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UPLOOK

FEBRUARY • MARCH 2000



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MINISTRY

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RISE & SHINE '99 SAMPLER

Including these
six mouth-watering
conference messages:

- VICTORY NOW
- WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CROSS?
- TEMPORARY WORK PROJECTS
- GIVING AWAY THE GOOD NEWS
- THE JUDGMENT SEAT
- LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

ON THE MOVE



ON THE MOVE

You may have travelled farther than you think. But are you moving His way?

It has been my lot in life to celebrate my birthday just three days into the new year. That means I have little time to recover from the painful exercise of assessing my performance in the last year of the 1900s. I try to soothe my forlorn heart with the hope of a better year ahead when—wham!—the calendar tells me I'm another year older already. And I'm just three days into the new year!

The Old Book is right when it describes life in our little world as “a vapor,” “a shadow,” “a tale that is told.” The scientists speak of nanoseconds and picoseconds—slivers of time that only slice the few short years we are given into more pieces, but cannot serve up any more of the stuff.

You may not realize just how far I've travelled in my, gulp, 49 years on the planet. My Northwest Airlines Frequent Flyer program update just arrived, telling me that since I signed up I have accumulated over 300,000 miles on their airline. But that doesn't include the other airlines, or car travel, or walking for that matter. Yet adding them all together is only the beginning.

The earth spins once on its axis every 23 hours, 56 minutes, and 4.091 seconds. During that time it covers about 7,900 miles. So in my almost half a century, I've covered 141,388,275 miles through the cycle of day and night, give or take a few pirouettes. But there's more.

I also have made 49 return trips around the sun. Each journey hurtles me and my six billion fellow passengers at an average speed of 66,600 miles an hour. Each circuit is 595 million miles long! So, let's see—that makes 29,155,000,000 miles around the sun since I gave my first cry in 1951. Dizzy yet?

Without a moment's vertigo, we find that our whole solar system is also spinning like a small compartment on a giant ferris wheel, the Milky Way. Revolving around the center of our galaxy, at the breathtaking speed of 155 miles per second, I don't expect to make a full revolution before I have to leave compartment earth (one orbit is said to take 250 million years). Just the same, my 49-year's journey adds about 239,679,972,000

miles to the total. If only I could get travel points!

The God who put these heavenly bodies in their place, set them spinning, and sustains them in their courses, is the God who also offers to control our daily movements through time and space as well. *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way”* (Ps. 37:23).

Now let me ask a question. Who is the *he* and to whom does the *his* refer in the latter half of the verse? The New King James, by capitalizing the He, concludes that it is the Lord delighting in the way of the good man. Whatever this verse means, we know that is true

from other passages: *“Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the Lord, but the blameless in their ways are His delight.”* *“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.”* *“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is His delight”* (Prov. 11:20; 12:22; 15:8).

The other side of the coin ought to be just as shiny. When He directs our steps, we find delight in His *“good...acceptable and perfect will”* (Rom. 12:2).

Standing outside on a clear night, we

look up into the velvet sky and see the history of God's dealings with the stars. We see them not as they are but as they have been, under the watchful care of their Maker. And He, in the stillness, would ask us, *“Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?”* (Job 38:31-33).

Good questions! If He does so well directing everything else in the universe, why wouldn't I delight in His way in my life too?

J. B. Nicholson, Jr.



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- 1) by using the envelope included with the January issue each year
- 2) by using the form on our website at:

http://www.uplook.org/magazine_uplook/subscribe/

- 3) by contacting our office at any time, by phone, fax, mail or e-mail.

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The GO in the gospel

Some great opportunities for obeying the Lord's command.



OUTREACH W. VIRGINIA

Are you interested in reaching out to the lost with the gospel? Bible and Life Ministries together with Hillcrest Chapel, in Terra Alta, WV, is organizing an outreach beginning on Wednesday, March 29 through Saturday, April 1. There will be a special effort on Saturday, April 1. Our goal will be to reach 1,000 homes in this town with door-to-door evangelism and tract distribution. The outreach will be followed with a week of nightly gospel meetings with Arnot McIntee.

For more information:

B. Kirk (304) 789-2431
D. Dunlap (813) 996-1053
d.dunlap@juno.com

TEACH & TESTIFY TEAM

A trip to Ireland is being planned for May 15 to June 9. Following four days of orientation and training, the team will be involved in a 17-day program of front-line evangelism and ministering to Irish assemblies. The TnT Team time will conclude with a 3-day tour of Ireland including visits to Powerscourt Estate, Waterford Crystal, Blarney Castle, and the Lakes of Killarney. The all-

inclusive cost of the 24-day program is \$850 US or \$1200 Cdn (does not include airfare).

Ron Hampton
614 Greene Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R2K 0M6
Canada
Tel: (204) 669-6026
Fax: (204) 669-1694
rhampton@mb.sympatico.ca

PARK OF THE PALMS

Park of the Palms Christian Retirement Community & Conference Center, 706 Palms Circle, Keystone Heights, FL, (352-473-4926) look forward to the following guest speakers as a part of their winter program:

Feb. 26-Mar. 3 James Cochrane
Mar. 4-10 Dr. Paul Irwin

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

The believers at Hopedale Bible Chapel (Oakville, ON) extend an invitation to join them for their continuing series of study sessions. Classes run from 9 until 12 noon, including three 40-minute sessions with 15 minute breaks between.

Mar. 18 Randy Amos, NY
Apr. 15 J. B. Nicholson, MI

YOUNG ADULT SERIES

A series of conferences for young adults is being conducted, Lord willing, at the Brandywine Bible Chapel, 2005 Shipley Rd.,

Wilmington, DE. The sessions run from 9:30 until 3:00. Lunch is served. Speakers expected:

Mar. 18 Doug Kazen, WA
Apr. 15 Keith Keyser, PA

Contact:

Tim Bhatt (302) 425-0762
tim_bhhatt@yahoo.com

PREACHING THE WORD

Dr. Peter Aceti (ON) is scheduled to present two talks on Preparing and Preaching the Word of God on March 12 and 19 at 6 PM at Cornerstone Bible Chapel, Dunedin, FL. These talks should be of interest to all Christian workers concerned about improving the public ministry.

Bill Davis (813) 535-4430

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

A conference for women is planned for March 18 at Albany Gospel Chapel (Albany, GA) with speaker Nancy Trogdon (NC). The meetings will begin at 9:30 and end at 3:30. No nursery will be provided.

Contact: Shirley McDaniel
(912) 436-8905 (after 7 PM)

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP DAY

Prospect Bible Chapel, Hartford, CT, plan to hold their annual Hartford Youth Fellowship on March 18 at Watkinson School in West Hartford starting at 9:30 AM and ending at 8:00 PM. Schedule includes ministry, food and fellowship with speaker, Dr. Ken Daughters (IA).

Tom Wood (860) 643-4477
TWoods1231@aol.com

MID-WEST MEN'S WEEK

The second Midwest Men's Bible Study will be held at Lake Geneva Youth Camp in Lake Geneva, WI, March 20-23. This year's study will be the book of James. The discussions will be led by Alan Gamble of Scotland. The study is a joint effort of the camp and Palos Hills Christian Assembly. For a brochure and registration information, contact the camp at (414) 248-5500.

GRAND RAPIDS CONFERENCE

Christians at Northwest Gospel Hall (Grand Rapids, MI) extend an invitation to their annual conference March 24-26 with invited speakers Mike Attwood (GA) and Patrick Long (ON). The meetings will be held at the facilities of White Hills Bible Church (3900 E. Fulton, GR). Accommodations will be provided for out-of-town visitors. Contact: Tim Johnson (616) 791-4179

WORD ALIVE WEEKEND

Assemblies in the Winnipeg, MB, area are hosting a young people's Bible study on Mar. 24-26, DV, with Floyd Schneider (IA). The weekend includes a Friday Word Alive Rally for youth and an all-day Saturday Word Alive Seminar. Visitors are welcome. Contact: Ron Hampton (204) 669-6026 rhampton@mb.sympatico.ca

SPRING BIBLE CONFERENCE

The Christians at Believers Bible Chapel in Rockford, IL, are hosting a Spring Bible conference, April 1-2. Everyone is invited for a time of fellowship and Bible teaching. The expected teacher is Joe Reese (ON). W. Henderson (815) 969-9428 whenderson1@compuserve.com

SPRING CHALLENGE 2000

Dayton, OH will be the place for this weekend meeting (April 7-9) for

high school, college, and career age believers. John Heller (AR) will be the speaker. Contacts: David Price at (513) 759-5264 Mike Gaynier at (937) 427-1559 mgaynier@aol.com.

CONFERENCE IN INDIANA

The saints at Logansport Gospel Chapel (321 Cliff Dr., Logansport, IN) will be holding their annual spring conference on April 8. The expected speaker is Joe Reese (ON). Coffee and donuts at 9:30 with the first session at 10; the second session at 11. Lunch provided. Joe Reese will also speak on April 9. Ralph Garver (219)722-1012 leegar@lneti.com

MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

The annual Michigan Ladies' Missionary Conference is scheduled for April 15 at East Lansing Bible Chapel. Coffee will be served at 9:30, with the first meeting starting at 10. Some of the expected speakers: Hilda Wielenga (recently retired from Japan), Corrine Warke (short terms in China and many years providing hospitality to missionaries on furlough) and four young women who served as house mothers at House of Hope in Bethlehem. Ann Bjorlie (616) 459-3081

SHILOH 2000

A weekend conference for young

adults (18 years old and up) will be held, Lord willing, at Verdugo Pines Bible Camp, in Southern California, April 14-16. The planned speaker is Brian Moore. Cost (two nights/three days, with food and lodging) is \$35. Alex Vasile (909) 393-3328

41st DALLAS AREA CONF.

The Dallas area 41st conference is scheduled for April 14-16. In the will of the Lord, Joe Reese (ON) and Boyd Nicholson (ON) will be ministering the Word of God. The meetings will be held at the Wheatland Bible Chapel, 1303 W. Wheatland Road, in Duncanville, TX. Robert Smith (972) 298-6293

TORONTO EASTER CONF.

A Bible conference sponsored by seven Toronto area assemblies will be held, DV, at Martingrove Collegiate (Martingrove & Eglinton, Etobicoke, ON) on April 21-22. Meetings are scheduled for 2:30 and 6:30 both days, with a special young people's meeting at 8:00 on Friday, April 21. Supper will be served at 4:30 both days. Child care provided. Speakers: Don Welborn (TX), Bill Yuille (ON) and Steve Burnett (ON). Ted Willis (905) 845-0584

CONFERENCE IN LIMON, CO

The Limon Bible Chapel, 385 J Ave., Limon, CO, will hold its annual Bible conference on April 29-30.



VESSELS of HONOR CONFERENCE

A conference for young people (18 and older) is scheduled, Lord willing, for Memorial Day, May 26-29, 2000. Joe Reese (ON), Art Auld (OH) and J. B. Nicholson, Jr. (MI) are invited to speak about the New Testament assembly and the believer's part in it. Seminar speakers include John Heller (AR), Debbie Auld (OH), Warren Henderson (IL) and Jamie Hull (CO).

The conference will be held at Baker University in Baldwin, Kansas. The registration fee is \$125 if you stay on campus or \$75 if you make your own housing arrangements. These prices are effective for registrations received before March 31, 2000. A late fee will be applied after that date. Contact: Jim Lindamood (918) 663-1121 jimlindamood@juno.com

Invited speakers are Charles Fizer (IA) Dan Lindsted (KS), and Ben Parmer (CO). Free motel accommodations and meals provided. Call: (719) 775-9788 or 346-8547

MEN'S RETREAT

The dates for Camp Iroquoia Men's Retreat in the endless mountains of Pennsylvania are Apr. 28-30. Come for great fellowship and a study in the book of Romans.

John MacPherson (570) 967-2432
Tom Freeman
TFREEMAN3@juno.com

CHICAGO AREA CONFERENCE

The Chicago area spring conference will be held, Lord willing, April 28-30 at the Palos Hills Christian Assembly (10600 S. 88th Ave., Palos Hills, IL). The speakers expected are Randy Amos (NY), Keith Keiser (PA), and Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON). Special sessions for children.

Robert Fiebig (708) 448-2552

SENIOR HOUSING & LONG-TERM CARE CONFERENCE

A conference designed for leaders in the ministry of senior housing and

long-term care will be held May 16-18, Lord willing, at Pittsboro Christian Village (NC). The theme, "Using God's Gifts for Him," will center on Christian principles of staff and facility management.

Phone (919) 542-3151

Fax (919) 542-5919

wddew@juno.com

NW WORKERS' CONF.

Men and women interested in the work of the Lord are invited to the annual conference at Lakeside Bible Camp on Whidbey Island in Washington State, May 16-19. This year's speaker is Jonathan Brower (VA). Cost is \$57 per person.

Dean Mills

2500 S. 370th St. #89

Federal Way, WA 98003

dmills616@aol.com

CONFERENCE IN CLAREMONT

Claremont Bible Chapel (432 W. Harrison Ave., Claremont, CA) will host their 9th Annual Spring conference, Lord willing, May 19-21. The invited speakers are Joe Reese (ON) and Jamie Hull (CO). Friday at 7:30 PM; Saturday at 10 AM and 1:00 PM;

Sunday, Lord's Supper at 9:30 AM and ministry at 11 AM and 1:30 PM.
Henry Kamena 909-985-0437
hrkamena@juno.com

MEETING IN LAND O' LAKES

Believers in Land O' Lakes, FL, (North Tampa area) have been praying about the need for an assembly. In November 1997, a door-to-door evangelistic outreach was held. During the outreach 1,000 homes were visited and hundreds of gospel tracts were distributed. The outreach stirred our hearts further concerning God's will for an assembly. We were concerned that the assembly should be a work of God, not the result of our own doing. After continuing in prayer and Bible study, it was decided to begin to meet as an assembly.

The schedule of meetings for the Land O' Lakes Bible Chapel is:
Sunday, Breaking of Bread at 9:00 AM, Bible Hour at 10:30. Wednesday, Prayer and Bible Study at 7:00 PM.
David Dunlap (813) 996-1053

FELLOWSHIP IN SOUTHPORT

A few believers in the area of Southport, NC, have been meeting in a home and would welcome visitors or those already living in the area.
Cliff and Mamie Schaefer
1900 Raeford Rd.
Southport, NC 28461
(910) 845-3522

IRELAND HERITAGE TOUR

Mark Kolchin and Mike Attwood will be conducting an 11-day assembly heritage tour, Lord willing, from July 3-13. Places to be visited significant to assembly heritage include Powerscourt Estate, Trinity College, Dublin and Wicklow, where J. N. Darby ministered as well as other sites. Plans have been made to meet with the assembly in Cork, plus two days at the Northfield conference in Newcastle, N. Ireland, where Joe

100 YEARS of GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

On May 1, 1900, Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Pell, Sr., moved into a house at 817 North Ave., NE, Grand Rapids, MI. It became the home of the Pell family of ten children for the following one hundred years—a home which has been an open house to all the Lord's people and many have availed themselves of it. The remaining three members now invite you to share a celebration with them on Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, 2000.

Those who have visited us in the past know there is ample room for all who would like to come. A tent will be pitched for convenience. Lord willing, the order of the day will be as follows: From 2:30-4:30 PM—a homecoming for relatives and friends; a finger-food smorgasbord fellowship will be provided. From 5:00-6:30 PM—a light supper will be available to all who stay for the evening event. At 7:00 PM—a neighborhood hymn sing for all, ending with a word in the gospel. Come if you can and magnify the Name of the Lord with us. At any rate, please pray that this day may be to the glory of God, and a great memorial in many lives, even to the salvation of many souls.

The Pells at 817 North Ave.

Reese (ON) is scheduled to speak. Meals and deluxe accommodations.

Mark Kolchin
P. O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
mkolchin@juno.com

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

The Chicago Missionary Guest Apartments in Glen Ellyn, IL, are a ministry of the Chicago Missionary Study Class. The purposes of the apartments are to provide a home for Chicago area missionaries on furlough, and a place to stay for other missionaries passing through the area. There is a need for a couple to be live-in managers of the CMGA. The managers handle hospitality, minor maintenance, yard work and reservations. In return, they occupy one of the four-room apartments, rent free. Anyone interested in more details, contact:

Bob Marshall (847) 524-6675 or
Bill Warke (708) 599-1389

EYE NEED HELP

Dr. Mike Gaynier, an ophthalmologist, practicing outside Dayton, OH is looking for a like-minded Christian to associate with him in the practice that the Lord has given him. He is looking for either an ophthalmologist or optometrist. If you are interested (or know someone who might be) please call:

(800) 900-EYES (office)
(937) 427-1559 (home)
mgaynier@aol.com

ARABIC LITERATURE

Malcolm and Hannah Coombes publish Emmaus Bible Courses and gospel literature in the Arabic language. They would like to make their material available:

Malcolm and Hannah Coombes
N° 6; Lot. "Les Jonquilles d'or"
84100 Orange France
MCoombes1@compuserve.com

COMMENDATION

Alan and Dolly Christensen

The Christians gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at the Jefferson City Bible Chapel (Jefferson City, MO) commend to the Lord's work at Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp Alan and Dolly Christensen. Both Alan and Dolly have faithfully served the Lord's people in the Midwest for many years and are in active fellowship in the Jefferson City assembly.

REPORT FROM THE FIELD

Fred and Jenny Kosin write from Darlington, SC: "The Lord continues to send us on missions of mercy seeking to serve missionaries around the world. This year marks the 16th year of traveling, offering pastoral care to the Lord's servants. This spring (from March to May) we expect to be in South Africa for ministry to the assemblies in Capetown, Plettenberg Bay, Kareedouw, Port Shepstone, Pietermaritzburg, Durban, and Johannesburg. These opportunities will be to all races in a struggling South Africa. We desire the prayers of the Lord's people for this period of service in many different venues."

SEEKING FELLOWSHIP

Homer Powell, Carnesville, GA, is seeking to meet with other Christians in his area. Contact:
Homer Powell
PO Box 222
Carnesville, GA 30521
(706) 384-5546

WITH THE LORD

John Williams

John Williams of Kansas City, KS devoted his life to the Lord's work, first in evangelistic preaching on street corners in Kansas City, Topeka, and numerous small towns in the Midwest. He was a faithful

minister of God's Word, publisher, businessman, and long-time Sunday School teacher. John and his wife, Rosa, were in fellowship at Carriage Hills Gospel Chapel.



He touched lives throughout the world for more than 40 years by publishing and distributing Christian literature through Walterick Publishers and the Christian Book Store in Kansas City. He and his brother Raymond taught Hebrew and Greek for many years to all who were interested. Because of John's generous sharing of both financial resources and time, the lives of many young people were impacted for the Lord.

On December 13, 1999, after a struggle with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease, John was called home to be with the Lord.

Audrey Aitken

After only a few months of poor health, Audrey Aitken slept into the presence of the Lord on October 13, 1999. Audrey was the wife of Clifford Smith, a full-time worker in Ontario during the 1940's and 1950's. He predeceased her in 1954. She remarried in 1955. She and her husband John Aitken spent many years involved with children's Bible Clubs and DVBS programs. John also travelled throughout Ontario in itinerant ministry, until his homecall in 1977. More recently, Audrey reached out to many people in her neighborhood in one-on-one witness as well as hosting Neighborhood Bible Studies. She will be lovingly missed by her two sons, step-children and grandchildren.



Sam Robinson of CMML



Rise & Shine '99

The conference is over but the blessing goes on.



The Hyatt Regency Cincinnati



Sisters in the Lord

“The conference in Cincinnati was so uplifting.”

“We want to thank all who were involved for a wonderful conference. It’s a delight to see the excellent results of good pre-planning, organization and aggressive scheduling. At first it seemed like there were a lot of elective sessions but after seeing the wide range of attendees, I can understand the need for such diversi-

“I want to take the opportunity to thank you very much for all your effort in making this conference possible. I’ve attended the past two *Rise Up and Build* conferences and was truly blessed through them.

May the Lord richly reward you for all your work!” —Priscilla Masuello

“All of the messages I heard touched my heart and strengthened my walk with the Lord. This conference truly had an impact on me and I’m praying it did the same for others. Words cannot express how impressed I was at the number of people who attended...I was so amazed at the number of brothers

and sisters in Christ that were there to learn more about our Saviour and how He works in our lives...” —Rod Belyea

“I really liked it so much I didn’t want to leave! Try to make it longer!”



Evening hymn sings



ty. The hotel was comfortable, the food very good, the book store the best I’ve seen at any conference.” —Jerry Elliott

“Very inspiring to me and thrilling to see so many saints on fire to pursue evangelism by living the life...”

refreshing, uplifting, and reconstituting... We come from all over, yet we share a common loyalty to the truth of the NT assembly... Another chief benefit is seeing those who are my partners in this work of God. We are all working the same agenda in our assemblies, and



Seminars galore

“Many of the messages had a certain point that was just for my life. I’m glad that we have such a great opportunity to hear godly, well-studied men whom I could tell love the Lord. Thank you so much for your work in putting this conference together. It has been a real blessing to me and I have found so much that I need to work on in my life.”



General sessions

Photos by David Robins and John Nicholson



Giving away the good news

The best message. The greatest need. Unlimited opportunities.

I believe that the Lord has endowed women with a special ability to share the gospel. Most women are people-oriented. We build relationships easier than men do. Women often have children in their homes and under their nurture many more hours than men do, with the opportunity to teach them the gospel and the ways of God. We usually talk much more freely than men. Women tend to be more compassionate and loving.

Evangelism needs to be done. God desires that all be saved (2 Pet. 3:9). That's His heart, that's His plan. The love of Christ constrains us and compels us to share this good news, and each one of us has that solemn responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission, to go and tell. Each of us will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and give account of our lives. When we realize that heaven and hell are at stake, then we must give away the good news—and we have a limited time to do it.

Sadly, personal evangelism is not being done today the way it should be. I talk to a lot of women and some of them say, "Well, I've made some attempts to tell others about Jesus, and come away discouraged." Others tell me, "I'll stuff envelopes and lick stamps, but don't ask me to tell anybody else about Jesus. Let the men do it. I'll be a supporter." Do you feel that way? "I'm too timid," "I'm too shy," "I don't have the gift of evangelism," "I don't know enough about the Bible."

If we look at witnessing and sharing Christ with others as a burden instead of a joy and a privilege, we

will find it drudgery and will not be very effective.

In preparation for this seminar, I asked possibly 75 women why we don't witness more than we do. The Number 1 answer? Fear! Fear of rejection. Fear of failure. Fear of offending others. It's not easy to tell another person she is going to hell.

The second reason was, "I don't know how to begin a conversation; I just don't know how."

Evangelism is hard work. It involves sacrifice, time, and a lot of prayer. You may have to sow the seed, or you may be watering someone else's seed. You might get to reap it, or someone else might reap it. Evangelism is hard work, but it *can* be done and the Lord will enable you to do it. The key is, we need to be prepared. We always need to be thinking of those that we come in contact with. They fit into one of two categories: they are either lost or they're saved. Where do they stand?

When I meet you for the first time, the first thing that should go through my mind is, Are you a Christian? Are you saved or not? We need to

be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We need to be aware that God wants that other person to be saved, too. We are working with the Holy Spirit to bring the gospel to them. Don't you want to be a part of what He's doing? It is a joy and a



privilege to share the good news and to give it away.

In 2 Corinthians 4:7, Paul uses earthen vessels as a metaphor. Gideon used them as lamp shades and the light was inside. Remember that the light didn't shine until they smashed those clay pitchers or jars. The same is true for us. Until we're willing to be broken, that light is going to flicker. It's not really going to shine.

If the gospel is hidden, it's hidden to those who are perishing (2 Cor. 4:3). That's serious. People are perishing because we're hiding our little lights! Let us shine for Him!

Sometimes a question is asked of me: Which is more important in witnessing, my life or my words? That's like asking which wing of an airplane is more impor-

tors, my friends, my workmates? If it's not now, when will I do it? What am I waiting for?

Let's go to the Scriptures and look at a few biblical examples of women who had a role in sharing this good news. You will see that there is room for every kind of person in this great work of evangelism:

- A prostitute—Rahab (Josh. 2:12-13, 17-19; 6:23, 25). *"Gather to yourself in the house your father, mother, brothers and all the household."*
- A child—Naaman's servant girl (2 Ki. 5:3, 15, 17). *"I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria!"*
- A mother-in-law—Naomi (Ruth 1:16-18). *"Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God..."*

*Asking which is more important, my life or my works, is like asking **which wing on a plane is more important.***

tant, the right or left? Both are essential. You can't do without either of them. You need to live that clean, pure life before the Lord, but we also have to verbalize the gospel. It's a sin to be silent.

Evangelism puts a sparkle into your life. Its enthusiasm is contagious. A friend of mine puts it this way: What more exciting place can you be than in the "birthing room of eternity"?

The explosion of knowledge, space travel, communications, and computers has not made our concern for the gospel obsolete. You can look at this new millennium as a clean slate—nothing has been written on it. You can start brand new in a new year and a new millennium. Forget your failures, and grasp this new opportunity. Say "yes" with a renewed vigor to give out the gospel and share Christ. We women can make a difference in this new millennium, and you're a part of it if you belong to the Lord Jesus. When we realize the message that we have, the value of a soul, the blessedness of heaven, and the reality of hell, we dare not fail to be witnesses for Christ.

We're not all evangelists, but we are all witnesses. Every one has a different personality, different talents, circumstances, and gifts. There is an old saying that I'd like to use to stir your heart, "If not me, then who? If not now, then when?" We have this treasure in earthen vessels. If it's not me, who *is* going to tell my neigh-

• A queen—Esther (Esther 8:17). *"And many among the peoples of the land became Jews..."*

• An old widow—Anna (Lk. 2:36-38). *"She continued to speak of Him..."*


• An ethnic racial outcast—the woman at Sychar's well (Jn. 4:29-30, 39). *"From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified."*

• A mother and grandmother—Eunice and Lois (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15). *"From a child you have known the holy Scriptures that make you wise unto salvation..."*

• A formerly demon-possessed woman—Mary Magdalene (Mt. 28:1, 7; Mk. 16:9-10; Jn. 20:15-18). *"Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons... Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead..."*

• A businesswoman—Lydia (Acts 16:14-15). *"...she urged us to come into her house and stay. She prevailed upon us..."*

• A housewife—Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19). *"Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus."*

If you go out into each day with a heart that is prayerful for the lost, willing to be used, filled with the love of Christ, and ready with a few gospel verses, the Lord will use you for His glory, and you will find joy in obeying and serving Him. 

SHADOWS OF CHRIST

From a book by the same name authored by John R. Caldwell (1839-1917)

Sin had interposed such a barrier between God and man that to man, in the condition in which he is found by nature, God is not only unseen but unknown. Hence at Athens, the very center of human wisdom, an altar was erected "to the unknown God" (Acts 17:23). To know God is the highest and deepest of all knowledge, and the wisdom of the Greek only brought him to the infinite unknown. There he stood, after all his searching, conscious that whatever knowledge he had acquired, he knew not God. But God *has* revealed Himself in many wonderful ways.

CREATION

The invisible things of God (Rom. 1:20) are clearly seen in creation, "even His eternal power and Godhead." That which could be known of God men cared not to know, and, instead of acknowledging their ignorance, they professed to be wise. But God's purpose to reveal Himself was not to be frustrated. The revelation of Himself is of interest to a wider circle than to man or this world. When earth was created, there were unfallen beings who discerned in its creation His eternal power and Godhead. And as they beheld a fair creation spring into being, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Even fallen man might have apprehended this from creation, but he would not. He "did not like to retain God in his knowledge," hence the science (falsely so-called) of the present day doubts if there be a God at all, denies creation, and substitutes a theory of evolution by natural laws for God. But after all, creation with all its glory, tells only of His power and Godhead.

PROVIDENCE

Providence joins the voice of creation in telling us that God is good. He left not Himself without a witness

in that He did them good, "filling [their] hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). He makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and His rain to fall on the just and the unjust. Thus again He partially reveals Himself, going further than to show His power and Godhead. He gives a little glimpse of His mercifulness and goodness. To this, man is also blind. He glorifies Him not as God, neither is thankful (Rom. 1:21).

Yet there was much more in God which was still unrevealed. Deep in the bosom of God was hid the unopened fountain of grace.

GRACE

To unseal this fountain, to display this wondrous attribute in its fullness, to show it in harmony with all His other attributes, was from eternity the purpose of God. It was before creation, for before the foundation of the world the Lamb was fore-ordained for sacrifice, so that creation and the fall are only so many stages towards the great platform whereon God was about to reveal Himself. Herein lies the ultimate design of the stupendous mystery of the incarnation, the sacrifice, the resurrection, and the glorifying of the Son of God. To save a lost people was a purpose worthy of God, but even this is not the ultimate design. Rather is it "that in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). It is the

opening of the very heart of God, that He, the Unknown, might be known—that, being known, He might be loved with an ever-deepening love, and praised with a fuller joy by every unfallen and redeemed being.

Oh, the deep, deep meaning of that word uttered by the only One who had fully known God, who knew Him by dwelling from eternity in His very bosom. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true



God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (Jn. 17:3). It is life eternal to know God; not to know Him is death. It has pleased God, therefore, to make Himself known in the person of His Son.

INCARNATION

He is "*the brightness of [God's] glory, and the express image of His person*" (Heb. 1:3). "*God manifest in the flesh*" (1 Tim. 3:16). So perfectly, so accurately represented to us, that in answer to Philip's request, "*show us the Father;*" He could say, "*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father*" (Jn. 14:9). But the natural man does not have the capacity to comprehend even the perfect manifestation which God has given of Himself in His Son. "*He was in the world...and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*" (Jn. 1:10-11). "*Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*" (1 Cor. 2:8). Those only recognized Him who were taught of the Father. It has been remarked that the flesh of Christ was that which veiled and yet revealed the Godhead. It was a veil so thick that the carnal eye could not penetrate it. The natural man only saw in Him "*a root out of a dry ground,*" a man with visage marred, the son of Mary and Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth.

But through that veil of flesh there shone with holy, tempered radiance a glory such as faith could discern. "*And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*" (Jn. 1:14). To the opened eye, He was God manifest in the flesh, Immanuel, God with us.

The WORD and the SPIRIT

But the Word made flesh is no longer on earth. We see Him not, though we love Him. In the meantime, there is given to us the written Word and the Holy Spirit of God, to take of the things that are Christ's, and show them unto us (see Jn. 16:13-14). We are thus not left without a Comforter. In fact, it was expedient for the disciples that Christ should go away, that the other Comforter should come—through whose teaching and anointing they should know more of Christ than had He remained with them on earth. And it is through the written Word that the Spirit of God ministers Christ to the souls of His people, for therein has God with infinite skill treasured up for us His Christ, giving us every line of His character, every detail of His work, His sufferings, and His glory, every relationship that He bears to God, to His saints, and to the sinner.

No mere historical record could accomplish this; no biography ever attempted it—the idea is God's. To effect this, He has therefore resorted to a great variety of methods.

There is the purely historical record of *the four Gospels*, giving us Christ as seen by man among men, His outward life as He passed before the world and His disciples.

Then there are *the Prophetic Scriptures* of the Old Testament, to which the book of Revelation in the New might almost be regarded as an appendix and a key. These give the official glories of Christ as the Heir, and a glimpse here and there at the sufferings through which He acquired the glory.

Distinct from these stands *the Book of Psalms*, where we are brought, as it were, to listen to the very breathings, to feel the very throbbings of the heart of Christ in the midst of those sorrows, and temptations, and agonies, that were relieved by no human sympathy. This is the way God has taken to lead His loved and highly-privileged children into a nearness and intimacy with the only-begotten Son, into which no biography, however detailed, not even personal acquaintance, could have introduced them. To this class belong the book of Lamentations and the Song of Solomon—the one giving the sorrows and the other the joys, that found no outward expression among men, and therefore could not find a place in the history of His outward walk as given in the Gospels.

Finally there are the types and shadows where Christ is set forth so vividly, ages before He appeared on the earth, that no reasonable and unbiased mind could come to any other conclusion than that these overshadowings are indeed divine. These constitute a veritable picture gallery of Christ, in which every aspect of His work and His personal fitness for it, of His atonement and His priestly intercession, are abundantly unfolded.

Doubtless there is room in such enquiries for mere natural ingenuity to work. It is well to watch against this, and rather to come short of the full understanding of a type for a time than to press into its interpretation that which was not in the mind of the divine Author. And while unhallowed curiosity and the desire of the fleshly mind to intrude into things that are hidden from it has its bounds assigned and its rebukes ministered in the Word of God (Ex. 19:21; Num. 4:20; 1 Sam. 6:19), there are, nevertheless, the inquirings in His temple to which He delights to respond (Ps. 27:4). The desire to look into the things that are revealed, whether in angels or in saints, is well pleasing to God.





What happened at the cross?

It happened in God's heart before ever a sinner needed it.

If you had one son in whom you found unspeakable delight, would it not be normal as a father to want more like him? So it is with the Father who has purposed to have a vast family of human sons transformed to be like His only begotten Son. It is evident that the Father makes all His plans with His Son in view. The Father intends that in all things the Son shall have the pre-eminence.

The Son lives to reveal the Father, and in doing so brings glory to His Father. Likewise, the Spirit speaks not of Himself, but dedicates His activity to the revealing of the Son and to bring to fruition the work for the Father and Son.

It is the inner attitude and purpose of selfless giving, serving, and sharing the divine rule of action which has always been the expression of the Godhead. This is the principle revealed in the cross. It may come as a surprise to some when we suggest that the cross has been an eternal principle with God. This Cross-Principle of the Father is demonstrated by the Son, and interpreted by the Spirit. If the cross tells out the heart of God, then the story of the cross is the story of God's eternal love and generosity.

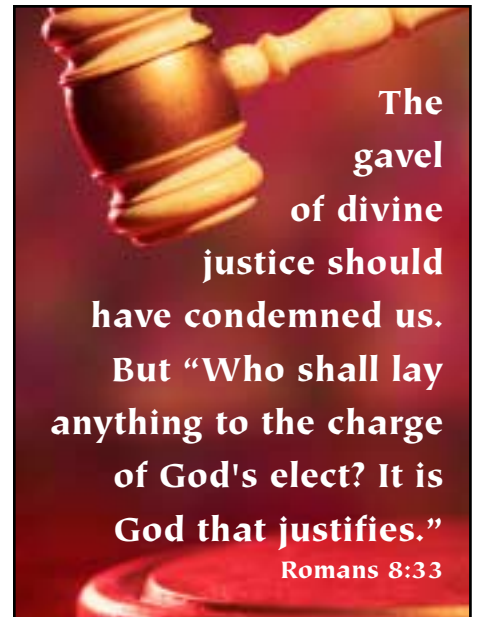
God deals with the human race through two representative men, Adam and Christ. Our natural beginning can be traced to Adam; our new beginning is in Christ. So this is how God sees the two family trees—Adam's family tree, and Christ's. In Adam's tree, we have death, sin, the law, and the flesh. In Christ's tree (the Tree of Life) we have righteous-

ness, love, life, and the ministry of the Spirit (Rom. 5:19, 21).

GOD'S REMEDY for MAN

At last we have arrived at the highway where man can begin to realize God's magnificent plan. God uses the blood of Christ and His cross in a remedial way by which He intends to bring us into life. By means of the cross, He can cut us loose from our old natural resources that we might live by the life of Another. Naturally, from God's standpoint, man had divine life from the moment he was born from above. But just as God revealed the value of the cross to reconcile and forgive, and the value of our union in death with Christ for our deliverance, even so it must come as a revelation that we are cut off from the old source of natural life and that we are to live and move by the life-resources of Another. Not only are we united with Him in the likeness of His death but also in the likeness of His resurrection: *"Being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more shall we be saved [daily delivered from sin's dominion] through His resurrection."* The Christian life is not a "changed life," it is an "exchanged life" (Gal. 2:20), *"I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."* This life is not something we ourselves can produce. It is actually living by the life of Another.

Now through union in death and resurrection, we also receive a new mind, His mind. Instead of being ruled by a carnal mind, which works death, we now have a spiritual mind, which means life and peace. We get



The
gavel
of divine
justice should
have condemned us.
But "Who shall lay
anything to the charge
of God's elect? It is
God that justifies."

Romans 8:33

to know and experience this living in "His resurrection Life" as we live in fellowship with the "Living Christ." He is always abiding in us, putting forth His mighty resurrection-energy through us to fulfill the Father's desire. Yet this life-union only works as we abide in Him.

One who embraces the Cross-Principle and allows it to accomplish its full work is constantly energized by divine power. Such a demonstration in the lives of believers is more than a moral influence. Paul says, *"The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is the power of God."* Multitudes of God's people are praying for power, but few realize God's only reason for enduing His children with power is that they might give their life for Him. Many have missed the real meaning of Acts 1:8, *"Ye shall*

receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be witness unto Me." The word for witness is *martus*, meaning "martyr." Too often our attention has been focused on power to do some bold exploit, to move multitudes, to become great deliverers. Yes, there will be exploits, and multitudes will be moved, but the deeper truth is that we have a divine energy to love not our own lives even unto death. The words "witness" and "martyr" were once interchangeable because witnesses allowed no circumstance to silence their testimony concerning their Lord Jesus.

Would we desire to know this divine energy in our lives? Observe Stephen who, "*full of faith and power;*" did "*great wonders and signs*" (Acts 6:8). He crowned his testimony by laying down his life for the One who had died for him. The power of the cross was manifested as much in the glowing face of Stephen as in the words of his message, which reached out and laid hold of Saul of Tarsus. This persecutor of the Church became the apostle who above all others demonstrated the glorious message of the cross, and the Christ of the cross.

The PLACE of GOD'S PLEASURE

The position of our Lord is always central. From the Tree of Life in Eden, to the Lamb upon the Throne of Glory, the positional emphasis is invariably "*in the midst.*" John saw Him in the midst of the lampstands in his apocalyptic vision. Even in death there was no exception, for on either side there was one, and Jesus was in the middle.

Jesus was ever cognizant of the end to which He would come. He thus informed His disciples when He began to teach them (Mk. 8:31):

1. The Son of man must suffer
2. The Son of man must be rejected
3. The Son of man must be killed
4. The Son of man must be raised

The cross was the beginning, not the end, of Christ's teaching. His teaching continues with the freshness, beauty and force which it possessed coming from His lips when He spoke as no other man ever spoke.

The cross may be pondered with great profit. By the term "the cross" we mean not the physical instrument of death, but the work which was so gloriously accomplished thereon. Nowhere do the rays of divine light beam with more brilliance than when they focus on the cross of Calvary. If the cross with all its ignominy was the cost of our redemption, and since the Lord Jesus came to pay the ransom price then it was necessary that He should be impaled on that cross. As we stand at the

foot of the cross by faith, we remind our hearts, That was the death I deserved to die. It really was that bad!

One who dies by crucifixion dies a thousand deaths; the agony is indescribable. His beard was plucked; His body was lashed; His head was bruised; His side was pierced; His heart was broken... How can anyone question the great love with which He loves us?

If the rigors of the cross defy adequate description, what shall we say concerning its rescue? The cross bridged the chasm between the Almighty Creator and His alienated creatures. It is the dividing point between life and death, between hope and despair, between heaven and hell. Through the cross we have sweet peace, complete pardon, joyful prospects and eternal provision.

Isaiah 53:10 tells us, "*It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*" How do we understand such words? Our soul is subdued, and our heart melts as the fact looms up in the horizon of divine revelation. The context at least begins to explain how the cross is the place of God's pleasure:

And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth... Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him... to put Him to grief... to make His soul an offering for sin... He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

All this was fulfilled with the Father's full approval. And He who poured out His life amid the shame and sorrow of Calvary shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. At the cross it was grief; at the throne it will be glory. At the cross it was pain; at the throne it will be pleasure. At the cross it was redemption; at the throne it will be reception.

For us the new birth is an introduction into a new sphere. We experience the fullness of love, "*Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" True love suffers long and is kind. It leaps to the opportunity of serving, and welcomes the privilege of suffering if need be, so that benefit for others may be obtained.

On that first day of the week, the cross was empty; the tomb was empty. Where is He now? "*And behold... in heaven... in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb...*" Satisfied and glorified, the Conqueror of Calvary awaits the full harvesting of the fruit that shall come from the one Corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died that He might not abide alone.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

CAN IT BE TRUE?

Jane Fonda, Hollywood actress and liberal political activist, made the news headlines across the United States in January when she and her media mogul husband, Ted Turner, separated after eight years of marriage. Christians were surprised when reports emerged that Jane Fonda had become a born-again believer, and that her new-found faith may have added to the strains in the marriage. The internet and other news sources have published conflicting details about Ms. Fonda's conversion and she has not yet made any public statement. One report in *World* magazine says that she began attending a Bible study at Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta a year and a half ago, but the media frenzy over her separation and conversion has kept her away from the Bible study recently. She continues to meet in private with Christian friends. Pray for her.

LOVE NEVER FAILS

A year ago Graham Staines and his two sons were burned to death in Orissa, India. A courageous act of forgiveness by his widow stunned this predominantly Hindu nation last year. But Gladys Staines has discovered that the powerful act of forgiving the killers continues to reverberate throughout this nation of 1 billion. Recently police in India arrested a man wanted for the killings. Dara Singh had evaded police for more than a year, but a tip resulted in his arrest in a remote village at dawn Feb. 1. Singh also is suspected in the murders of a Muslim merchant and a Catholic priest.

THE DISTANCE IS GROWING

The Church of England will end its age-old policy of not allowing remarriage after divorce, a church report recommended today. The official policy stated that a person could only remarry after their original spouse had died. However a committee of bishops has recommended that a second marriage should be permitted in cases where there is "a clear

distance of time, of local setting and of relationship" with the previous spouse. —*DayWatch*

TURNING UP THE HEAT

Over 200 million Christians now face intense persecution for their faith and over 250 million undergo some form of discrimination, with Communist governments and some Islamic regimes being the most flagrant offenders. The problem is rapidly spreading around the globe.

An updated list of countries that fail to allow religious freedom was released in January 2000. It's called the Open Doors' World Watch list, comprising of countries where Christians face the most persecution. Open Doors says Saudi Arabia has the distinction, unfavorable as it is, of being the most repressive regime in the world for the Christian faith. They have topped this list for several years in a row.

Afghanistan is second, followed by China, Chechnya and Sudan. Eighty-two other countries made the list. Local churches can use this as a prayer tool to remember those who

are in bonds for Christ's sake. The entire list, along with information on each country is available at www.opendoors.org. Below are the 20 most restrictive countries and the estimated number of Christians:

1	Saudi Arabia	600,000
2	Afghanistan	2,500
3	China	60,000,000
4	Chechnya	200
4	Sudan	4,800,000
6	Yemen	5,000
7	Comoro Islands	200
8	Maldives	250
9	Iran	200,000
10	Morocco	25,000
11	Tunisia	10,000
12	Libya	140,000
13	Vietnam	7,500,000
14	Egypt	8,000,000
15	Turkmenistan	60,000
16	North Korea	100,000
17	Pakistan	3,250,000
18	Laos	50,000
19	Bhutan	5,000
20	Kuwait	75,000

WHERE ARE THE GIRLS?

One reason for declining birth rates in many areas of the world is wholesale abortion. In some places, cultures with a bias for males use female feticide and sex-determination tests to decrease the number of girls. China, for instance, has far more males than females. In India, since 1994, the government has had a law on the books that forbids doctors from telling parents the sex of their unborn children. Too many developing girls were being aborted. Sadly, the practice continues.

Now, however, the Indian Medical Association has joined governmental bodies and non-government organizations in the fight against killing females. An estimated 2 million female feticides are reported every year in India. In Bihar and Rajasthan, there are only about 600 females to 1,000 males. —*Pulse*

“ LORD , TEACH US TO PRAY ”

WHY MUST WE PRAY?

Because God Works by Prayer

1. Co-operatively with His People

- In the past (Dan. 9:2)
- In the present (Mt. 9:38)
- In the future (Mt. 24:20)

2. Objectively through His People

- Abraham—for Lot’s preservation
- Moses—for God’s people
- Daniel—for God’s purpose

3. Subjectively in His People

- Fullness of joy (Jn. 16:24)
- The peace of God (Phil. 4:6-7)
- New strength (Isa. 40:31)
- Changed lives (2 Cor. 3:18)
- Our own needs met (Job 42:10)

WHY WE FAINT IN PRAYER

- Laziness: a lack of personal discipline
- Carelessness: due to slow erosion
- Weariness: giving up in exhaustion

1. The answer—not AS expected

- Patience—tribulation (Rom. 5:8)
- Miracle—call to obey (Jn. 11:39)
- Closer walk—the Cross (Mt. 16:2)
- Great blessing—great testing (Eph. 3:16)

2. The answer—not WHEN expected

- Satan opposes mightily (Dan. 10:13)
- God wills differently (Lk. 11:9)
- We desire wrongly (Jas. 4:3)
- Must ask believingly (1 Jn. 5:14-15) (prayers of faith & hope, Rom. 4:18)
- God resisted stubbornly (Jn. 5:40)

WHAT IS PRAYER?

God’s Word Describes Prayer

- An activity of the mind
Problem: lack of concentration
- A movement of the spirit
Problem: no appreciation
- An emotion of the soul
Problem: mere repetition
- An appeal for help
Problem: no petition
- An expression of the heart
Problem: unhealthy heart condition

God’s Word Distinguishes Prayer

- The sudden prayer:
prayer & fear (Mt. 14:30)
- The sacrificial prayer:
prayer & fasting (Mt. 17:21)
- The steadfast prayer:
prayer & fighting (Eph. 6:12)

Boyd Nicholson

❖ Tapes of a seminar on Worship at Rise Up & Build ’97 are available from Uplook Ministries.

FORMS OF PRAYER

- Worship: ministering to the heart of God (see ❖ at lower right)
- Praise: (to bless—εὐλογέω) (see Ps. 107, the OT commentary on the praise of God)
- Thanksgiving: (Rom. 1:21) “Neither were thankful”
- Confession: (ὁμολογέω) (1 Jn. 1:9) preceded by acknowledgement (Ps. 51:3)
- Supplication: expressing a desire (Jn. 17:5) “glorify Thou Me...”
- Intercession: standing between someone’s need and God (Jas. 5:16)
- Advocacy (Job 42:10): “The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends”

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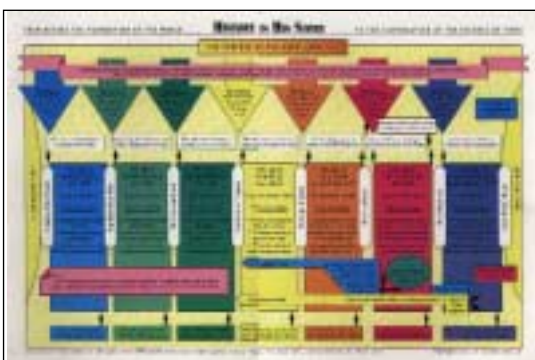
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Victory for you now

Is this reality or illusion?

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12:1).

YIELD YOUR BODY

Why does Paul talk about yielding our *bodies*? Because our bodies are the battlefield in spiritual warfare. We read time and again in the epistles (particularly Romans) about our members, of the law that works in them, and the problems we have with them. But they are not throwing Christians to the lions today, at least not in Western countries. Elsewhere Christians are being savagely treated, but obscenities like that rarely happen in our lands.

The field of conflict here has just moved to another level. The greatest theater of conflict today is in the mental and emotional regions. I have discovered personally, and in dealing with others, that most of the problems Christians experience today have to do with conflicts in the mind. So the first thing we must do is present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. By this we recognize His right to rule our bodies and everything they contain—our minds, our emotions, our desires—and the changes necessary to conform us to the image of Christ.

DON'T be ENTANGLED

Next, we must not become entangled in anything that would hinder our ability to respond promptly to the Lord's direction. I take this key to victory from 2 Timothy 2:4 where

the apostle reminds us that if a person is a soldier, he should not become entangled in civilian affairs. He should not have any priority in his life other than his allegiance to his commander on the field. If you joined the army, I dare say when it came to the day of the battle you wouldn't say, "Listen, I'm sorry but I've got something else on." So it is with our spiritual conflict—we must be available.

Being available for the Lord is a real challenge today. Various areas compete for our time. The sports field seems to be taking a great number of the young people today. Please don't misunderstand me—I don't think there's anything wrong with having good physical exercise, but when people know all about the players on the big teams and can't tell the names of the judges of Israel, something has gone wrong. When there's a greater knowledge of the world than knowledge of the Word, something is out of sync. We must not become entangled by these things.

One of the biggest areas of entanglement these days is the business world. Perhaps some of you heard my personal experience at a previous seminar in Kentucky. I became entangled to the point that I was not able to respond to the Lord's requirements in my life. The business had



me; I was in bondage.

Now there's a difference between having a job and being entangled. The business world today will entangle anyone with abilities. They'll try to tie them down. You'll never consciously say, "I'm becoming entangled." It just happens little by little.

Remember the story of Gulliver. While he was sleeping, little people came and tied him with these little cords. They seemed insignificant in themselves, but before long the giant couldn't move. He was entangled. So we must watch the little things that would keep us from being available for the Lord.

Young people with ability, please make sure that you place priority on your availability to the Lord, and not your business life.

ENDURE HARDSHIP

Be prepared for inconvenience.

“Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Paul talks to Timothy that way. I’ve watched some films of the World Wars and you see these people lying in the mud. They’re sleeping there, and they’re eating there. The rain is up to their knees, and they’re fighting over the edge of the trench—it’s hardness.

If you’re going to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, if you’re going to win the battle, you’ll have to be prepared to endure some hardness. People sometimes approached the Lord Jesus and said things like, “I’m going to follow You.” Sounds good, doesn’t it? Yet the Lord Jesus often appeared almost to be blocking them. He said things like, “You want to follow Me? That’s good; but keep in mind that foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but I have no place to lay My head.” That changed a lot of people’s minds. We must be prepared for inconvenience.

Move your life out of the comfort zone into the combat zone. That’s what we often have to do. Have you ever seen on your thermometer at home, “Comfort Zone”? I think that’s where we all like our lives to be—that’s where I like mine to be, anyway. But we will never have victory if we are not in the battle.

Accept things that God has placed upon you, which He will not remove (2 Cor. 12:7, 10). Evidently Paul had a physical handicap. He asked the Lord three times to take it away and the Lord said, “No, Paul.” That is contrary to the modern view that everyone should be healed. After Paul had accepted, finally, that the Lord wasn’t going to do anything about his condition, he

said, *“Most gladly will I glory in my infirmity, because when I am weak He is strong.”* The Lord was providing a theater for demonstrating the power and glory of God in his body, and the pain and the anguish that he was going through. We need to learn to endure rather than escape when under trial.

KNOW the ENEMY

The Lord Jesus said that a king would never go into battle without finding out the strength of the other side. We have to know our enemy. The first thing we want to say here is, our enemies are not in the physical realm, but in the spiritual realm. Ephesians 6:12 says, *“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers...against spiritual wickedness.”* Our enemies are in the spiritual realm. We also face a trinity of evil: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The devil is *the enemy against us*. The world is *the enemy around us*, the system where people are trying to be happy without God. We are not talking about the people in the world, or the planet on which we live. We are using the term “world” in the sense that it relates to that godless system that has been built up around us.

Then we have the flesh, *the enemy within us*. I think we all know this enemy pretty well. What we must realize is that conversion does not change our old nature. We still have the same old rotten nature within us. It never was converted. Conversion gives us a new nature which lives in conflict with the old. Read Romans 7 and you’ll find that Paul is talking about the tremendous

VICTOR	PLACE	ENEMY	REF.	STRATEGY USED	LESSON
Joseph	Potiphar’s house (Egypt)	Potiphar’s wife	Gen. 39	Joseph fled before he fell.	There is a time when we must not stay to fight, but turn and flee (2 Tim. 2:22).
Gideon	Valley of Moreh	Midianites Amalekites	Jud. 7	Surprise the enemy with trumpets, broken vessels and shining lamps.	God chooses the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty (1 Cor. 1:27).
David	Valley of Elah	Goliath (Philistine)	1 Sam. 17	To fight in the name of the Lord of hosts and to use weapons with which he had previous success.	We must not go into battle in our own strength, nor use unfamiliar means.
Elijah	Mount Carmel	Prophets of Baal	1 Ki. 18	To show the weakness of Baal and the supremacy of God at the altar.	The altar is the test of reality. Calvary showed the heart of man, and the loving heart of God.
Lord Jesus	Wilderness of Judea	Satan	Mt. 4	The Lord Jesus faced the devil with nothing other than Scripture—“It is written.”	Satan must be resisted (James 4:7) and we must do so with the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit.



struggle that is going on. To put it in the words of an old preacher we had in Scotland when I was young, “The nature that will predominate is the one that you nurture.” If you feed the old nature, it will predominate in your life. If you feed the new nature, it will predominate. This challenge comes to us: which nature are we feeding? Which nature are we allowing to predominate?

WEAR the WHOLE ARMOR

We have a list given of the armor that a Christian has to wear if he is going to be victorious. Notice that all of the armor is for the front; there is no armor for the back. If you turn your back, you are unprotected.

We have our loins girt with truth. Peter talks about having the loins of your mind girded, bringing our thoughts into captivity. The battle will be won or lost in the mind. I was in Chicago with Mr. Wm. MacDonald some years ago. He said that the longer you think about doing something wrong, the more likely you are to do it. That’s wise, isn’t it? If we chase it out of our minds right away, it’s unlikely to go anywhere else. The longer we toy with the idea, the more likely we are to do it. My father-in-law used to say, “You can’t stop the crows from flying over your head, but you can stop them from building a nest in your hair.”

The breastplate of righteousness, the feet shod with preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, and praying always with prayer and supplication—the last one is as vital as the rest. We neglect prayer to our peril.

LEARN HOW to USE YOUR WEAPONS

A shield is a defensive weapon by which we may constantly dodge the fiery darts of the evil one. When soldiers were approaching a defended city, the archers would shoot arrows with rags dipped in oil. Paul is talk-

ing here about quenching all the evil darts of the evil one in a spiritual way.

We also have the sword of the Spirit, the offensive weapon, which is the Word of God. It is only effective to own a weapon when we are skilled in its use. I think perhaps we feel we are the most vulnerable when we are not practiced in its use.


In a Bible study in Ontario, a man put me on the spot with these words, “I want everyone to think of five verses that talk about eternal security, five verses that have to do with the coming of the Lord, five verses that have to do with His deity...” and the list went on. We need to know how to use our weapons!

Look at the Lord Jesus in the Judean wilderness. He was victorious there by counteracting everything Satan said with the Spirit’s sword, the Word of God. He had a verse for everything that Satan said. Then Satan began quoting the Bible back to the Lord Jesus in a distorted way. The Lord Jesus was able to respond again with another quotation that negated that distortion. It is not only important to know the truth; we must be able to marshal it in such a way that we can use it effectively when we are facing the enemy.

KEEP YOUR EYES on CHRIST

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him...” (Heb. 12:2-3). Our victory will depend in large measure on our occupation with Him. Christ is the victor.

When I was in business, at one point in my career, I was allowed to have various perks such as a company car and so on. My business’ insurance company insisted that anyone who drove a company vehicle should go to skid school. So I went off to skid school and was taken to this lot that had puddles of oil on the driving surface. The instructor told me to drive through the oil, and I spun around and around. Finally the instructor told me that in order to stay on the road I need to fix my eyes on something that would never move, so I looked over at a telephone pole. The next time I drove over the puddle of oil I didn’t spin around. I had my eye on something that never flinched, that never moved.

So it is when we look off unto Jesus. He has been through these battles before and He has been victorious! He is the fixed, immovable point where we must maintain our focus when everything else is going crazy. Things may be spinning around in your life, but as we are occupied with Him, we will be able to enter into that victory that will surely be ours if we follow Him. 



Temporary work projects

Golden opportunities for servants of the King

How can participation by local assemblies in temporary work projects enhance the missionary efforts of those serving abroad as well as national Christians?

Some Christians oppose short-term missionary service. Their thinking is: if it is not a lifetime calling to preach the gospel, then one is wasting his time. The Great Commission exhorts believers to “go into all the world,” spreading the gospel by whatever means possible. The time frame for service is not mentioned. Whether a person goes for two weeks, two months, two years, or a lifetime, the important thing is the response to God’s call to go. Whether it is going to Little Rock, AR, for a few weeks or to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, for a few months, the Lord wants to use those who are called to serve.

Although there are many occasions in the OT where God’s people supported one another in practical undertakings, such as building the Tabernacle and later the Temple, it is in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah from which we can draw a modern day parallel. There all came as volunteers to do rebuilding and repair work on God’s Holy City. Beside the hard physical work by both men and women, they were tormented by adversaries who wanted to doom them to failure. But God chose to use them to rebuild Jerusalem.

We learn this was not only an exercise of “bricks and mortar” but one of spiritual revival that convinced the people of God to return to meaningful worship.

So as well as accomplishing the

rebuilding project, God chose to use these people to be a blessing by bringing spiritual revival. This is the purpose and experience of modern day short-term work teams as able preachers and Bible teachers accompany the teams to share God’s Word in evangelism and ministry.

Some well-meaning Christians refer to efforts such as assemblies sending relief supplies and work teams to a country devastated by a natural disaster as being a “social gospel,” linking them with humanitarian agencies and therefore not worthy of support. But James 2:15-16 makes it abundantly clear, “If a brother or sister be naked, or destitute of daily food, and one of you say...Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?” Yes, the Christian community has a responsibility to practically assist both at home and abroad.

As regards to financial support, the Apostle Paul was not timid when he asked for a “collection” from the churches in Corinth and Galatia for the poor saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1) Earlier, in Acts 11:29-30, we read, “The disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren who dwelt in Judea; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.” Can we do less today, when it is within our means to give or actually go on a team to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of those devastated by famine, earthquake, or war? What an opportunity to show the love of

Christ in a practical way! “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me” (Mt. 25:40).

If we believe that there is a place for short-term missionary assistance as we approach the year 2000, then we need to examine some specifics on the subject.

1. Can I help a missionary on a short-term basis? The answer is yes! But first you have to find out the need. This requires quality communication between the assembly Christians at home and the mission-



ary on the field. It may require someone actually visiting the missionary to determine the magnitude of the project. Almost everyone, whether working or retired, can free up a few weeks to go and help on a short-term project.

A second important factor is finding people who are sincerely interested. We have to face the fact that a high percentage of assembly Christians have absolutely no desire or exercise to become involved in going or even giving financially to support a short-term project.

Therefore, it takes some effort to locate mission-minded people who will actually commit themselves to go. In Canada, the MSC Relief and Development Committee is willing to work along with assemblies in helping identify field projects as well as men and women who are available to go on short notice.

2. What kinds of projects are available to group and individuals? This is the type of information referred to in question 1. The majority of missionaries send out prayer letters, e-mail, etc., on a regular basis. Very often they will mention projects they wish to undertake. Assemblies back home need to pick up on these needs and further inquire as to how they might help. MSC assists in this area by sending out survey forms to missionaries asking if they have projects that require individual or team assistance. The 1998 list, compiled by MSC as the result of the survey, outlines 50 projects in 25 countries.

- 10 opportunities for teams
- 40 opportunities for individual help

Areas of service: Bible teaching, camp work, maintenance, English as a second language teacher, doctors, nurses, school teachers, construction workers, people to do visitation, tract distribution, evangelists, home school tutor, secretary, agricultural workers, organizing DVBS.

Do you think you could fit into any of these areas?

3. What expertise is required? If you are serving the Lord at home, you can do the same in a foreign field. More important is the confidence that God is calling you to go and that you have the support of your family and local church elders. If you are not sure about going, or your elders are opposed, you should not go.

Also, whether it is an individual or a team that is going, there must be an understanding with the missionary you are going to help, as to what is expected of you. Explain your qualifications and make sure you have a specific invitation to come, preferably in writing. Many countries require that letter of invitation before they will issue a short-term visa.

4. Who funds the project? This will vary depending on a number of factors. Normally the cost of airfare, transportation, departure taxes, insurance and food costs are borne by the volunteers. Accommodation while on the field may or may not be provided by the missionary. Local churches in Canada or the US may undertake a foreign mission project and receive funds to finance the project. Therefore all expenses including airfare can be

legitimately received to donors who have channeled their funds through the assembly. In some cases, MSC Canada will receive funds and issue income tax receipts for designated work projects for which they are involved. Some assemblies, in order to encourage their young people attending high school or college, will subsidize a portion of their expenses to facilitate their participation. Generally, with construction projects, the purchase of building materials and supplies are the responsibility of the missionary or national Christians.

5. What projects at home can help on the field? Believers in our home assemblies can be a tremendous help even though they never leave home. In Canada our “container project” known as ACCTS (Answering Christ’s Call To Service) has been a link in helping missionaries and nationals on the field. Each year several 20’ and 40’ shipping containers are loaded with needed supplies and sent by transport, rail and boat primarily to Africa and the West Indies. Assembly Christians donate new or used hospital equipment, medicine and pharmaceutical supplies, maintenance equipment and electrical supplies, bulk food stuffs (purchased in bulk by the ton) clothing as well as personal items for missionaries. In some cases, building supplies for a specific project are sent in these containers since they are not available in the developing country that may have just suffered a natural disaster. Volunteers from area assemblies are always needed to assist in the loading of these containers prior to shipping.

A recent initiative from an agricultural perspective is for Christian “cash crop” farmers to dedicate a specific acreage of grain, that when harvested will be sent to alleviate hunger in some country stricken with famine or suffering from a natural disaster. Assembly missionaries in those countries are responsible for distribution.

6. Where can I get more information? For many years the women of North American assemblies have faithfully sewn and shipped countless items to missionaries overseas. To make it easier to carry out this work, lists of project ideas are printed in two assembly publications that are primarily directed to women in Canada and the US. *Workers’ Together* is published in the US and the *KNOW* paper (Knowing Needs Of Workers) is printed in Canada.

Although not considered a project, groups of all ages meeting to pray for the needs of missionaries is one of the most important exercises undertaken by the assembly. “*We are laborers together with God...*” (1 Cor. 3:9).

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The judgment seat of Christ

Will we wish we had given Him more? There's time to change that.

Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ... So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God (Rom. 14:10-12).

Rudyard Kipling wrote:

*I keep six honest serving men,
They taught me all I knew;
Their names are What and Why and
When,
And How and Where and Who.*

I would like to address these six questions relative to the judgment seat of Christ.

WHAT?

The Bible tells us about many judgments. There is the judgment of the world, of angels, of the Jews, of living nations, and the judgment of the Great White Throne. Of course, the Judgment Seat of Christ is none of these. It is separate and distinct. It is a judgment for believers and for believers only. It is not a place, in the Roman concept, where the judge sat on a throne, listened to evidence for and against, and then found the defendant guilty or not guilty and handed out (if guilty) a punishment that he deemed appropriate. There is no question here that any of our sins will arise because they have already been dealt with.

Someone has written, "To see the Judgment Seat of Christ as a place where sin is rehashed and failures are broadcast is to swing a serious blow at the work of Christ." And so at the Judgment Seat of Christ we

think of it more in terms of the Greek concept at the athletic games, where awards were given to athletes who had run the race and who had run well. Now there were also losers on that occasion but the losers were not chastised, whipped, beaten, or killed. The winners, however, were given the prize. It is more this idea that we should keep in mind when we think of the Judgment Seat.

On one extreme, people fear it because they think that everything there will be made manifest and they will be hugely embarrassed. On the other hand, some people say that it's a bit like a flower show where everybody wins a prize. But I suspect that the real truth is somewhere in between. It will be an award ceremony, but it will also be a place where there will be loss as we consider what might have been. The warning is a real one: "Let no man take thy crown."

So what is the Judgment Seat of

Christ? It is an occasion when our lives will be assessed and awards will be given for what we have done and for our motives in doing them.

WHY?

But why have such a judgment? One of the reasons is that our lives need to be reviewed. After this conference, the committee will review it to see what went wrong, what went right. What could have been better? And so the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ will review our lives. That is very important for us and I suspect it is very important for Him. So one reason is the necessity and helpfulness of having a review afterwards to see how we've done.

Why? It will be a place where rewards are given. We shall be recompensed. We shall receive back the things done in the body. It is a matter of responsibility, because the awards given will be the enabling power for us to reign with Christ in His millennial kingdom. In fact, they will also probably attach themselves to us throughout eternity. And so future responsibility will be decided at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

I suspect another reason is to encourage us to live rightly now, so that we're not living aimlessly, because we know that in a future day there will be a review; there will be recompense; there will be responsibility. That gives us encouragement to live rightly for the Lord now.

WHEN?

When will it happen? Well, clearly it will happen after the resurrection. Luke 14:14 says, "Thou shalt

**We need to be
living for the
then and there
rather than the
here and now.
We'll be there
sooner than we
think.**



be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." The resurrection takes place for saints who have died at the same time as the rapture of those who are still alive on earth. Therefore the Judgment Seat of Christ takes place after the rapture and the resurrection of believers.

And it takes place before the Lord Jesus Christ returns yet again in power and in glory (some seven years after that prior event). And so in that undefined period of seven-plus years the review will take place.

HOW?

How will it be done? It is an individual assessment, that is, one on one. I suspect that when I am being reviewed at the Judgment Seat of Christ you will not all be sitting there watching me. And should the Judge say to me, "I think that the message that you gave in Cincinnati actually wasn't very good," you might be sitting in the audience, saying, "Amen. I told you that. I was aware of that." In fact when it is turn for my assessment, I don't think that you'll know anything about it. And when it is turn for your assessment, you might be relieved to know that others will probably know nothing about it, either. So it is an individual assessment. The passages stress that. They say, "**Each one of us shall give an account.**" "**Each one's work shall be made manifest.**" "**Each will receive praise of God.**" So it is very much an individual thing.

But how will God find time to do this? He only has seven years plus. To review everyone at this conference and to give them five minutes each to talk about their lives would take over four days. And we're a very small group in comparison to Christianity as a whole and all who love the Lord. How will He do it, if He's going to see each one, one by one?

Well, how did He do it today? How many of us prayed today? Did we have to stand in line? Did we have to wait until somebody else was finished? No, we didn't, because the ability of the Lord is such and the breadth of His ministry is such that He is able to review all at once; to hear the prayers of all at once. And each will feel that he is being dealt with as an individual.

WHERE?

Where will it happen? It will happen in heavenly realms, when we are with the Lord Himself. At that time there will be various clarification given. There will be given a clarification of the various *ministries* with which we have been involved. There will be a clarification of the *mysteries* that we were not able to understand. There will be clarification of the *mistakes* that we have made. And there will be clarification of the *misunderstandings* in which we were involved. And this happens in heaven, giving us heaven's perspective on it all.

WHO?

Who will be there? First of all, the Lord will be there! In one of the passages that we read, it is referred to as the Judgment Seat of God. Now we know that the Lord Jesus Christ is God—that He is divine, and that the Father has committed all judgment to the Son. And so while it is the Lord, the Christ, the Risen One, who will sit upon the Throne of Judgment and assessment, nevertheless, it is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as God.

Also there will be all believers. "*We must all appear.*" There will be no way out of it. Each of us will be there. Of course, some believers may have already received their reward. You remember that in speaking about the Pharisees, the Lord Jesus Christ said, "*They have their reward.*" And the more that I tell people down here what I've done, what I've achieved—and incidentally, the more they think of me for having done it—when I get to heaven, the Lord might say to me, "Well, you've had your reward. You had the adulation of the crowd. You had the following that went wherever you went. You wanted it in time, and there's nothing left for those deeds in the coffers of heaven for you."

We need to be aware of that fact if we are seeking our reward down here, because there cannot be two rewards. There will only be one. If we have it down here, we shall not have it up there. And if we don't have it down here, than we certainly shall have it up there. Yet on that day, every believer will be absolutely satisfied with his assessment and will be able to say, Amen to the reward that was given, whether great or little.

Now I want to deal with the four key chapters.

ROM. 14: JUDGING EACH OTHER

Here Paul indicates that in the assembly at Rome there were some who were strong and some who were weak. The strong believer felt passionately about the liberty into which he had been brought as a result of knowing Christ. He had no scruples (as many Jewish

believers had) about eating any sort of meat set in front of him. He was prepared to drink anything that was set before him, and he did not feel that one day of the week was any more special than any other day. So he had this situation where he felt absolutely at liberty. He was, in that respect, his own judge, and after all, this is what Christ has done for us: He has made us free—free to choose what pleases Him. And so he felt strongly.

However in the same assembly there was another brother who felt that he couldn't eat food if it had been offered to idols previously. He felt that there were some things that he couldn't drink. And he felt that some days were more important than others. So how could these two get along? The strong brother who felt the honor and dignity of freedom despised the man who didn't. And the weak brother judged the stronger brother.

Now, says Paul, these two brothers, albeit quite different, are both responsible directly to the Lord. They are not responsible for each other. The Lord is able to uphold both of them and will cause both of them to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Have you noticed, says the apostle, that when the strong brother eats the meat, he gives God thanks for it? And have you noticed that when the weak brother refuses the meat, he gives God thanks for his ability to refuse it? Both, opposite ends of the pole, believe that they are pleasing God. How happy we are in such circumstances that the Lord is the Judge.

So we shouldn't despise one another in the things in which we have liberty and we shouldn't judge one another in these things either. As men and women, our position is to stand before the Judgment Seat. I must not, down here on earth, presume to sit in the Judgment Seat. If you wish to pass criticism of another brother or sister, it's almost as if you're walking up to the Lord and saying, "Excuse me, would You mind getting out of that seat? I would like to sit there, and I want to call Brother So-and-so or Sister So-and-so before me and tell them what I think about them." I think the Lord would say, "Excuse me, but this is My job."

Our position is not to sit in judgment but to stand to be judged. And if we have that in our minds, it will keep us from active criticism of the brethren.

At the judgment, I shall "give an account." What sort of account shall I give? Presumably I'll give an account of my life. How will I do that? Maybe the Lord will help me a bit. He might say to me, "Well, I'd like to talk to you about the time that you had that problem when you were working with Brother So-and-so."

And I might say, "Ah yes, well, what Brother So-and-so did was this—"

The Lord might respond, "I'm sorry, but we're not talking about Brother So-and-so. We're talking about you. He doesn't even come into it. What he said, what he thought, what he did, the pressure he put you under—we don't wish to discuss that. I'll be discussing that with him. But what I need to discuss with you is your reaction to that. Whether it was good or bad." Therefore I will give account of *myself* and not of what other people said and did.

So what lessons can I learn from this? Number one: Let us not judge one another. Let us not presume to sit in the seat of judgment. But judge this rather: do not put a stumbling block or occasion to fall in your brother's way. A stumbling block is something that will keep him from what is right; an occasion to fall is something that will encourage him to do what is wrong.

Number two: Do not destroy by criticism the brother or sister for whom Christ died. You wouldn't die for them, but He did. He takes rather unkindly toward criticism about someone He feels passionately enough to have died for. And you presume to criticize them? Let us therefore, says the text, follow the things that make for peace, because if you follow the things that make for difficulty, you are destroying not only your brother, you are also destroying the work of God.

The message of Romans is this: the Judgment Seat is a place where Christ sits; nobody else has a right to sit there then or now. Let us not judge one another; let us encourage one another and help one another because we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

1 COR. 3: RAISING a BUILDING

In 1 Corinthians 3:11, the message that comes to us, regarding building in the assembly and in service for God, is remembering that the foundation has already been laid. The apostle says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." His death and His current ministry are the only foundation upon which anything can be built for the future. But each one of us in our service for God has the opportunity to build *on* the foundation. The foundation is totally secure; it will support a massive structure. We have the opportunity individually of building on that foundation.

Paul asks the Corinthians, how did some build? Apparently, upon this foundation some build with gold and silver and precious stones. Others, however, built with wood, hay, and stubble. Now, these things are quite different. For example, the gold, silver and precious stones are relatively heavy. The others are relatively light. The gold, silver and precious stones are compact; the others are bulky. The one is expensive; the other is

cheap. One is lasting; the other is seasonable. One does not burn; the other burns easily. The result of building in gold, silver and precious stones is to receive a reward; and the result of building with wood, hay, and stubble is to suffer loss.

But, you say, how can I build with gold, silver and precious stones? What are these things? Well, gold in the Bible always speaks of the deity of Christ. Therefore your ministry and mine should be built upon things concerning Him and the intrinsic value of His Person.

The silver speaks of the redemptive work of Christ (see Ex. 30:13). I should be building in my ministry things concerning the redemption that Christ provided.

The precious stones speak of longevity and preservation and the value of the Lord's people (see Mal. 3:17). These are the things that the people of God need today. They need to know about the Lord; they need to know what He has done; they need to know that they are safe; they need to know that their sins are forgiven once and for all, and will never be called into question again. The ministry of a man or a woman who builds this into the assembly has the stamp of approval from God Himself.

So, what have you been building into your assembly? What have you been building in your Christian life? Take heed how you build. Avoid wood, hay, and stubble by studying, by effort, by perseverance. Concentrate on gold, silver and precious stones—things that are valuable, lasting, and spiritual, because the day will come when whatever we have built will be tested by fire.

Wind often tests things and blows them away, but you can usually find them afterwards. Water sometimes tests things and sinks them, but sometimes you can salvage them afterwards. But when fire burns, it is on the one hand beautiful, and on the other hand awesome. It leaves nothing unless there are things that it cannot burn. What we have done for the Lord will one day be put to the flame. And what will happen? It might be that we shall have the great privilege and joy of seeing what we built remain, and of hearing from the Lord, "Well done, good and faithful servant." It may be, however, that even though we evaluated our work highly, that we shall stand in that day and see it burnt to ashes.

I suppose, really, on mature reflection, that each of us will have some things that will survive the fire and each of us will have some things that will be burnt up. In view of that, I should be building in my ministry for the things that are fireproof. If you are evaluating your life and service, you need to discriminate between things that may seem worthwhile in time but may be worthless in heaven and the things that will last for eternity, being proven and purified through the fire of God.

1 COR. 4: RECEIVING PRAISE

We're told at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 4 that we are ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. And it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. If you have somebody looking after your house while you're away, you need to be able to trust them. If you can't trust them, you shouldn't have left it in their care. They may shine in other areas too, or they may be nothing else. But they do need to be faithful.

So you and I as stewards of the mysteries of God need to be faithful. Can the Lord trust you? Can He trust me? Because in that day at the Judgment Seat of Christ, the hidden things of darkness will be revealed. Now I suppose the way that word sounds in the English language is rather shattering. We worry about that: the hidden things of darkness—and we think of the bad things that we've done. Well, that's not the idea behind the phrase. If it is, it's only fifty percent of the idea because the hidden things include the good things done that nobody else knows about. Of course we're inclined when we do good things to make sure other people know about it, but then we have our reward down here. The things that we've done down here that nobody else knows about, or at least very few, those are also the hidden things that will be revealed on that day.

The counsels of the heart will be made manifest—what motivated me, the secret thought that prompted my action. Why did I do it? Was it for the Lord? For my own glory? Was it for someone else's benefit? Or for me? These are the things that will be manifested.

So what are the lessons? First, don't be diverted by the criticism of men unless it is constructive. As Paul wrote when he was under fire, "*With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment*" (1 Cor. 4:3). If you feel the Lord would have you do something, then do it. If you feel before the Lord that He would have you go somewhere, then go. You report to the Lord. He's the only one between you, your service, and Himself. But don't justify yourself. This is self-assessment, not self-approval.

The other lesson from this passage is to judge nothing before the time, before the Lord comes. You see, the race is not over yet. Some of you might still have a long race to run. You can't jump to conclusions too soon. You can, but you shouldn't. We are to assess ourselves and not others, remembering that the race isn't over and that the real assessment will take place before the Lord.

2 COR. 5: FINDING ACCEPTANCE

As he comes to this passage, the apostle Paul is talk-

ing about being present with the Lord. He says that currently he is at home in the body and absent from the Lord. But he instructs us that we must make it our ambition to be accepted of Him. That is, whether down here or up there, my ambition should be to be well-pleasing to Him, to bring pleasure to His heart. That is what Christ did. God opened heaven and declared, *“This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased.”* And there is the opportunity today in the things that we are doing to please Him as well.

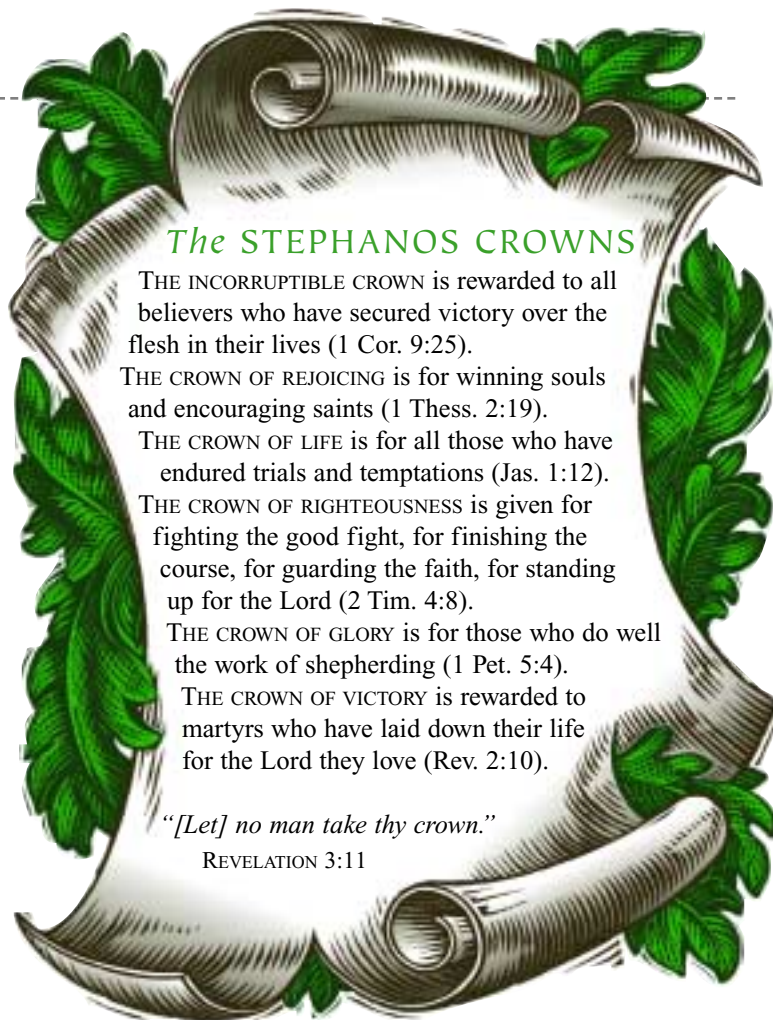
According to 2 Corinthians 5:10, we must all must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ. *We must.* It is **inevitable**. You cannot have another prior engagement. And we will *all* be there. It is **inclusive**. And it is **instructive** because it will be an assessment of what we have done. It will be **incisive** because we shall understand clearly how the Lord feels about it all.

On that occasion, we shall receive (the idea of the word is, we shall “receive back”) the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad. That’s what you might call the boomerang effect. When I do something, it goes out among the believers or into the world and if it is good, it will come back to me at the Judgment Seat of Christ; if it is bad, it will come back at the Judgment Seat, too. So be careful what you say, be careful what you do, be careful where you go because these things will all come back to us yet again.

So the lesson to be learned in this passage: I need to be ambitious to please Him well. *“Wherefore we labor [or are ambitious] that we might please Him well.”* You just can’t drift through life and hope to please Him. He didn’t do that for you. You have to set this as a goal for your life. You have to walk by faith, not by sight. You need to be persuaded by the truth of these passages.

What now? In view of the Judgment Seat of Christ, what should I be doing? I should be living honestly in the sight of all men. I should be loving the people of God as well as the Lord. I should be leaving sin and criticism. And I should be looking for His coming again at the Rapture.

In that day old sins shall not be raised; but things will be uncovered, evaluated, clarified. That day will be a day of **testing**. It will be a day of **triumph**, for all shall receive praise of God. It might also be a day of **tears**—what might have been—what could have been—if only I’d been determined to live for the Lord. But it will also be a day of **togetherness**. You’ll be happy for me, and I’ll be happy for you. I’ll say, “Yes, that was more than



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“[Let] no man take thy crown.”

REVELATION 3:11

a fair and reasonable assessment of what I’ve done. Although what I received may be very small, that too is wholly undeserved and I’m happy with that. We’ll know what’s right, and the right thing always brings the response of pleasure in the hearts of God’s children.

And together through the triumphs, through the tears, through the fire, we shall be together—not only with one another, but together with the Lord.

There are many things that I can win on that day. I need not suffer loss if I give my life of which I have only one. “Only one life, ’twill soon be past; Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

We ought to be looking forward with encouragement. We know that our soul’s salvation can never be touched; that our sins have already be dealt with. Christ has died for them. How dare anyone raise them again in view of that? But the measure in which I live for Him now is the measure in which I will be able to bear responsibility for Him then, the measure in which I will know, enjoy, and glorify the One who died for me. *“And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming”* (1 Jn. 2:28).

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD

Spurgeon called him "a strong-winged eagle [who] soared into the highest heaven."

I hesitated to write about Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) because I thought no one would believe me. In this frivolous day, when a preacher tells an obligatory joke at the opening of every sermon, is there anyone left who can understand a man like Samuel Rutherford? His letters were flights into heaven, his pastoral labors daunting, and his personal devotions superhuman. In what kind of soil did such a man grow?

Rutherford lived during Scotland's long struggle with England in the 1500s and 1600s that produced the Scottish patriots and believers called Covenanters.

When towering oaks like Bunyan, John Owen and Richard Baxter grew, even then Rutherford was legendary. Born at Nisbet in Roxburghshire, Scotland, Samuel's father was a successful farmer who gave his three sons, Samuel, George and James, academic training.

In 1617, Samuel enrolled at Edinburgh University. By 1621, he had earned his Master of Arts degree and two years later was a professor of Latin at the university.

We gather that he was an adventurous and sometimes reckless young man up to his conversion around the year 1624. Concerning his conversion, he wrote, "He hath fettered me with His love...and left me a chained man" (LSR 222, p. 431). About this time, he went back to school to study theology for two years. We assume it was about this time that Samuel married his first wife, Eupham.

King James' son, Charles I, ascended the throne in 1625. Both father and son advocated superstitious rituals and control of the Church by the prelate. This meant reprogramming the Church of Scotland. For instance, the king enjoyed the idea that church members receive communion at the hands of a bishop while kneeling before him. Godly Scots detested such practices.

In 1627, Rutherford took a preaching post at Anwoth, Kirkcudbrightshire. James Urquhart, a preacher in Kinloss, said, "He seemed to be always praying, always preaching, always visiting the sick...always writing or studying." He rose at three to be alone with God. His prayers went up from the hills of Galloway, where he prayed for an awakening in Anwoth.

Urquhart remembered how "he had two quick eyes, and when he walked it was observed that he held aye his face upwards." His preaching was impassioned. Urquhart said, "Many times I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ. He was never in his right elements but when he was commending Him."

His two infant children died at Anwoth, and then Eupham contracted a terminal disease. Samuel said she had "exceeding great torment day and night." After a thirteen-month illness, she died in 1629. Thus Rutherford's letters of comfort were spoken out of the same comfort wherewith he himself had been comforted.

"Know, therefore," he would write, "that the wounds of your Lord Jesus are the wounds of a lover, and that He will have compassion upon a sad-hearted servant... Give Him heart and chair, house and all...He will have all your love" (LSR 105, p. 217). Charles I continued his father's policies of force-feeding the Episcopalian prayer book and the English clergy to the Scots. Archbishop Laud was the hired nanny with spoon in hand. A fawning sycophant of Laud's, Thomas Sydserff, was appointed bishop of Galloway in 1634. Rutherford knew that under Sydserff his tenure in Anwoth hung by a thread.

Rutherford detested Laud's policies and especially his doctrines, and published a book in early 1636 to refute Laud's Arminianism. Sydserff acted quickly, and by July of that year Rutherford stood on trial in Edinburgh. The sentence was banishment to Aberdeen and to be forbidden to preach.

For a man of his energy and temperament, to have his work taken away, was one of the great trials of his life, and he spoke about it often. "That day that my mouth was most unjustly and cruelly closed, the bloom fell off my branches, and my joy did cast the flower...I dare not say that the Lord hath put out my candle, and hath casten water upon my poor coal...but I have tasted bitterness, and eaten gall and wormwood since that day on which my Master laid bonds upon me to speak no more" (LSR 185, p. 362).



Rutherford's tomb

It was from his room at No. 44, Upper Kirkgate, that Rutherford's letters of admonition, comfort, and warning poured out from this dear man's heart. Many, such as James Guthrie or the men of the Gordon clan, would need that correspondence more than they knew.

The National Covenant in Scotland of 1638 (with the Confession of Faith) was a reply to the King's agenda. Here certain Scottish believers pledged to keep the Church of Scotland separate from the State. This document, written on a large deerskin, was at the heart of their defense of the biblical idea that the Lord Jesus is Head of the Church, as opposed to earthly sovereigns. The Covenanters spoke about maintaining "the crown rights of the Redeemer." It does not appear that Rutherford was present at the signing but James Guthrie, one of his correspondents, was. As he laid down his pen he said, "I know that I shall die for what I have done this day, but I cannot die in a better cause."

Around 1640, Rutherford was appointed as a preacher at St. Andrews. Five months later he married a widow, Jean McMath. She would bear him seven children, but only one daughter, Agnes, survived him.

In 1643, the Solemn League and Covenant was ratified by the English Parliament. That year Rutherford was chosen as a commissioner of the Scottish delegation to the Westminster Assembly, which drew up the Westminster Confession. The next year he published the book *Lex Rex*, Latin for "Law is King," or popularly called "The Law and the Prince," the point being that the law of God is over the earthly king. Francis A. Schaeffer (1912-1984) made much of Rutherford's *Lex Rex* in his books *How Shall We Then Live*, and *The Christian Manifesto*. He credits Rutherford with stating "the clearest example of the Reformation principle of a people's political control of its sovereign," and says that by way of John Witherspoon directly and John Locke indirectly, *Lex Rex* had a "great influence on the United States Constitution." This book taught that when a country recognizes the Bible as the final authority, that country has a government based on moral absolutes rather than arbitrary decisions and the winds of political expedience. The idea of inalienable rights, government by consent, separation of powers, and the right of revolution against tyranny were stated in *Lex Rex*.

Rutherford was a complex case study. He could be a cool thinker, who wrote doctrinal treatises and engaged in hard debate. Then he would write tearful letters dripping emotion. Those who have spent the most effort studying Rutherford will debate about these two sides of the man. Particularly difficult to reconcile is the way he used his writing ability to insult his opponents.

In 1661, the Covenant was repudiated by Charles II and so it became illegal to subscribe to it. The Duke of Argyle and James Guthrie were imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle for their adherence to it. Rutherford wrote them, "If Christ doth own me, let me be laid in my grave in a bloody winding-sheet; let me go from the scaffold to the spikes in four quarters—grave or no grave, as He pleases, if only He but owns me."

The Duke of Argyle was beheaded, and on June 1, James Guthrie was hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh and afterward dismembered.

Middleton's Ejectment Act came into force in 1663 which prohibited nearly 400 preachers from freely proclaiming the truth. It is estimated that 18,000 Scots had to leave their homes. Hardships, persecutions, prison cells and the gallows met many of those who would rather die than contradict their convictions. At least 672 sealed their testimonies with their blood.

That same year *Lex Rex* was publicly burned and Rutherford was summoned to appear in court. But he died before being arrested. Had he lived, the probable outcome would have been execution.

Rutherford is chiefly remembered for his letters, about 365 being in print. Some of his most memorable lines were woven into the hymn, "Immanuel's Land" by Anne Ross Cousin.

When John Wesley tried to make inroads of his Methodism into Scotland, he was met with stoic disinterest and complained that the Scottish "know everything and feel nothing." But reading Rutherford tells you that the Scottish can feel, they just feel differently.

*E'en Anwoth was not heaven—
E'en preaching was not Christ,
And in my sea-beat prison
My Lord and I held tryst:
And aye my murkiest storm-cloud
Was by a rainbow spann'd,
Caught from the glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land.* 📖



John Bjorlie

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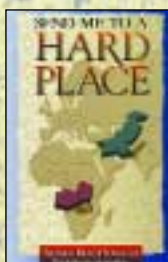
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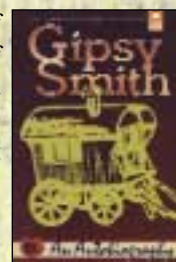
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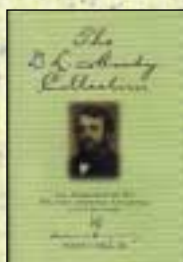
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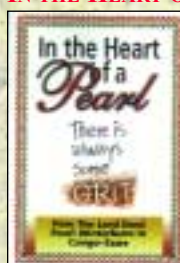
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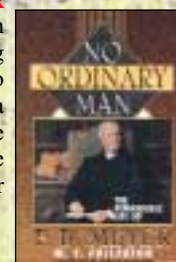
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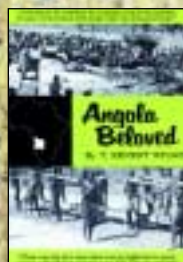
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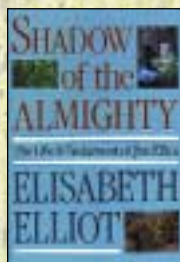
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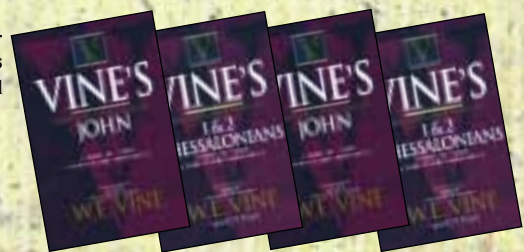
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