse  
That everyone should know;  
No matter if you're from a sunny Isle,  
Or somewhere with lots of snow.

John 3:16 gives a little glimpse  
Of God's great matchless love;  
That's certainly hard to comprehend  
From then, until now.

It tells us of God's love,  
And His only Son He gave,  
So that all who believe on Him  
Would not perish, but be saved.

He gave His Son so willingly,  
And to us there was no cost;  
But oh, what a horrible death  
Jesus suffered on the cross!

His sacrifice was made  
For people from ev'ry nation;  
And to this very day,  
All can still enjoy salvation.

This free gift of salvation  
Can't be bought or even sold,  
And is available to everyone,  
Including the young and the old.

There's no better time than now,  
To make a brand new start;  
By welcoming Jesus to occupy  
Every chamber of your heart.

Remember time is running out,  
And the trumpet soon will sound,  
And only those prepared to go,  
Will then be heavenbound.

You can't afford to miss out  
By holding on to sin;  
So accept Jesus now,  
And let Him reign within.

You won't regret the choice you make,  
And from sin be set free, too;  
Glory hallelujah! He did it for me,  
And He will also do it for you.

**THE LORD IS RISEN**  
**Thomas Hastings**

Ye mourning saints, dry every tear  
For your departed Lord;  
"Behold the place; He is not here!"  
The tomb is all unbarred;  
The gates of death were closed in vain—  
The Lord is risen, He lives again!

Now cheerful to the house of prayer  
Your early footsteps bend;  
The Savior will Himself be there,  
Your Advocate and Friend.  
Oh, weep no more your comforts slain!  
The Lord is risen, He lives again!

**HE IS RISEN**  
**Mrs. C. F. Alexander**

He is risen, He is risen,  
He hath opened heaven's gate;  
We are free from sin's dark prison,  
Risen to a holier state!

**HE IS LIFE**  
**Mattie Cookman Forbush**

My Savior arose from the grave,  
Triumphant indeed is He!  
He arose, my Savior arose,  
To give hope and life to me.

He broke the seals of the tomb,  
He spoke to those nearby;  
He went to be with His Father  
In that glorious home on high.

Yes, He is our life, our strength,  
Our joy, our hope, our all;  
He comforts our aching hearts,  
And hears us when we call. †

\*\*\*\*\*  
"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come,  
see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28:6).



# WORDS TO BRIGHTEN US

Radio Message by Bro. James Arch

**T**HERE IS always something in the Word of God to uplift us in so much gloom and darkness which is around us in so many places of the world. Many things could discourage people and get them down, but there is always something that can brighten our lives in the Word of God.

The word *bright* means “glorious; splendid; full of promise and hope; happy and cheerful.”

The writer of Psalm 19 asked God to accept his meditation. If you’ll look at verse 14, it says there: “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.”

One of the songs in our hymnal at church here, says—

*My Father is rich in houses and lands,  
He holdeth the wealth of the world in his hands;  
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,  
His coffers are full, he has riches untold.*

*I’m the child of a King,  
The child of a King;  
With Jesus my Savior,  
I’m the child of a King.*

*I once was an outcast stranger on earth,  
A sinner by choice and an alien by birth;  
But I’ve been adopted, my name’s written down,  
An heir to a mansion, a robe and a crown.*

*A tent or a cottage, why should I care?  
They’re building a palace for me over there;  
Tho’ exiled from home, yet, still I may sing:  
All glory to God, I’m the child of a King.*

Thank God we can be a child of this great King. In a world of so much fear, uncertainty, and conflict, and all the other things along with those, we can find comfort and hope by taking a little time just to meditate on these beautiful scriptures to let them brighten up our lives. Life is ours to live. It’s what we make of it. With us and God, we can make it.

In this nineteenth Psalm, the writer expresses very deep reverence and awe at the great God of the universe, making reference to the excellence and perfection of His divine Law. The Psalmist even prayed for pardon and preservation from sin. He summed it up by begging the Lord to accept his words and thoughts, which I read to you a few seconds ago.

Sometimes the kind of day that we have depends on our attitude towards life, towards God, and towards others. Our attitude towards everything.

This Psalm (Psalm 19) that I have before me here is full of words that can cheer us up all the time if we take the time to see them. It tells us what we can look at when we’re down and maybe discouraged. “The heavens declare the glory of God.” Have you ever looked up at the starry sky and looked at the full moon, the

stars twinkling, and the planets placed by God, and even other objects now that have been placed by man? What a mighty God we serve!

Psalm 19 confirms what God did through His handiwork: “and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” Thank God that we can believe in this great Almighty, the One who holds the world in the palm of His hand, and yet so small He can live in the heart of a man. Who but God could design such a thing as the plan of life and the formation of creation all over the natural world? It is amazing. We don’t take enough time in today’s rushing world to really enjoy what God does. Then you can stop for a minute and call on Him. You can lift up your head to heaven and say, “Lord, here am I; help me today. Give me grace, give me strength, more courage, and more love. Help me to enjoy this wonderful way.” All of those things are short, but God deals with those things.

Every day this Psalm tells us who God is. “Day unto day uttereth speech, ...” God talks to us through His creation. Every time a rooster crows in the yard, we see God. Every time the moon rises in the evening, we see God. What a God! It also goes on to say that every night we see His wisdom: “and night unto night sheweth knowledge.” I really can’t express this strong enough and deep enough to get across what this Psalm really means.

Every language understands God’s handiwork. It doesn’t matter what language you speak. Verses 3 and 4 of Psalm 19: “There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.” Everywhere you go the world is different. God made a world of variety. It is amazing. Everybody is different. No two people look exactly alike. Over seven billion people are in this world today. People have different dispositions, different temperaments, and so on. They have different views, but we can all be God’s. We can give ourselves to the Lord and find joy and peace and satisfaction in knowing He is our heavenly Father. He is the King we can be a child of.

The church’s beauty is described as a bridegroom fully dressed and ready for the journey. Verses 5 and 6 say: “Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

Do you know that the Bible tells us that God has cast our sins in the sea of forgetfulness never to remember them against us anymore? “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). This is not a myth. This is real. You have to find this out yourself. It’s an experience with God. People can’t tell you about this enough. You can’t get this from your grandfather and grandmother. You have to get this from God. Only God can give us this.

There are no mistakes in God’s instructions. I’m quoting from the nineteenth Psalm which is described in this Bible as a Psalm of David. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord

is sure, making wise the simple.” Yes, there are no mistakes in His instructions. People make mistakes all the time and always will, but God never makes a mistake. We should take time to trust in Him.

The Law of the Lord is even instrumental in bringing souls to Christ. Verse 7 of Psalm 19: “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” Do you know how many people in this world have been saved as a result of just reading God’s Word, or just having heard it read and preached? People in hotel rooms and in hospital rooms and those out on a ship have been saved through God’s Word. Anywhere God moves on our hearts, we can find that peace and rest that no one else can give us but God.

The statutes of the Lord make the heart glad and happy. Verse 8 says: “The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” When you take the Word of God and open it, “the entrance of thy words giveth light” (Psalm 119:130). When you open the Word with the right mind and intent, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you, it’s going to take place.

Reverence for God is a clean life. Verse 9 of Psalm 19: “The fear [respect] of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.” How good it is to take a little time from the secular, temporal side of life, and the problems and cares of life, to read and meditate and study the beautiful scriptures found in His Word!

The Bible says that His words are better than gold. There’s a lot of gold in the world today. Everywhere you look you’ll see it. Verse 10: “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” It is my understanding that gold is an expensive commodity. When we were children growing up, it was common for us to take honey from the comb where the bees had made in the boxes or the trees. Honey is a sweet thing. All of this was a design of God’s plan. What a mighty God we serve! Everything comes from God.

These scriptures warn us against wrong. Verse 11: “Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”

The Palmist asked God to help him with his faults. I wonder how many of us are fault free. Verse 12: “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.” It’s a good thing to admit and to confess our faults to the Lord. A fault is not necessarily sin. People have different ways and faults. I know that. The thing to do is to work on those faults and to try to improve on them if they are offensive to other people. Ask the Lord to help us to drop those faults and get on with our lives.

The Psalmist asked the Lord to keep him from sin, not only faults. Verse 13: “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”

The Psalmist then prayed to God to help him to say and think what would be pleasing to Him: Verse 14: “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength,

and my redeemer.” The old people used to say, “Count to ten before you speak.” Oh, there’s so much hurt in words today through people’s words! Christians must be careful with their words, not only in what they say, but also how they say them. You can think things that are wrong, too. Meditate on the things that are wholesome. Paul said in the book of Philippians to think on things that are lovely and of good report.

Psalm 19 is a pretty comprehensive guideline, My Beloved Friends. It’s good for us to look at and to meditate on.

Christians are ambassadors for Christ. Christians are workers. God has no other hands but our hands. No other feet but our feet. No other mouth but our mouth. God uses the instrumentality of mankind to further His cause.

Look at the world around us today. Look at the material prosperity. Prisons are filled, the rehabilitation centers are filled. People are bypassing the great God of heaven that can help them in their lives. Material prosperity is not the answer to men’s problems. It’s up to us how we walk this road and what we do with the life God has given to us. †



Dear Young People,

Salvation is a personal experience. Even though we may have been taught the Bible from a child and been blessed to see Christian examples around us, we must know God by our own relationship with Him. There will be times we need to prove God and His promises for ourselves. In these

times, our faith will be strengthened. It is such a blessing to see young people come to a place where they can see God moving and working on their behalf.

May you receive a blessing from the words of Bro. Logan Arch as he shares what the gospel means to him.

Blessings!  
Bro. Doug

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## WHAT THE GOSPEL MEANS TO ME

By Bro. Logan Arch

**T**HE TOPIC I would like to speak on tonight is “What the Gospel Means to Me.” If I were to ask the question, “What does the gospel mean to you?” to everyone here, I would probably get as many answers as there are people. Even though we all share the same experience of salvation, one of the many amazing things about Christ’s sacrifice is that it means something different to each and every one of us.



## THE FAMILY OF GOD

## GOD, THE FATHER

**Scriptures:** Matthew 6:9; 17:5, 6; Luke 10:21, 22; Ephesians 3:14, 15; Acts 7:55, 56; John 16:23.

Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Matthew 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

Luke 10:21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

Acts 7:55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

John 16:23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

**Memory Verse:** One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

—Ephesians 4:6.

**Aim:** To give an understanding of the Fatherhood of God.

## INTRODUCTION

**I**N THE beginning God created the earth and everything on it. He created man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. Thus we see that God became the Father of all mankind. We who have been born again are the sons of God. Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." How fitting it is that God's children are known as the family of God!

Let us consider for a moment the greatness of God. At His command the earth came into existence, as did the sun, moon, and all the stars. Some stars, we are told, are so far away and so large that the light you now see radiating from them left that star before Christ was born. Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, so the distance is so great that the human mind cannot comprehend it.

God's mind is so great that He has a record of each of our lives down to the minutest detail, including our very thought. The happenings of a thousand years ago

Mark 16:15 gives us the Great Commission, or the instruction to "go into all the world, and spread the gospel to every creature." To do this, we must have an idea of what the gospel means to us. I think this is one of several reasons testimonies are so important: besides testifying in public services, which encourages other saints who may be struggling, having our own testimony accessible at any time ensures we have personal evidence to support what Christ has done for us.

What the gospel means to me, personally, is a lot of things. Obviously, I don't have time to go over all of them so I have chosen a couple that I believe sum everything up nicely. First, the gospel message tells me that I can live free from fear. Matthew 6:33, 34 tells us to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." If you spend any time at all out in the world, which we all do, you will be practically guaranteed to hear people worrying about things: the economy, the direction our country is going, death both personal and of loved ones, and the list goes on and on for quite a while. Most of these are legitimate cause for concern, but concern taken too far can become worry. Jesus and His gospel here are not telling us to ignore, or shut out these problems, but rather to focus our energy on His kingdom, and all the other stuff in the background will work itself out. We must not keep this wonderful news to ourselves, and if we truly have Christ guiding us, it will be hard to stay silent. Spreading the gospel to the "uttermost parts of the earth" is a duty that we must all take extremely seriously.

Even though I am extremely thankful for the promise of peace in this temporal world, I am far more grateful for the promise of eternal life. God's plan of redemption, and His gospel in the form of Jesus Christ, have given anyone who is willing to surrender to Him a way to escape the eternal fire of hell and live in paradise with Him forever. God loved us so much that even when we wanted nothing to do with Him, and may have even gone out of our way to spite Him as Paul did when he was Saul, He sent His one and only Son to die and redeem us. This alone would make it all worth it, but the promises extend to our time on Earth, too, as I mentioned earlier. To be able to face anything that life and the enemy can throw at me, and hang on to the hope in the gospel, is something that I can't even try to put into words here. Why anyone would turn this down, I have no idea, but as the verse that I read earlier from Mark says, it is our duty to tell as many people as we can about this wonderful news.

In conclusion, what the gospel means to me is not only a liberation from fear and worry of things both in the physical and spiritual realms, but a call to rescue our fellow man who might not know the saving grace of our Lord. Everyone on Earth deserves—and needs—to know of His love for them, and to learn about the gospel message. †

**"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Apostle Paul**

are just as fresh in His mind as those of yesterday. What a mighty God we serve!

### MEDITATIONS

**THE FATHER IN HEAVEN—Matthew 6:9—Hallowed**—God is on His eternal throne which He has prepared in the eternal heavens. His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is seated beside Him. The Spirit of God (also called the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost and Comforter, which are one and the same Spirit) is in the world doing the will of the Father and Son. It is only by a well-planned program of teaching this truth concerning God that the Father can be given the worship that is properly due Him. A strong and persistent effort is being made by the spirit of the world to dishonor God.

**THE FATHER'S COMMAND—Matthew 17:5—Hear ye him**—This vision was given, no doubt, to strengthen Peter's, James' and John's faith in Jesus and to prove to them that He really was divine. Up to this time the Jews had been living entirely under the law, but here these disciples heard the voice of God say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Thus we see that from then on Christ was to be the center of all things. Truly, it is He whom we must hear, for there is none other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved. His teachings are the gospel, full and complete. He was the perfect Example. He trod the road before us. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet He did no sin. He doesn't ask or expect us to do anything that He has not already done. Why shouldn't we be willing, even anxious, to follow such a sublime and loving example?

**GOD'S VOICE CARRIES POWER—Matthew 17:6—And when the disciples**—When God speaks, something happens. Here the sound of His voice caused Peter, James, and John to fall down speechless. **Were sore afraid**—Think what His voice of wrath will be when He says, "Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity: I never knew you."

**THE FATHER RECOGNIZED—Luke 10:21—O Father**—There's a feeling of kinship in these words. Jesus called God His Father when in prayer, for He addressed Him as such. He gave respect and honor to His Father, God, and submitted Himself to His authority (Matthew 26:39-42). This same expression can also be found in other scriptures (Mark 14:36; Matthew 11:25; John 12:28). Upon these three different occasions "a voice" made known the relationship between God and Jesus Christ: at the baptism, upon the mount, and again near the close of Jesus' life. **Verse 22—My Father**—The closeness of the Father to His beloved Son is evident as we thoughtfully study these passages of Scripture. We, too, should be aware of the nearness and watchful care of One whom we may call, "Our Father."

**NAMED AFTER THE FATHER—Ephesians 3:14—For this cause**—Paul in his letter to the Ephesians tells us that the family of God is named after the Father. Now we are told elsewhere in the Scriptures that the saints compose the body of Christ, or the church. Or, in other words, the name of the church would have to be the Church of God. This scripture says that the

whole family, both in heaven and in earth, is thus named. Now if this be true, every born-again person, regardless of where he may be, is in the family of God, which is the Church of God. Does it stand to reason that God is pleased when man organizes a sect and gives it some man's name and then tries to say it is God's church? **Verse 15—The whole family**—The church is compared to a family. When a child is born into the Jones family, it takes the father's name. If the child were named Smith, it would naturally follow that Mr. Jones was not the child's father. This would bring disgrace to the father, Mr. Jones. So it is when Christians take some other name than that of God our spiritual Father. It is displeasing to God and is in direct violation of His commandments. If God be our Father, why not follow the Bible teaching and take His name?

**STEPHEN, A MAN FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST—Acts 7:55—Being full of the Holy Ghost**—I know of no greater testimony that anyone could leave than to have it said of him, "He was filled with the Holy Ghost." In Acts 1:8 we read, "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." What kind of power did Jesus mean? Did He mean the kind that causes one to fall on the floor, creating an unseemly spectacle, and muttering a lot of unintelligible jargon? No, a thousand times, no! He meant the power to live a pure and holy life, the power to witness for Christ at all times, the power to keep one's heart filled with love to the extent that he can love even his enemies with a pure heart fervently; the power to keep humble, low down at Jesus' feet and to esteem others better than one's self. Stephen had this power, and he was able to witness for Christ, having no fear as to what the cost might be. God may permit us to be persecuted and even martyred for His sake, but the Holy Ghost will furnish us power and courage to go through, praising God, just as Stephen did. He will give us the grace to ask God to forgive those who wrong us. The Holy Spirit should be cherished in our hearts. **Verse 56—Behold, I see ... the Son of man standing**—God was right by Stephen's side, and to encourage him, He gave him a glimpse of heaven where he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. After beholding this wonderful sight, do you think Stephen had any regrets for the course he had taken? Heaven is cheap at any price; and if we could buy it with our very life, it would be the cheapest thing we ever bought.

**PRAY IN JESUS' NAME—John 16:23—And in that day**—Jesus was soon to leave this earth, so it was necessary to instruct the disciples to pray to the Father in Jesus' name. He was still going to be their Mediator. Jesus says in this verse, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." If we are walking close to the Lord, we never have any desire to ask anything of the Lord for any selfish purpose. Our greatest desire is to please the Lord, and this desire is reflected in our praying. We can never make a mistake praying for lost souls or for the advancement of God's work in the earth.

### CONCLUSION

What a wonderful privilege it is to have God for our Father! It is His desire that we give our hearts to Him

so He can lead us more than we can ever imagine, and everything that He does is for our good. Sometimes we may not be able to understand why things happen as they do, but we must never doubt or question the wisdom of God. He is all-powerful and all-wise and never makes a mistake. He knows the end from the beginning, and we never make a mistake by putting our complete trust in Him. God has a greater concern for us than we do for our own children. So let us have real trust and confidence in God's ability and desire to care for us. This is what it takes to live a victorious Christian life, and I am sure that we all want to be victorious over sin and the devil.

### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Why did God reveal the gospel mysteries to "babes"?
2. Do you suppose the rich and educated would have received them?
3. How is the family of God compared to the human family?
4. What kind of power does the Holy Ghost give us?
5. What is our most cherished possession?
6. What is the correct attitude of prayer? †

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## WINNING A CROWN

By the late

C. W. Naylor



Part  
III

### How to Find God

**T**HE PRODIGAL has wandered far; he is in a strange land. Things there are not as they are in Father's house. As long as he is satisfied in this strange country, the charms of home appeal to him but little. Before the sinner can find God he must, as the prodigal of old, come to himself. He must realize what his situation means. He must become conscious of his true state as a sinner. He must see his sins in their naked reality; and he has only to see them so to abhor them. The pleasures of sin may satisfy for a season. His heart may have no longing after God; but when he comes to himself, he begins to think of better things. Sin loses its attraction. He begins to eat the bitter bread of remorse. He thinks of the outraged father, and there arises in his heart a desire for reconciliation. He is conscious that he has transgressed, that he has deeply wounded the paternal love. He is deeply conscious of the fact that he deserves nothing better of the Father than permanent rejection. The language of his heart is, "I am no more worthy to be called thy son."

No man can ever find God who does not first become thoroughly dissatisfied with his own condition; for so long as he is satisfied in sin, he has no desire to be reconciled to God, he does not wish to be in God's presence. But when once he begins to abhor his sin, and to desire to be something better than he is, he instinctively turns God-ward, and says, "I will arise and go to my

Father." Reconciliation with God is not hard to obtain if there be first this turning away from sin and self. But without it there can never be peace. There can be no salvation while there remains self-satisfaction or rebellion.

### Seeking God

It is not hard to become a Christian. It is not difficult to find God. The difficult part is to leave self and to gain the consent of mind and heart to begin the seeking. God is not far away. We do not need to take a long journey to find Him. He "is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart" (Psalm 34:18). Yea, He is "not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27), and He has said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one ... that seeketh findeth" (Luke 11:9, 10). There is, however, a way in which we must seek in order to be successful. We must not seek carelessly nor indifferently. "But if ... thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29).

God never hides Himself from those who seek Him with right desires and pure purposes. The seeker should come humbly and simply and trustingly. He should come as one who expects to find, and, having found the desire of his heart, to turn back no more to his former life.

But if we desire to find God, we must seek for Him where He is. The prodigal would have sought long and vainly for his father in the land wherein he was a prodigal. Knowing this, he said, "I will arise and go to my father." So we must arise and go from the land of our sinful service, from the country of our evil master. God is not to be found there. In vain do we look for Him there. He is not found in the way of earthly pleasure. So long as our hearts and affections are set upon the things of this world, so long as we care for them, we cannot find God. It is only when we turn to Him with our whole hearts and with a full purpose to serve Him that we can find Him.

Sometimes people desire to be Christians, and they make up their minds that they are going to do better. That is their thought of being a Christian—just doing better. But that is not enough; there must be something more than that. How can a man who is evil do good? Nor is it enough to join with people who are Christians, or who are professing to be Christians. We may unite with some organization of people called a church, but that of itself may not make us either better or worse. Turning over a new leaf and taking up new habits, becoming interested in church work and various benevolences, will never bring us to God. Our souls must become hungry for Him. We must desire Him more than anything else and search for Him until we find Him. That is the one thing—we must find God. We must become His. We must have a new life, new purposes, and a new relationship with God. This demands a severance of old relations, a forsaking of the old habits and life, of the old ways and desires. Do not suppose that you can find God as your Savior unless you turn to Him with your whole heart, giving up once and for all time everything that displeases Him. He will not be a partner with you in anything that is unholy; therefore, all that is unholy must be given up.

God has said, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). These are God's terms, and He will not change them. David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). God tells us the result if we seek Him while we still hold to sin. "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear" (Isaiah 1:15). What, then, must we do? His answer is, "Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (verse 16). If we will do this, the gracious promise is given, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (verse 18). As long as the soul clings to one sin, it cannot find God. All must be forsaken. The old life must have "Finished" written under it. When we fully turn from sin, then, and then only, can we turn to God. We are told to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin. If we do this, our relation to it will be the same as that of a literally dead man to the activities of this life. Sin must end before righteousness can begin.

### Repentance

God's message to sinners has always been that they should repent. This was the burden of the message of the Prophets, of John the Baptist, and of the Son of God when He came, as it has been the message through the ages. But what is repentance? In its practical sense as respecting the sinner, it means regret or sorrow for sin, accompanied by a turning away from sin. The word sometimes means no more than a change of mind, but in the true evangelical sense it means something more than this—not only a change of mind, but much besides. It means that change accompanied by or produced by real sorrow for sin, that godly sorrow which works repentance and leads to salvation.

One of the most important points involved in this subject is the direction in which repentance acts, or the object toward which it acts. Much repentance is essentially selfish in its nature. Sometimes people grow very sorry because of what they have done when they see the effects upon themselves. When they see disease brought upon their bodies and realize that they are languishing under its touch because of what they have done, they are filled with regret. The prisoner behind the bars often is repentant because he is suffering punishment. He is sorry for what he has done, but sorry only because of its effects upon himself. Sin often brings shame, and this shame is not easily borne, and often brings self-reproaches and sorrow, not because the evil was done, but because of the fruit of that evil.

All such repentance is essentially selfish. It leads to no change in the individual, in his attitude toward God, nor in God's attitude toward him. He may have wronged friends and later may come to feel very bad over having done so; he may wish that he had the opportunity to change matters and would be glad if he had not done as he did. In this case his friends are the object of his repentance. Any effectual repentance must have God for its object. It must be directed toward Him. The individual must be genuinely repentant because

he has wronged God. He must look at his sins from God's standpoint, not from his own. He must consider that he has wronged God, that he has transgressed his law; and he must consider the character of God—how infinitely just and holy He is and how exceedingly wrong has been his conduct in thus breaking the holy law of that holy God. It is only when he views his sins from this standpoint that he can have any adequate idea of their deserts, and only then can he have any proper idea of his own guilt and his own need of repentance.

Repentance implies a turning away from sin with a full purpose never to repeat the sinful deeds. Anything that does not produce such a result is not real repentance. Those who claim to have repented and still go on in their sinful ways, doing what pleases them rather than what pleases God, have never truly repented; for if one is truly sorry for sin, is truly sorry that he has grieved God, he will once and forever turn away from doing such a thing. God says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." That is an essential part of repentance, and if omitted, the repentance cannot be unto salvation.

God says that the wicked shall "give again that which he hath robbed" (Ezekiel 33:15). One characteristic of true repentance is the disposition of the individual to repair the injuries that he has done others, so far as it lies in his power. If he has stolen from another, he desires no longer to have that property in his possession. If we have taken from our fellow man by fraud or in any other way things that were his, the things are still his, and if we truly repent, we shall feel an earnest and sincere desire in our souls to restore them. Repentance that leaves the individual in possession of that which has been wrongfully gotten, is not genuine repentance, for genuine repentance wants to make right any wrong that has been done. It takes no argument to convince anyone who really repents that he ought to confess to those whom he has wronged and to make restitution to them to the extent of his ability and opportunity. The thousands of professors of religion who have things in their possession that are not theirs will have a hard task getting inside the pearly gates, as they have now a hard task of convincing those who know of the facts that they are true Christians. It is not enough to be sorry that we have done wrong; we must go far enough to be thoroughly sorry that we have that which is not ours, so sorry that we will not keep it. It is just as truly natural for the penitent sinner to make his wrongs right and to ask the forgiveness of those wronged and to make thorough confession as it is for his soul to reach out after God's mercy.

Having truly repented, the soul is then upon the threshold of God's mercy and can reach out expectantly to find Him. †

#### WRITE OR EMAIL US THIS MONTH!

We would love to hear from you. Your support is appreciated. If you want to add a name to our mailing list, or if you want to be removed, our email and post office address is found on page 1.

# VANITY

Message by Bro. Ray Hydes

(preached in Grand Cayman)

**P**LEASE GET your Bibles and turn to Ecclesiastes, chapter 1, verses 1 and 2: “The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.”



There is nothing a man wants more than to believe his life matters. All of us want to be recognized. We want to know that what we do matters. We want to be a part of something important and something that lasts, yet at times our lives seem to consist of nothing more than making a living, perhaps raising a family, paying our bills, and then dying. That sometimes sums up what life is.

It may impress you to learn that Solomon came to the same conclusion. He noted that all of life under the sun is vanity; that is, in our earthly existence, apart from God, is all vanity. It's meaningless, like the sand castles on a beach that are swept away during a high tide, so everything we do is washed away and eventually amounts to nothing. That's a reality of life, Friends.

Every effort you do will one of these days amount to nothing, unless it's done for God. When you help a friend, when Bro. James encourages us to enjoy this walk along the way, that's what matters. It doesn't matter what kind of car we drive. What matters is what we do for the Lord. Everything else we do under the sun is vanity.

I want to go through a few steps to help us to realize that we need to balance life, but we need to do more for the Lord than for the world, because everything we do in the world is vanity. So, as we live and think of what we do each day that is not for the Lord, then we might do less in the world. We'll do more for the Lord. If it's only what we do for the Lord that counts, what difference does it make what we do in the world?

## WE HAVE A JOB TO DO

Church, we have a job to do. We have to work for the Lord because that is all that matters. One of these days our lives will come to an end, and the only thing that will count is what we did for our fellow man and for the Lord. That's what will count. Don't think of hoarding up things, don't think of what you can eat today, don't think of how much money you can make today. Put those all aside. As a matter of fact, we ought to live as if today is our last day. What if the Lord comes today? What thoughts do I have in my head? What am I doing today? Will it make the Lord proud? Will He be happy with me if He came today?

You will hear the word *vanity* a lot in this message. “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” Everything in this world will be forgotten about, except what we do for the Lord.

To prove his point, Solomon gave a few illustrations: The results of a man's labor won't remain. After a few generations the man himself is forgotten. Isn't that right? Man is forgotten. It's only what is done for the Lord that will remain. In the natural world, the sun circles overhead every day, only to make the same journey the next day. I say quite often, we live in a simple world. I've used that term a lot. Why? Because we do live in a simple world. The sun rose in the east this morning, exactly where it rose yesterday. I promise you, if the Lord carries it, it will rise again tomorrow in the same place. But when you're dead and gone, you won't know anything about it. We live in a world that God made and designed. Water flows in endless cycles from a river to the sea, from the sea to the sky, and from the sky, back down where it runs into a river. The same cycle happens over and over and over every day. All of these cycles continue regardless of any important things we try to build in our lives. That's how our lives are. What we do with our lives is nothing. What God has done and created is what matters, because no matter how smart man gets, the sun is still going to rise in the east and set in the west. Man can't stop that.

## IS THERE A GOD?

Some people say that there is no God. I was told yesterday that there are some atheists living here. I don't hate the atheists, but I'm sure if they grew up here they heard their parents and grandparents talking about the Lord. Our great-great-grandparents depended on the Lord. As a matter of fact, that's all they had to depend on—the Lord and the ground. What they ate came from the ground. Some of the youngsters today think they're so smart, and know it all, so they don't believe in God, but older people have heard and know about Him.

Man can't stop the sun from shining. Man can't stop the wind from blowing. He can't stop the rain from falling. God does all of this. It's the design from God. Everything man touches is vanity. What God touches last forever.

How important do you think you are? When you're dead and gone, the cycles that God designed continues. We're not so important, but we're here to help each other. We're here to love each other. We're here to carry on what God has started in us. We're not here to see how many millions we can accumulate. We're here to do a job for God. What we do for God will last. The older I get, the more I realize that God is everything to me. Without God, we're nothing. Until we start to acknowledge God, and until this world gets back to the basics of the Bible and God, the world will be no different. The world is in a bad shape, but we still have a job to do. You and I have to make sure that people don't forget God. As Christians, that is our duty. Otherwise, what do you think we're in the church for? We have a job to do. I say again, everything we do is vanity, except what we do for God.

It would be easy to throw up our hands after reading Solomon's words, but remember, he was talking about life under the sun. “Life without God,” says Solomon, “is vanity.” Solomon's words make sense, don't they? Just ask yourself, *What have I done that has eternal value if I take God out of the equation?* I'm going

to read that again. I want you to think of this. Just ask yourself, *What have I done that has eternal value if I take God out of the equation?* I can answer that for you. Absolutely nothing. It's vanity. God out of the equation is vanity. Whether you think so or not, God out of the equation means absolutely nothing. I don't care how hard you work, it means nothing. God has to be in the equation in order for your life to be worth something.

Sinner Friends, I say to you, if you don't have God in your life, what you're doing is vanity. It means absolutely nothing. You might ask, "Bro. Ray, you mean my life means nothing?" Your life means nothing until you turn it over to God. That's the reality of life. Your life now is meaningless unless it's for God. It's a hard truth, but it's the absolute truth.

I'm going to go through several points from Ecclesiastes. I want you to bear with me. I've read Ecclesiastes and thought to myself that Solomon was so wise when he gave us the words at the end of what is worthwhile for us to follow. Everything that we need is in the Bible. Everything that we need for life is in God's Word. Am I right?

### VANITY OF PLEASURE AND WEALTH

*Vanity of pleasure and wealth*—Ecclesiastes 2:11—"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." I don't care how many titles you're given. When you say you should become educated and get your degrees, absolutely, but you need to balance life. Don't forget where your life came from. It came from God. Unless you acknowledge God, your degrees will mean nothing. One of these days you will be buried with your degrees. If you did nothing for God, your degrees will mean absolutely nothing. That is the truth of the matter. Nothing without God means nothing.

The longer you are a Christian, the more you realize you need God. If you think otherwise, something is wrong. We must convince the world that being a Christian is good. When you have a deep walk with God, people know. People are watching our lives. If you think not, you're making a sad mistake. People are watching our lives every day. They watch what we do. Don't talk too much. Do! Show action!

*A time for everything*—Ecclesiastes 3:1—"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." There's a time to do everything. This chapter goes on to say, "A time to be born, and a time to die," etc., but I won't take the time to read them all. There's a time under the sun for everything. What we do with the time is what's going to matter. Only what we do for God will matter. Eternity is not for a few days. Eternity is forever. The older you get, you start to think, *What road am I taking?* The road I take either will be the one that has no meaning and of vanity, or the one that leads to eternal life. Eternity is a long time.

*The vanity of all life*—Ecclesiastes 3:16, 17—"And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. I said in mine heart, God

shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work." So we will be judged by God. Excuses will be given that day. "Well, Lord ..." Try that on Earth, try that with your fellow friends, but not with God. No excuses. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." All is vanity, except for what we do for the Lord. No excuses, Friends. You'll have no excuses on the day of judgment. It's either good or bad. It will be either "Welcome" or "Depart for me." It won't be watered down the way people think now. Everybody you meet nowadays claim to be a Christian. The Christian life is an excellent life, a fantastic life, and a fulfilling life that you can find no place else but being in God. The longer you are a Christian, the more you'll find that out. The road to eternal life is narrow. It's an attractive road. The broad road leads to death.

### VANITY OF RICHES

*The vanity of riches*—Ecclesiastes 5:8, 9—"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they. Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field." There is somebody smarter than you and I. Always. There's somebody who has more degrees than you and I. The poor man gets his feed from the field. So does the king. God made a simple world, right? We all feed from the same world. So don't think you're better than anyone else. We all live on the same earth. We drink the same water, we eat the same food. Friends, if you can't afford something, then don't buy it. We live in a world where common sense must be used. Sis. Hope, bless her memory, would always say that she didn't understand why they called it *common sense*, because it's not so common anymore. There are people who we talk about. Do you know why? They affect our lives. I want to be remembered for the things I did for others. That's all that matters in life. Sis. Hope is still affecting us although it's been many years since her passing. Do you why? God was in her, with her, and she passed it on to us. That could only come from God.

*Choosing wisdom*—Ecclesiastes 7: 1—"A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Do you know why? When we're born, we just entered the world. The journey we take through this life is what is going to matter. An old lady said one time, "Sometimes we go through rough times, but sometimes it's how you make your bed." You lie in it. Sometimes we need a reality check.

*Making the best of this life*—Ecclesiastes 9:10, 11—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." Church, we need to be reminded that what we do in life counts. Solomon tells us in Ecclesiastes that what we do matters. But it is what we do that will matter. If what we're doing doesn't matter, then do



something that matters. It's only what is done for God that matters. Everything else is vanity. In other words, everything else will fade away.

*Investment of a life*—Ecclesiastes 11:1—“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” If that’s a promise from God, why don’t we follow His promise? A lack of faith. If we don’t have faith, we won’t cast our bread upon the waters at all. We have to have more faith in God. Cast your bread upon the waters and leave it there. We come here for prayer, we raise our hands to give a request for a particular thing, so we must leave it to God. Trust Him to do what you asked Him to do. As long as you trust God, your request won’t go unheeded. Sometimes we just want to thank Him. Keep going on.

We’re human, and we live in a very troubled world. We live in a world that everything we do is useless. Everything we do is almost meaningless. We can’t please everybody. Ask God to give you the grace you need for that one day, and don’t worry about tomorrow. Don’t worry about the mistakes you made today. They’re gone. “Lord, you know yesterday was a hard day.” Yesterday is gone. Leave it alone. Ask God for grace for today. As a matter of fact, don’t ask Him for grace for tomorrow. You might not live to see tomorrow.

### THE SPAN OF LIFE

*The span of life*—Ecclesiastes 12:1—“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” Sinner Friends, you’ve heard this verse many times, but it’s absolutely true. It seems like yesterday I was a student at Truth For Youth School. It’s been over forty years ago. Time has swiftly gone by. Time waits on no man. What we do with our time is what matters. Stop wasting time, Friends. The more you procrastinate, the more time you waste, the less time you’ll use for God. Do something for God every day. Every day do something for God, then you life will really matter at the end.

*The whole duty of man*—Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14—“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” I promise you that God won’t say, “Congratulations, John, you worked hard to earn five doctorates. Did you do anything for me with those doctorates?” “Well, no.” It doesn’t matter what we do. Only what we do for God will last.

The Judgment Day is coming. We won’t escape it. Ready or not, God will be calling you. No excuses will be accepted on the Judgment Day. None! Ample time was given. Sometimes I ask myself, “How will I really make God feel on the Judgment Day?” I want a good report card. Do you? I want to know that when I stand before God that I will have a good report card for Him. That’s what all Christians should desire. It’s like when you were in school. You wanted a good report card. A good report card comes from working for God. You can’t sit down and do nothing and expect to get a good report card. It takes some work. To get good results from anything, it takes work. To be a successful Christian,

it takes work. That’s a reality of life. You can’t sit back and hope and pray that Bro. James’ message will carry you through. You have a job to do. Your report card is yours. It won’t have James Arch’s name on it. It will have your name on it. You’ll be judged according to the work you’ve done, not because you went to the Church of God (Universal) and listened to all of Bro. James’ messages. Look at your report card. Is your report card good? If the Lord comes today, will your report card be good? “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” All we do is vanity, except what we do for God.

Sinner Friends, I challenge you to turn to God. Then you can start your brand new report card tonight. Say, “Lord, use me. What can I do to further your work?” God is good all the time. He is faithful.

Solomon has told us that everything we do under the sun is vanity, except for what we do for God. The thought this week is *What can I do for God, because only what I do for Him will count*. Nothing else!

### CONCLUSION

Church, we have a work to do. May the Lord always help us to continue to not only do right, or to do well, but to pursue what matters in life. What matters in life is what we do for our fellow man, for God, and the love we pour out. When you pray, ask God for humility, because with humility all of these things will come in line. You love more when you’re humble. You’re more genuine when you’re humble. If you think somebody can’t see through you not being a real person, you’re making a sad mistake. Sooner or later the real you comes out. Ask God to help you to do your part. Brighten the corner where you are. You will make a difference.

May God continue to bless us as we continue on. I pray for our pastor, Bro. James, all the time. Nothing can function without a leader. May the Lord bless us as we work for Him. †

### OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Brother,

I’m not sure how your magazine found me all the way over here on the West Coast. Sure glad it did. You are surely spreading the true Word of God.

The fellow brothers and sisters who contribute to your magazine are surely sincere believers and blessed in their understanding of scripture. It is refreshing and uplifting to know there are other true believers left in this present, seemingly completely, fallen world we currently (temporarily) reside.

Please use this donation to continue to spread God’s eternal truth to as many as possible.

—S. M., Oregon

Thanks so much for your publication to spread God’s Word. I got started with *The Way of Truth* through my mom who has now passed. You have some really good old-fashioned articles. Thanks for providing the truth. I pray the Lord will bless, keep, and give you peace.

—V. D., Illinois

# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



## THE LAW OF KINDNESS A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Go out to the shed and bring in another bucket of coal, please,” my mother said to me one winter evening. Supper was over, and the dishes had been washed, wiped, and put away. It was time for us girls to gather around the kitchen table to do our homework.

I picked up the coal bucket from behind the coal and wood stove and headed out the back door. The minute I stepped outside, I was met with a blast of frosty air. Moving as quickly as I could, I ran to the shed and shoveled coal into the bucket. Holding out one arm to balance the load hanging from my other, I made my way back to the house.

I slammed the kitchen door to shut out the cold and set the bucket down beside the stove. My mother opened the stove door to check the state of the fire and then poured in some of the coal.

“It’s freezing out there!” I said. I was still shivering.

“Well, you could have put on a jacket before you went charging out the door,” my mother said.

“I know,” I admitted. “I just didn’t want to take the time.”

“Well, suppose you take the time now to sit down at the table and start on your homework,” my mother replied.

I opened the three-ring binder where I kept notebook paper and written assignments. Some of my papers were neatly fastened in the rings of the binder, while others stuck out here and there where I had hurriedly shoved them, thinking I would put them in the rings later.

“And maybe you should also take the time to clean out your notebook,” added my mother, shaking her head at the untidy mess. I had turned ten just a few months earlier. It was time I started to be more organized.

I began at the front of the notebook, putting each loose paper into the rings behind the divider tab of the subject with which it belonged. I was making good progress when I suddenly froze, staring at the piece of notebook paper I had just picked up. On the paper was a drawing I had done in school that day. It was a drawing of the face of a girl in my class. Her eyes were upturned as if she were searching for an answer she couldn’t find. Under the drawing, I had written, **THIS IS JANE\* WHEN SHE GETS CALLED ON.**

I glanced up quickly. My mother was at the kitchen sink, her back turned to me. Carefully, I folded the paper to hide the drawing. I walked over to the stove, opened the door, and slipped the paper with its ugly drawing into the flames.

When I turned away from the stove, I saw my mother walking toward the table where my notebook was lying.

“What was that piece of paper you put in the stove?” asked my mother, looking sharply at me.

“It was just an old paper I don’t need anymore,” I told her.

“HmMMM!” said my mother with a thoughtful frown.

My face felt hot, but I didn’t explain any further. To my relief, my mother didn’t ask me any more questions about the paper.

It was difficult to focus on my homework. I kept remembering the events at school earlier that day that had led to the drawing I had just destroyed.

During indoor recess, Maya,\* one of my classmates, had said to me, “Did you ever notice how Jane’s eyes roll up every time the teacher asks her a question? Why does she do that? It makes her look funny.”

It was true. Jane always looked up at the ceiling when she was asked a question. I took a piece of paper from my notebook, right then and there, and drew a picture of Jane with her eyes rolled upward. I showed it to Maya, who laughed and showed it to another student. By the time the drawing was handed back to me, I had begun to feel guilty for creating it. The picture was no longer funny to me, and so I jammed it into my notebook.

When I saw the drawing again at home that evening, I was ashamed of myself. I certainly didn’t want my mother to know what I had done.

Even after I had burned it, the drawing remained in my thoughts. I was sorry for being so unkind. What I should have done was go to my classmates the next day and apologize for showing them a drawing that made fun of someone.

In Luke 6:31, we read where Jesus said, “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” We don’t like people saying unkind things to us—or about us—and so we should not do anything like that to them.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 31:26, which says, *She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.* Proverbs 31 describes the way a righteous woman lives her life. Verse 26 tells us that a righteous woman follows the law of kindness. The same is true for men—and for children. The “law of kindness” can be found in many different scriptures. One of them is Ephesians 4:32, which says, *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.*

Just as God is good to us, we need to be good to one another. We must ask the Lord to help us follow the law of kindness each day.

\*not their real names

### Activity

Look for three other Bible verses, besides Ephesians 4:32 and Proverbs 31:26, that tell us to show kindness to others.

## Answers to Last Month's Activity

Judge righteous judgment. (John 7:24)  
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving. (Psalm 100:4)  
Abide in [Jesus]. (John 15:4)  
Love the Lord thy God. (Matthew 22:37)  
Obey God. (Acts 5:29)  
Understand what the will of the Lord is. (Ephesians 5:17)  
Seek the Lord. (Psalm 105:4) †


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# SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

By the late D. O. Teasley

From the book, *The Holy Spirit and Other Spirits*

 ALL SIN IS against or contrary to the Holy Spirit; but this term is generally used to designate the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, or the sin which is unpardonable. Many honest souls have been harassed for years with the thought that they had committed the unpardonable sin, when there was no truth in it; and had they known it, the very fact that they were convicted was a positive proof that they were not guilty of what they were accused. Satan often employs this means of discouraging souls and hindering them from finding peace, and getting a settled experience. While there are very few who commit the unpardonable sin, it is possible, and some do commit it. We will first notice this:

*Unpardonable Sin Under the Old Testament*—“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses” (Hebrews 10:28). “Died without mercy,” that is, they were not pardoned. There were several sins under the Old Testament which were unpardonable; and when it would be proven by two or three witnesses, the guilty party “died without mercy”; was stoned to death, or cut off from among the people. For this reason Paul calls the law of Moses a “ministration of death” (II Corinthians 3:7), or “the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). This meant that when a man sinned, and it would be proven, the inevitable end was death, which was known as “the curse of the law.” All the sins mentioned in the ten commandments, or decalogue, and many others in the law of Moses, were considered unpardonable, and punishable by death. Hence under the law of Moses the unpardonable sin was frequently committed. This sin is known in the Old Testament by several different names, such as, “Sinning with a high hand,” “Presumptuous sin,” “Sinning willfully,” etc., etc.

*Unpardonable Sin in the New Testament*—The first place in the New Testament we have mention made of an unpardonable sin is in Matthew the twelfth chapter, where Jesus was speaking to the scoffing Pharisees. We have a record of the same in Mark and Luke also. “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh

against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matthew 12:31, 32).

Here, and here only, is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit mentioned—that is, here and in the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. In this passage, as in all Scripture, the context goes far to help us in understanding the meaning of the writer. Jesus had been casting out devils, and the Pharisees accused Him of casting them out by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. When Jesus had heard their accusation or read their thoughts, He spoke to them the foregoing words, and warned them about blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

The question might naturally arise here as to what called forth this declaration from Jesus. Mark in recording the same thing clearly answers the question. “Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit” (Mark 3:30). These wicked Pharisees spoke not only against Jesus, but more expressly against the power by which He cast out devils; and Jesus said that He cast out devils by the Spirit of God (Matthew 12:28), hence they spoke blasphemously about the Holy Spirit. Jesus hearing this, or rather knowing their thoughts, told them of their awful doom.

This, and this only, is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; that is, speaking blasphemously of His work, mission, operations, or person. Yet the roads that lead to the unpardonable sin are many, or at least they are more than this one. Men may apostatize so far that their case is hopeless, and their doom is sealed. They may go beyond the reach of mercy and reach an irretrievable state. They may fall so far away that it would be impossible to renew them to repentance. They may reject the truth and take pleasure in unrighteousness till God will send them a strong delusion and their case is hopeless. All these are sure roads to the unpardonable state.

We will next notice those to whom God has sent a strong delusion “because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). Those who will not receive a love for the truth when they have heard it, but go on in unrighteousness till the Holy Spirit is grieved forever away, can never be forgiven. This may be done by blaspheming the Holy Spirit, or by repeatedly turning Him away and refusing to admit when He knocks at the door of the heart. Those who sternly refuse to get saved when they know the truth, stand in awful danger.

We read in the Bible of a certain class of people who refused to know God; “and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient” (Romans 1:28). They were disobedient and even disliked to retain God in their knowledge; “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts” (Romans 1:24). When a man refuses to retain God in his knowledge—refuses and rejects the Holy Spirit and receives not a love for the truth, God “gives him up”—“gives him over to a reprobate mind,” and sends him a “strong delusion” that he

may believe a lie and be damned. From this most deplorable state there is no escape. Past offered mercies are gone forever and lost in the chaos of past eternity. Present mercy is not offered, and nothing but hell and damnation can be expected in eternity. This is certainly of all states the most wretched.

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (Hebrews 6:4-6). “If they shall fall away.” The significance of the whole text is founded on this clause. To “fall away” does not mean, as some suppose, merely to fall from the grace of God, or backslide. To “fall away” as Paul uses it here means to totally apostatize and fall beyond the reach of mercy; to reject the gospel system and put its Author to an open shame, by denying Him to be the Son of God.

Three things especially should be taken into consideration in trying to understand the Bible, or any other writing. They are: (1) Who is writing, (2) who is written to, and (3) under what circumstances the passage is written. If we consider that in the foregoing text Paul was writing to the Jews, and that at that time many of them had “fallen away” from the gospel and had denied that Jesus was the Christ, we can better grasp the import of his language.

That Paul is here aiming at total apostasy is further proved by the words, “They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” That is, they say by their actions and doctrine that His crucifixion was just, and had they been there they would have helped to condemn Him. They publicly declare, after having known by a positive experience that He was the Christ, that He was a malefactor and died as a man, guilty of crime; thus making of Him a public example and “putting him to an open shame.”

The simple act of backsliding is not an unpardonable sin; but for the scoffing apostate and the hardened reprobate, who rejects the gospel system and Jesus Christ, its author, there is no place of repentance. And he who utterly “falls away,” away from the gospel plan, and the reach of the Holy Spirit, can never hope for life. “For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned” (Hebrews 6:7, 8). Those upon whom the showers of grace descend and they bring forth fruit, receive blessing from God: but those who have become so worthless and have fallen so far away that they bear only thorns and briers, are “nigh unto cursing.”

Note the strong analogy here between a worthless piece of earth, or field, and the apostate soul. That is, when a field after much cultivation, brings forth nothing but thorns and briers it is given up as worthless and unimprovable. So a soul, when it has been often watered with the dew of life and carefully cultivated, if in spite of all it becomes utterly worthless, it is then

considered unpardonable. It is then near unto cursing, and to its final end, which is burning.

There is yet another phase of the unpardonable sin which we wish to notice, known in the Bible as “The sin unto death.” “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death” (I John 5:16, 17). All sin in one sense is unto death; but the death here referred to is doubtless the second death, or the “lake of fire” (Revelation 20:14). Paul gives us to understand that all who are in sin are dead (Ephesians 2:1; I Timothy 5:6); but the death here mentioned by John is one from which there is no escape. Those who sin and yet do not fall beyond the possibility of life, may receive life through prayer and faith; but the “sin unto death,” for the forgiveness of which we are not to pray, is sin which places the one who sins beyond the reach of life. John does not here specify any certain act of disobedience, but possibly refers to any act which would place the soul beyond the reach of redemption.

There are two unseen lines which cross the life-path of every man and woman. One of these is the line of death, the other is the line which divides between God’s mercy and His wrath. If the soul is stained with sin when the death-line is crossed, eternal destruction is the inevitable end. Those who linger in sin and reject the Holy Spirit may cross the line of mercy before the line of death is reached. In either case the state is equally hopeless. What we mean by crossing the line of mercy is to pass beyond the reach of mercy, or where the Holy Spirit ceases to call. That this is possible is undeniable, for God has said, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man” (Genesis 6:3). Any act, whether that of a neglecter or that of a rejecter, which places the soul beyond the reach of the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin; whether it be blaspheming the Holy Spirit and driving Him away in an instant, or whether it be rejecting and neglecting Him till the heart has grown too hard to feel His divine touch.

There is yet another text which doubtless will bear the same construction as Hebrews 6:7, 8, or at least it was written to the same people by the same writer and for the same purpose. “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin” (Hebrews 10:26). That Paul here referred to unpardonable sin seems plausible, from the fact that he directly connects it with the unpardonable sin of Moses’ law by saying, “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses” (Hebrews 10:28). However, this sin includes more than a wilful sin of ordinary magnitude, as is clearly shown by the twenty-ninth verse of this chapter. “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Hebrews 10:29).

This sin, like “falling away,” included rejecting the gospel plan, doing despite unto the Spirit of grace and

counting the blood of Christ unholy. As we have before stated, Paul was here referring to the Jews, many of whom had at this time rejected Christ as being only a man. The *Syriac* translation of this text makes this clear. "How much more, think ye, will he receive capital punishment, who hath trodden upon the Son of God, and hath accounted the blood of his covenant, by which he is sanctified, as the blood of all men, and hath treated the Spirit of grace contumely?" This makes it clear, that the sin for which no sacrifice remains includes rejecting Christ and saying that His blood is unholy, or is as the blood of any other man, together with doing despite unto the Spirit of grace.

"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." God had at this time, and long before, ceased to accept the Jewish sacrifices; and those sacrifices offered to idols, God never accepted; so, of course, the man who rejected the sacrificial offering of the blood of Christ, was lost forever, for there remained no sacrifice for his sins, without which he could not be saved; for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). "There is no longer a sacrifice which may be offered for sins"—*Syriac*. "No longer, for sins, is there left over a sacrifice"—*Rotherham*. Christ being the only one who could atone for sin (Revelation 5:4, 5) there is no longer "left over" a sacrifice, even in heaven, for the soul of man. Hence, God having rejected the Jewish sacrifices, and there being "left over" in the celestial realms above no sacrifice for sin, he who turns from Christ and His vicarious sacrifice has nothing left for him "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:27).

The unpardonable sin, or sin unto death, includes anything by which the Holy Spirit is driven from the soul to return no more. Those acts which we have mentioned in the New Testament which are roads to the unpardonable state, or "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," are: refusing to retain God in their knowledge, and persisting in unrighteousness (Romans 1:21-32); receiving not a love for the truth, but taking pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:10-12); "counting the blood of Christ as the blood of any other man, and rejecting the gospel plan," also termed *falling away*. Jesus gives us to understand that no sin is unpardonable except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; but all these other things we have mentioned are equal to the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit in that they insult and drive the Spirit away. Hence, all sin that is unto death is in effect equal to the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Consequently all these sins we have mentioned have "never forgiveness"; and those who commit them are in danger of eternal damnation.

*The Unpardonable State*—Were this state more perfectly understood there would be less chance for Satan to accuse the innocent. Some suppose that the unpardonable sin is self-murder, or suicide, in which case the state would be temporal as well as eternal death. But suicide is not unpardonable sin except in the sense that a man who takes his own life, like all other sinners, has no chance of repentance after death, hence no forgiveness.

The state is one of hardness of heart and reprobacy of mind, in which the soul sleeps a perpetual sleep, only

to be awakened by the crashing thunders of eternal judgment. When a soul has committed the unpardonable sin, and the Spirit has forever taken its flight, no feeling of conviction ever visits the desolate heart. While there may be, from an intellectual standpoint, some thoughts of eternity, attended with awful anguish of soul at the thought of death, yet there is no true conviction for sin, or godly sorrow. I have often seen souls weighed down with conviction, and sorely tried by the devil, who was imposing on them the thought that they had committed the sin "against the Holy Ghost." Had they known it, their conviction was abundant proof of the devil's lie.

However it is reached, whether by blaspheming the Holy Ghost outright, by rejecting the truth till delusion is sent, or by falling away, the state is the same. The sad state of a soul that has committed the sin unto death, is unpardonable, irretrievably lost, and condemned forever.

*Who May Commit Unpardonable Sin?*—Some have thought that only those who were saved and sanctified could commit unpardonable sin. This position is false for several reasons: (1) The Pharisees who blasphemed the Holy Spirit were not sanctified, nor yet justified (Matthew 12:31, 32). (2) Any man may take pleasure in unrighteousness till God will "give him over" (Romans 1:24, 28). (3) Any man may reject the way of truth till he has become deluded (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). While it is possible for the unsaved to commit unpardonable sin, it is also possible for those who have attained to the grace of God to "fall away," as we have before explained. While in the last case it is far less probable, it is nevertheless possible. So then unpardonable sin may be committed by either saved or unsaved.

*Why Some Sins Are Unpardonable*—When we say that there are other forms of unpardonable sin besides the direct blasphemy against the Holy Spirit it might seem to contradict the saying of Jesus: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men" (Matthew 12:31). All unpardonable sin is of the same nature; viz., that which drives the Holy Spirit forever away; but there is more than one way of doing this. Again, in all other cases of unpardonable sin mentioned in the New Testament, it is not a single act, but persisting in sin. Thus, a man who takes pleasure in unrighteousness may be forgiven, if he does not go too far; but if he goes too far, God "gives him over" (Romans 1:28). Again, a man who has no love for the truth may come and be saved, if he does not obstinately turn away too often; but if he persists too long, God will send him "a strong delusion," and he is then unpardonable.

So there are other sins besides the direct blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which become the same kind when persisted in. That is, they become unpardonable. Then all sin that is unpardonable is the same "manner" of sin as the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. That is, it all drives the Holy Spirit away to return no more, and this is the express reason why they are all unpardonable. The reason the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable is that when He is blasphemed He departs and returns no more. And for the same reason any act which would have the same effect is

unpardonable, for not one can be saved independently of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3, 5).

In this dispensation of grace the Holy Spirit offers the last chance of mercy to the fallen race of Adam. Consequently, he who rejects the Holy Spirit until it has turned away for the last time, rejects his last hope of mercy and seals his doom for darkness eternal. God has laid all the plans He will ever lay to save man, and Jesus has died once and for all, and will die no more, and he who is deserted by the Spirit cannot find God. God in this dispensation deals with men through the Holy Spirit only, hence we can easily explain why he who sins against the Holy Spirit till He departs "hath never forgiveness." †

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## THE RESURRECTION

RADIO MESSAGE BY BRO. GREG TYLER

**I** WILL BE reading the latter part of St. John, chapter 2, beginning with verse 18: "Then answered the Jews and said unto him [Jesus], What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."

We are approaching the time of year that the world calls Easter. It is to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Upon the resurrection hinges the power of the gospel of Christ, for the apostle Paul said, "If Christ be not raised, we are yet in our sins, and we have not known forgiveness." So the resurrection is very, very important to our entire message.

What I would like to emphasize on this broadcast is the thought that Jesus foretold His resurrection. A little later on in the message, we will emphasize the resurrection itself.

We read here in St. John, chapter 2, that Jesus said unto them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Like most people do, the Jews put a physical or material application to this. They thought Jesus was speaking of the literal temple that they worshiped in. Jesus was speaking of His body which would be destroyed (slain), but after three days it would come forth triumphantly out of the grave. The disciples did not immediately grasp the importance of this statement, but this is not the only time that we see Jesus Christ using this statement or setting forth the teaching of the resurrection.

In St. Matthew 12, verse 40, Jesus said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Jesus was prophesying of the period of time that He would remain in the grave, and yet His disciples did not grasp the power or

the reality of what He was setting forth. But just as He foretold, He was crucified on Calvary, put in to a tomb where never a man had lain. Indeed, after three days, He came forth out of the grave, glorified and living. He is the living, risen Savior whom we are serving. Christianity is the only religion in the world that has a living, risen Savior. Tales are told about different prophets, but never has one gone to the grave and come forth triumphantly.

In St. Mark 8:31, Jesus foretold exactly what would happen. He said to His disciples, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." The Bible says that He spoke that openly, but Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him. In other words, Peter was rebuking the Son of God for making that prophecy, but He took a stand against Peter and let him know that this was exactly what must happen. True to His Word, Jesus was faithful, though He, in the Garden of Gethsemane wrestled with the enemy, as it were. He was able to pray, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Though the weight of all the sins of the world were upon Jesus' shoulders, He was able to bear that great load and go up to Golgotha's heights and there be crucified for the sins of the whole world. For your sins, Dear Listener, and for my sins Jesus suffered and bled and died.

But that was not the end of the gospel story. No, for at the crucifixion scene we see many of the people making fun of Jesus, wagging their heads. In St. Matthew, chapter 27, verse 40, we read that they went by and said, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." They were mocking what He said, but indeed when Jesus referred to the destroying of the temple and building it again in three days, He was speaking of His body.

Then, in verse 63 of the same chapter (Matthew 27), we read that the Pharisees, when they were brought before Pilate, wanting someone to guard the body in the tomb, they said to Pilate, "Sir, we remember that the deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." They put forth the idea that perhaps the body of Jesus would be taken by His disciples, who would spread abroad that He had risen. That's why they wanted the tomb guarded. But on that glorious day, the first day of the week, while the guards were watching the tomb, the stone was rolled away! Jesus Christ indeed came forth triumphant over death, hell, and the grave, and is alive forevermore. Those sisters who were coming to anoint the body of Jesus for burial were amazed to find that the tomb was empty. In St. John, chapter 2, our text for this program, Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He spoke of the temple of His body. Beloved, when He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this unto them: "And they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the Father right now.

We have emphasized the thought that Jesus foretold of His own resurrection, but we want to consider this thought now: *What if the resurrection had not taken place?* If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, then

prophecy would have been left unfulfilled, for different Old Testament prophets foretold of the resurrection. One said that God would not allow His holy One to see corruption. So if Christ would have carried out His ministry, been crucified on Calvary, and buried in the grave but had not come forth, prophecy would have been unfulfilled.

Anyone who has ever done any kind of Bible study knows that the life of Christ was the fulfillment of prophecy: from His virgin mother, to the lineage that He came from David, to the place where He was born in Bethlehem, to the time that He was crucified, the place He was crucified, and even to the parting of His garment. Everything to the smallest detail was fulfilled in Christ, yet if He had not been raised from the dead, prophecy would have been left unfulfilled. Also, if Christ had not been raised from the dead, then He would have been a false prophet, for He foretold the very time He would be in the grave—three days—after which He would be raised from the dead. In fact, when this actually happened, His disciples remembered what Jesus had foretold of Himself. No matter how many good precepts Jesus might have shared with His disciples, He would have still been a false prophet. He would have been a liar had He not risen from the grave, because He said He would do that. Furthermore, His apostles, His followers after Him would have been false prophets also, for they went forth to the four corners of the world, as it were, to share the message of the gospel, an important part of which was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Had Jesus had not been raised from the dead, the Founder of Christianity would be a dead Founder. The world has a lot of religions, and every religion in the world has a founder who has died or who will die. Only one religion has a living Founder, and that is Christianity, for Christ indeed came forth from the dead and conquered death. He is alive forevermore! Had He not risen from the dead, Christianity would be just another world religion following the precepts of some teacher or rabbi, but without any crowning glory in the fact that the Founder is alive forevermore. Thank God we don't have to consider these things, for Christ rose from the dead. One final thought concerning the resurrection of Christ: Had He not been raised from the dead, then you and I could not be raised from the dead, for He was the firstfruits of them that slept. Beloved, our hope of eternal life hinges on the fact that Jesus Christ first conquered death.

If we'll look in the book of I Corinthians, chapter 15, the apostle Paul reasons with the Church of God at Corinth. He says beginning with verse 17, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God,

even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

We see here that the apostle Paul points out to us the fact that without the resurrection our faith is vain. The resurrection is the one event that sealed the entire message of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, He was the firstfruits of all of us. In other words, as Christ has risen from the dead, so shall we rise from the dead at the last day. Beloved, because of the resurrection we have hope of a better life. We have hope of heaven and eternity with God. Christ set the example. He broke the ground, as it were, and was the first to conquer death by coming forth from the grave.

If we'll look a little farther down in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of I Corinthians, we will see that this indeed will come to pass at the last day. Beginning with verse 50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 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."

Every one of us will meet Christ in judgment, for there's coming a day when this world shall come to an end. Every one of us will be ushered into eternity and give an account of our lives. Some take their sins with them and hear, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." But some send their sins on before through the blood and are innocent at the judgment bar of God.

Won't you be one of the wise ones who will take Christ at His Word and repent of your sins and send them on before where God will bury them in the sea of His forgetfulness to remember against you forever no more? The only way for true peace and happiness in this world is to be saved and to live for the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not allow anything to come between your soul and the Savior. It is the greatest mistake that a human being could ever make. Make sure the way is clear, and once you are saved and forgiven, go forth in newness of life and let your light shine for Him, for it is not the one who starts the race that wins the prize, but he who crosses the finish line.

The resurrection is important. It fulfilled prophecy. It sealed the reality and truth of Christ's message. It gave Christianity a living, risen Founder, and it sealed the promise that you and I can know eternal life and be raised incorruptible. The price was paid, but you must yield your life to Him and accept the gospel.

We trust that the resurrection and the reality of the resurrection is forever forged in your heart, and you shall reap the benefits of it. †

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**Grants Mountain, St. Ann**

**July 22-27, 2025, Lord willing**

**Sis. Linette Jutan, Pastor**