

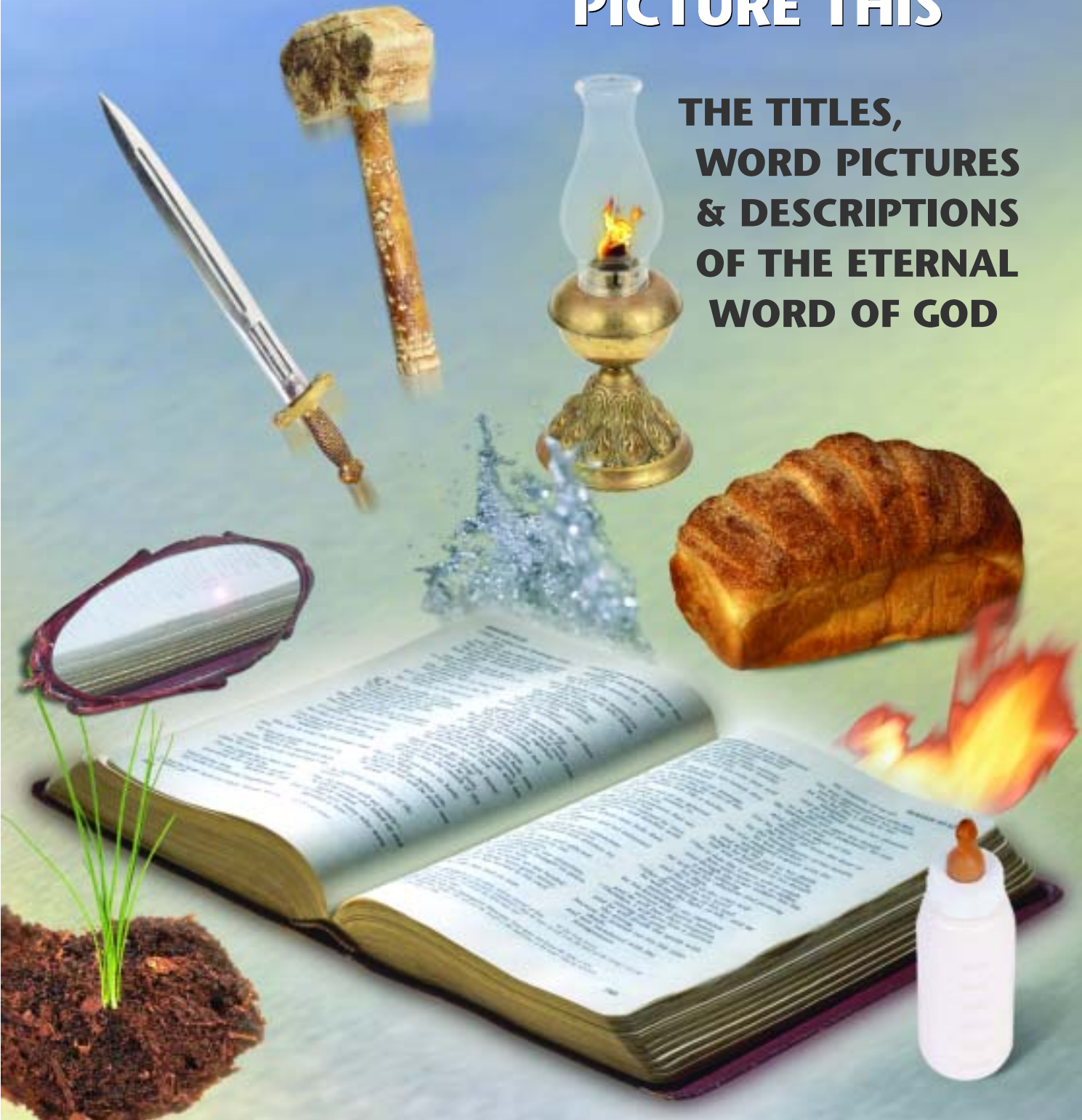
FEBRUARY 2004

UPLOOK

• ASSESS THE NEED • CATCH THE VISION • TAKE THE CHALLENGE •

PICTURE THIS

**THE TITLES,
WORD PICTURES
& DESCRIPTIONS
OF THE ETERNAL
WORD OF GOD**



PICTURE THIS

When we open this Book we are looking right into the heart of God!

A picture is worth a thousand words. The Lord knew that long before we coined the phrase. In fact, He designed us that way in order that we might not only fill our brains with details, but that we fill our hearts with the glories, wonders, and joys of all that He is and all that He has made and done. And so His Word combines technical teaching with pictures in order to augment our understanding of its truths. A very simple illustration can communicate a truth not only to our minds, but to our souls; and it can do so in a way that no mere listing of facts possibly could.

We learned this vividly when our daughter was three years old. One night at the dinner table we read concerning the most well-known of all the Bible's pictures: the lamb sacrificed to atone for sin. Our daughter interrupted, "Oh, no Daddy. You mean a wild animal."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"They'd kill a wild animal, right? They wouldn't kill a lamb!"

You see, she could comprehend sacrificing an animal that was violent and dangerous—a wolf, a bear, or a lion. Such an animal in her mind could deserve to die. But a lamb? With one simple picture the Lord had communicated a truth to our daughter's soul that no amount of cold teaching could ever convey: the horror of sacrificing an innocent, harmless lamb to pay for our sin.

And so the Bible turns out to be something we'd never have guessed it to be: the best picture book in the world. People skim through the Law and feel it's too technical, too cold, too lifeless. Such feelings say more about the reader than about the Law. For the Law is filled with some of the richest and most moving pictures in all of the Scriptures. And it reminds us that casual, careless reading deprives us of appreciating the true riches to be discovered in the Word of God. The Lord uses pictures to open our minds and stir our hearts about the grandest themes of the Bible: salvation, the Church, and, best of all, His Son.

But there's another lofty topic that the Scriptures use pictures to reveal. A picture is worth a thousand words but how many pictures is the Word worth? As we read through the Bible we find that it presents to us pictures of itself: pictures of God's Picture Book. And now we see that not only is it a book, or a picture book. It's also a sword. A mirror. A hammer. Water. Milk. The good seed. And much more.

Each picture reveals something fresh, something different, some new glory of the Word of God. How did He ever fit it all in? I suppose the "how" doesn't matter. What's important is that He did. Only God could compress so much into one glorious book but it is our delight to explore, uncovering one treasure at a time.



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**Special thanks to brother
Martin of Sudbury, Ontario for being
our Guest Editor for this issue.**

James Martin
JAMIE MARTIN

UPLOOK

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Phone: (616) 456-9166
 Fax: (616) 456-5522
 Website: <http://www.uplook.org>
 E-mail: uplook@uplook.org

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The WORD

TITLES, PICTURES & DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Word

- the faithful Word (Titus 1:9)
- the good Word (Heb. 6:5)
- the engrafted Word (Jas. 1:21)
- the sure Word (2 Pet. 1:19)

A. The Word of—*referring to the Author of the Bible*

- the LORD (242 times, generally *Jehovah*)
- [our] God (46 times; Isa. 40:8)
- the Lord (16 times, generally *Adonai*)
- His power (Heb. 1:3)
- My patience (Rev. 3:10)
- His grace (Acts 14:3; 20:32)
- the Holy One of Israel (Isa. 5:24)
- Christ (Col. 3:16)

B. The Word of—*referring to the Nature of the Bible*

- truth (Ps. 119:43; 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 1:13; etc.)
- righteousness (Ps. 119:123; Heb. 5:13)

C. The Word of—*referring to the Content of the Bible*

- [the truth of] the gospel (Col. 1:5; Acts 15:7)
- this salvation (Acts 13:26)
- promise (Rom. 9:9)
- the oath (Heb. 7:28)
- the kingdom (Mt. 19:13)

D. The Word of—*referring to the Work of the Bible*

- faith (Rom. 10:8)
- reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19)
- life (Phil. 2:16)
- exhortation (Heb. 13:22)

The Law (Josh. 1:7; book of the law, Josh. 8:34)

- [the book of the law] of Moses (Josh. 8:31-32)
- [the book of the law] of God (Josh. 24:26)
- of the LORD God of Israel (2 Ki. 10:31)
- the Law of the LORD (1 Chron. 16:40)
- of the LORD thy God (1 Chron. 22:12; Neh. 9:3)
- of the God of heaven (Ezra 7:12)
- of thy, our, his God (Ezra 7:14; Isa. 1:10; Dan. 6:5)

- of thy mouth (Ps. 119:72)
- of the LORD of hosts (Isa. 5:24)
- of truth (Mal. 2:6)
- of the Lord—*Adonai* (Lk. 2:23)
- of the fathers (Acts 22:3)
- of the Jews (Acts 25:8)
- of righteousness (Rom. 9:31)
- of commandments (Eph. 2:15)
- perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25)
- the Lord's (Ex. 13:9)
- and the prophets (Mt. 7:12; 22:40; etc.)
- and the commandment (2 Chron. 14:4)
- the words of the law (2 Ki. 23:24)

The Scriptures (Mt. 21:42; etc.)

- of truth (Dan. 10:21)
- of the prophets (Mt. 26:56; Rom. 16:26)
- the holy Scriptures (Rom. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:15)

Pictures of the Word of God

- hammer (Jer. 23:29)
- sword (Eph. 6:17)
- fire (Jer. 5:14; 20:9; 23:29)
- lamp, light (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23; 2 Pet. 1:19)
- silver (Ps. 12:6)
- mirror (2 Cor. 3:18; Jas. 1:23)
- seed (Lk. 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:23)
- water (Eph. 5:26)
- milk (1 Pet. 2:2)
- solid food, meat (Heb. 5:14)
- honey (Ps. 19:10; 119:103; Ezek. 3:3; Rev. 10:9f)
- spirit and life (Jn. 6:63)

Descriptions of the Word (2 Ki. 17:37; Ps. 119)

- law
- ways
- statutes
- judgments
- ordinances
- testimonies
- precepts
- commandments
- word



KEY ISSUES

THINKING IT THROUGH • BUILDING IT IN • LIVING IT OUT

INSPIRATION & INERRANCY

The God who supernaturally gave the Word also supernaturally preserved it.



William Yuille

When we speak of the inerrancy of the Bible, some object, saying: “The Bible contains material on doctrinal, ethical, and moral matters and is accurate in what it says about these things. Other material on incidental matters may be inaccurate but that does not interfere with the main message. Aren’t we in danger of losing our focus and majoring on minors? Does it really matter?”

Well, it does matter! If the Bible is not inspired and inerrant, the implications are serious and far-reaching.

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy leaves us without a solid reference point from which to build. In fact it begs the question, “Why should we read the Bible at all?” Dr. James A. Borror says:

To the extent that you weaken inerrancy, to that extent you weaken inspiration. To the extent that you weaken inspiration, to that extent you have a garbled revelation. To the extent that you have a garbled revelation, to that extent you have a weakened authority. And when you weaken the authority of the Bible you launch upon a shifting sea of subjective uncertainty.

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy overthrows the biblical idea of faith. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Faith is believing what God has said (e.g., Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6). In the absence of certainty as to what the Word of God is, superstition prevails and not faith.

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy is historically the first step down the path of departure. Students of history tell us that a denial of inerrancy inevitably leads to further departures from the truth and to a loss of vital interest in evangelism and missions.

Harold Lindsell observes:

From my perspective, God is glorified by the mind-set that

attributes perfection to Scripture, rather than by the mind-set that attributes error to the written Word of God and always leads to further concessions until at last, if not halted, it leads to a full falling away from the holy faith.

With so much at stake it is important to ask: What do we mean by “inspiration” and “inerrancy,” and what does the Bible tell us about them?

SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED

God took the initiative and was involved in the writing of Scripture. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). Literally, this means that Scripture is “God-breathed.” The breath of God elsewhere refers to that which emanates from God and is living and active and powerful. Just as He produced creation by His breath (Ps. 33:6), so He has produced Scripture—all of it. Paul may have had the OT in mind, but we need not limit his statement to the OT because in his earlier letter to Timothy he applied the term “*scripture*” to Deuteronomy 25:4 and also to Luke 10:7 (see 1 Tim. 5:18).

Peter agrees with Paul: “No prophecy is of any private interpretation” (2 Pet. 1:20). He refers to the origin of prophecy: it did not come about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things; it was not his idea. “For prophecy never came by the will of man; but holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” The verb translated “moved” was used of a ship driven along by the wind (Acts 27:15, 17). The prophets, so to speak, hoisted their sail and the Spirit of God bore them along, directing and controlling them as they wrote. And if that was the experience of the prophets, it is surely significant that Peter places the writings of NT apostles (2 Pet. 3:2), and those of Paul in particular (2 Pet. 3:16), on the same level as those of the OT prophets.

INSPIRATION IS NOT REVELATION

Sometimes the writers were aware that what was writ-

ten had been revealed directly to them, but on other occasions they wrote about things they already knew or had experienced, and sometimes they used the writings of earlier authors. Luke obtained information from eyewitnesses (Lk. 1:1-2). Paul writes, “Concerning virgins I have no commandment from the Lord...” (1 Cor. 7:25), *i.e.*, there was no previous teaching by the Lord and Paul was conscious of no revelation from the Lord on this particular point.

But whatever the source of the material, inspiration means that the Spirit of God assisted the writers and controlled what was written. “*These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual*” (1 Cor. 2:13). William Kelly renders the last part of that verse in this way: “*communicating spiritual truths in spiritual words*” so that the words they used were God’s words.

INSPIRATION DOES NOT MEAN DICTATION

The Scriptures were not dictated by God to writers who were no more than robots writing down what they received. If that were the case we would expect that the personal element would have been eliminated and that there would be consistency throughout in vocabulary, grammar, style, etc. Inspiration means that the Spirit of God so directed the writers that the finished product was precisely what God intended. God could say, as Augustine puts it, “Indeed, O man, what My Scripture says, I say!”

SCRIPTURE IS INERRANT

Since God is the source of Scripture, and since God does not and cannot lie (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2; Num. 23:19), and since He is not ignorant in any area but is all-knowing (e.g. Dan. 2:22; Heb. 4:13), it follows that Scripture is perfectly accurate in all that it communicates.

Does the Bible claim to be without error? An inductive study of Scripture confirms that it is inerrant. Peter describes how he had witnessed the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus and then adds: “*We have the prophetic word confirmed*” (2 Pet. 1:19, NKJV). In other words, his experience on the mount served to authenticate what Scripture said. The AV renders it, “*We have also a more sure word of prophecy*” (see 2 Pet. 1:19-21), *i.e.*, the Word is more certain and more reliable than human experience. Whichever rendering we accept, Peter is surely affirming that the Word of God is reliable and therefore we should pay attention to it.

The Lord Jesus had a similar attitude to Scripture. He **believed** Scripture, including the stories about Adam and Eve, Jonah, Noah, Abraham, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isa-

iah, the Queen of Sheba, etc. And He **expected others** to believe Scripture too (e.g., Lk. 24:25). He **obeyed** and **fulfilled** Scripture (e.g., Mt. 4:3-4; 5:17; Lk. 4:21). And He **taught** Scripture (e.g. Lk. 4:16-21; Jn 5:39; Lk. 24:27).

Perhaps His view is best summarized in His own statements: “*It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail*” (Lk. 16:17). He also declared, “*The Scripture cannot be broken*” (Jn. 10:35). In this passage the Lord Jesus appeals to Psalm 82:6, “*Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, You are gods?’*” Dr. S. L. Johnson writes:


There are two things to note. In the first place, the clause, “I said, you are gods,” is not a very important clause...And yet it is this incidental statement, and even its incidental form, that the Lord Jesus says cannot be broken!...In the second place, the essence of our Lord’s argument depends on one word: “gods.” The authority of Scripture attaches to a single word in a casual clause. If found in the “Law,” it is authoritative, and the authority extends to a single word in the Law. Is this not what is meant by verbal-plenary inspiration?

It might be objected that there are discrepancies in the Bible. However, many apparent discrepancies have, with the passing of time and the acquisition of further knowledge, been shown not to be discrepancies at all. There is good reason to suppose that difficulties that remain are difficulties only because of our lack of understanding.

We should look to the Lord to do for us what He did for the disciples when “*He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures*” (Lk. 24:45). Augustine’s conclusion on this matter:

I have learned to ascribe to those books which are of canonical rank, and only to them, such reverence and honor that I firmly believe that no single error due to the author is found in any one of them. And when I am confronted in these books with anything that seems to be at variance with truth, I do not hesitate to put it down either to the use of an incorrect text, or to the failure of the commentator rightly to explain the words, or to my own misunderstanding of the passage.

How should we respond? The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy in its Chicago Statement states:

Holy Scripture, being God’s own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God’s instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God’s command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God’s pledge, in all that it promises. 

FIRE, HAMMER & SWORD

The persuasive, penetrating power of the Word of God

Peter Kerr

All Bible quotations (unless noted) are from the NKJV

"Is not My word like as a fire?...and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:29), KJV.

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

The three images of fire, a hammer, and a sword are used to forcibly convey to our understanding a truth that to some is comforting, but to others is terrifying! What truth? The assurance that God's Word is not "bound" (2 Tim. 2:9) by people nor by circumstances; is not restricted by opposition nor unbelief; cannot be imprisoned by kings and princes; and is not diminished by the passing of time. The Lord Himself guarantees: *"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from the heavens, and does not return there, but waters the earth, and makes it bring out and bud, and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word be, which goes out of My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall certainly do what I sent it to do"* (Isa. 55:10-11). Further the Lord Jesus clearly stated, *"The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away"* (Mt. 24:35; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 21:33). Indeed what a blessed truth it is that *"The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God shall stand forever"* (Isa. 40:8).

God's Word penetrates, pierces, convicts, and persuades whenever and wherever He so

desires, and none can *"stay His hand"* (Dan. 4:35) for it is accomplished by His own mighty power.

Sin hardens the heart and sears the conscience, producing an ever deepening downward spiral of disobedience, unbelief, deceit and wickedness. The result is a mind which is at enmity with God, which does not, nor indeed cannot, submit to God (Rom. 8:5-8); an understanding that is blinded, corrupted, darkened, and which does not receive the things of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 4:4); and a nature captivated by Satan (Eph. 2:2-3). To rescue and change people thus requires nothing short of the Lord's miraculous intervention, using the penetrating, persuasive power of His inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word to break, melt, soften, and expose the sin-scarred, polluted heart.

Let us pause to examine each of these illustrations of fire, hammer and sword in turn, that we may gain a fuller understanding of this persuasive and penetrating power.

FIRE

Fire can be both constructive and destructive. It can save one's life by giving warmth and light, yet it can devour and destroy; it can be both friend and foe. It can soften wax, and harden clay, reduce paper to ashes, but temper iron to a useful strength. It consumes the dross, but purifies the gold. The Word alive in the believer is to some a *"savor of life unto life"* while to others it is a savor *"of death unto death"* (2 Cor. 2:16). Those who reject it are judged by it. Those who receive it rejoice in the *"wonderful words of life."*

The people to whom the OT prophet Jeremiah preached were spiritually cold and hard-hearted (Jer. 5:23). But the Lord promised His spokesman, *"I will make My words in thy mouth fire, and this peo-*



ple wood, and it shall devour them” (Jer. 5:14). Even so, after some time, discouragement set in, and the weary prophet wanted to give up on the work which God had given him to do because the task seemed too difficult, the opposition too stiff, and the response too meager. But God’s word did its work even within the reluctant man of God. He found that it was *“in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I became wearied with holding in, and I could not”* (Jer. 20:9). He had to declare God’s word!

As the two walked on the Emmaus road they conversed about the past few days in Jerusalem, and the events surrounding Jesus’ death and resurrection (Lk. 24). A Stranger drew near and entered into the discussion. *“Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself”* (Lk. 24:27). After their eyes were opened to realize that it was none other than Jesus Himself, they exclaimed, *“Was not our heart burning in us as He spoke to us on the way, and as He opened the scriptures to us?”* (Lk. 24:32).

It is recorded in his journal that on the night of John Wesley’s conversion (May 24, 1738), as he sat under the teaching of God’s Word:

About quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed! I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

Wesley’s years of struggle, doubts, and searching were brought to an end, and he was soundly saved. Indeed, *“Is not My word as a fire? saith the Lord.”*

A HAMMER

Although there are few direct references in Scripture to this picture, it warrants our attention as a vivid illustration of that same persuasive, penetrating power. Matthew Henry comments on Jeremiah 23:29,

It is compared likewise to a hammer breaking the rock in pieces. The unhumbled heart of man is like a rock; if it will not be melted by the Word of God as the fire, it will be broken to pieces by it as the hammer. Whatever opposition is given to the Word, it will be borne down and broken to pieces.

David’s heart was hardened, for after committing adultery with Bathsheba and arranging the murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 11), he was not repentant. God sent His prophet

Nathan to David. Nathan skillfully used God’s word as a hammer on David who emerged crushed and broken from the encounter. As a result David penned Psalms 32 and 51, in which His repentance is starkly visible.

In the NT we see Saul of Tarsus vehemently opposing the gospel of Jesus Christ, but eventually falling to the power of God’s word. He then experienced great opposition and persecution as he served the Lord faithfully in many places, and could testify that despite the hardness and rebellion, *“the word of God is not bound”* (2 Tim. 2:9) but rather it *“effectively works”* (1 Thess. 2:13). The book of Acts records that the word of God *“spread”* (Acts 6:7), *“grew”* (Acts 12:24), and *“mightily grew and prevailed”* (Acts 19:20), overcoming all obstacles.

Many since then could testify of having had a heart hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, of a will stubborn and rebellious, refusing to give consideration to the precious gospel. But then God in grace used His Word to wear down excuses and arguments, eventually breaking the sinner open, exposing his pride and the folly of self-dependence, bringing him trembling to the foot of the cross, acknowledging Christ alone as Saviour from sin and hell. Indeed, they have first-hand knowledge of God’s Word being *“like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces.”*

A SWORD

The Word is also like a sword. A sword has varied qualities and abilities: it can defend or attack; it can even kill. Two principle passages of Scripture are often quoted in this regard: Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17.

In the latter passage we are told to *“take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* This is the only offensive piece mentioned in Paul’s discussion of spiritual armor which God has provided for the believer. Note that though it is the sword of the *Spirit*, the believer is instructed to *“take”* it and wield it. It is His; it comes from Him; it is only effective through His working; but we are to use it. What is this sword? The spoken use of His instructions, warnings and promises as recorded in the Bible.


It was with this weapon that the Saviour met the tempter in the wilderness (Mt. 4); it is only by this that Satan can now be met. Error and falsehood cannot overcome temptation; nor can we hope for victory, unless we are armed with truth. Thus we should be diligent in the study of the Bible that we may know and understand what the truth is. Further, we should memorize Scripture texts—hiding them in our heart to meet the various forms of temptation. And we should not depend on our own rea-

son, or rely on our own wisdom. A single text of Scripture is more powerful to meet a temptation than all the philosophy which the world contains. Satan will retreat under threat of that sharp, double-edged sword.

When the believer is under trial, pressure or persecution, the needed comfort, help, strength, sustenance and protection is found in one place only—God’s Word. It cuts through the gloom and darkness and brings in the assurances of the precious promises of God, reminding us of who He is and His love and care over us. When stressed, anxious or fearful, it is the Word of God which must challenge our unbelief and drive us back to trust in Him with all our heart and not lean on our own understanding. When we have lost our way, straying from the path of righteousness, the Word is always needed to bring us to our senses, convicting of sin and disobedience, and providing a lamp for our feet and a light upon our pathway.

This sword is sharp, to be sure, and any who dare

attempt to seize it in opposition find that the double-edged sword cuts deeply! Any who love it and feel constrained to declare it to others in preaching and teaching find that it not only pierces the hearers to their hearts (Acts 2:37), but also has its influence on the bearer of it! (In fact, how often it is that the preacher is the one most convicted after declaring God’s Word.) Oh, how vulnerable it leaves us—naked before the searching glance of the holy God (Heb. 4:12). Everything—even the most intimate thoughts and innermost feelings—are analyzed and laid bare. Like a faithful, skilled surgeon the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to wound His own in order to heal.

Even in these last days, the Word of God is as powerful as it ever has been, and is still well able to penetrate, persuade, melt, purge, break, crush, and wound as the Lord intends. He declares, *“I will hasten My word to perform it”* (Jer. 1:12). So let us *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season...”* (2 Tim. 4:2). 

MONEY & HONEY

R. E. HARLOW

“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps. 19:9f).

“And it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness” (Ezek. 3:3).

Many people think that God’s commands just make everyone unhappy. But David by the Spirit declared that God’s laws and commands were more valuable than very much gold, even the best and purest gold. David saved and gave 3,000 talents of gold (about 100 tons!) for the work of the temple (1 Chron. 29:4). He knew that God’s laws were worth far more than all that money.

David loved good food, but he found that the Word of God was sweeter than the sweetest honey. He only had part of the OT, Genesis to Ruth, (that is all which was written in his time) but he loved it because it came from God.


Psalms 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, 176 verses. It is divided into 22 parts, eight verses each, all eight beginning with the same letter of the alphabet in Hebrew. The writer speaks of the word or the law of God in almost every verse. He said: *“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”* (Ps. 119:103). *“O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day”* (v. 97).

We too can love God’s Word if we keep His laws. The Old Testament contains:

1. The Law—Genesis to Deuteronomy
2. Historical books—Joshua to Esther
3. Poetry and Wisdom books—Job to Song of Solomon
4. Prophets—Isaiah to Malachi

Some parts are hard to understand, but all the books are very valuable, for they are God’s Word and will give you pleasure if you study them carefully.

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (Jer. 15:16). Honey is not sweet while you hold it in your hands. The prophet says here that he took God’s Word right into his heart and mind, and this brought him great joy. Ezekiel also ate God’s Word, and found that it tasted sweet as honey (Ezek. 3:3). We will too, if we read, study, and think about God’s Word, and obey what He says. Sometimes it may seem bitter, as it did to John (Rev. 10:9), but we know that God’s Word is good and perfect.

“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him” (Ps. 34:8). 

Adapted from *Feed on My Word* (Everyday Publications)

FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK

MAJOR GOSPEL OFFENSIVE in EUROPE

The *real* Plymouth brethren have a wonderful opportunity to impact Europe for Christ. Using a short and to-the-point TV program called *Straight Talk*, they will be able to blanket the continent from the Greenland coast to Russia and from Iceland to North Africa. The rate is reasonable and there is hope for expanding the ministry as the Lord sees fit. TV programs started Feb 7 at 8:25 AM with a repeat on Sunday at 12:30 PM on Channel 202. Please pray much for blessing.

They also have a Seekers Website in place which may be seen at www.sttv.co.uk Those interested in encouraging these brethren may contact them at:

Straight Talk Television

PO Box 328

Plymouth, PL2 3YO United Kingdom

email: enquiries@sttv.co.uk



AZ SPRING CONFERENCE

Palms Bible Fellowship, 1906 W Orangewood Av, Phoenix, AZ invite you to their annual Spring Conference, Mar 5-7 with speaker Alan Parks (SC). Ministry Friday at 7:00; Saturday 4:00; 6:30 and 7:45 with dinner served. Sunday Breaking of Bread at 9:30; FBH at 11 followed by lunch. Info. or accommodations:

David Wright 480-917-2771

Don Salter 480-948-9975

WINTER FL CONFERENCE

Visit Park of the Palms on Lake Brooklyn in north central Florida, through Mar 12. Eight weeks of excellent Bible ministry continue:
Week 1: Mr. Steve Herzig (PA)
Week 2: Mr. David Glock (IA)
Week 3: Dr. Boushra Mikhael (ON)

Week 4: Dr. Paul Irwin (ON)

Week 5: Dr. Donald Hubbard (FL)

Week 6: Mr. Roy Hill (UK)

Week 7: Dr. Daniel Smith (IA)

Week 8: Mr. Jabe Nicholson (MI)

Excellent conference accommodations. Well-built duplexes for retirees are also available. Please contact:

Park of the Palms

706 Palms Circle

Keystone Heights FL 32656-8016

352-473-4926

Fax: 352-473-6113

email: pop7@earthlink.net

Web: www.parkofthepalms.org

ALABAMA IN THE SPRING

The Christians at Hope Bible Chapel, Birmingham, AL invite you to their annual spring conference, Mar 12-14 in the will of the Lord. Joe

Reese (ON) is the invited speaker.

Contact Peter Rosborough:

205-833-2380

prosborough@juno.com.

GRAND RAPIDS MI CONF.

Christians at Northwest Gospel Hall (Grand Rapids, MI) extend an invitation to their annual conference Mar 19-21. Speakers: Brian Gunning (ON), J. B. Nicholson (MI) and Nathan Thomas (OH) with the children. Held at the facilities of White Hills Bible Church (3900 E. Fulton, Grand Rapids). Accommodations for out-of-town visitors. Contact:

Robert Snow at 616-863-9796

ONT STUDIES CONTINUE

The Oakville (ON) Bible study series for the spring 2004 season

continues with the topic of "Egypt to Canaan." All studies are held at Hopedale Bible Chapel, 342 Sherin Dr., Oakville, ON. Registration at 8:30 AM. Studies finish at noon. Speakers and topics still to come: Mar 20, R. Amos (NY), Sinai to Kadesh Barnea; Apr 17, J. Mikhael (ON), Kadesh to Jordan.

WORD ALIVE WINNIPEG

Several assemblies in the Winnipeg, MB area are hosting a ministry-intensive weekend Mar 26-28, including a Youth Rally on Friday evening, an all-day seminar on the Saturday and, along with the host assembly's regular Sunday AM meetings, an inter-assembly gospel meeting on the Sunday evening. Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON) is the invited speaker. Contact Ron Hampton: 204-669-6026 email: hampton@mts.net

DALLAS CONFERENCE

The 49th Dallas Area Conference is scheduled for Apr 2-4, Lord willing. Steve Hulshizer (PA) and Alan Parks (SC) will be ministering the Word. Meetings held at Wheatland Bible Chapel, 1303 W. Wheatland Road, Duncanville, TX. Contact: John Daniels at 972-424-9889 john_marilyn_daniels@verizon.net

ROCKFORD IL CONFERENCE

The saints at Believers Bible Chapel (Rockford, IL) invite you to attend their spring conference Apr 3-4. The invited speaker is Elie Nessim (BC). The first of five sessions will begin at 10:30 on Saturday. Contact: Will Webber at 815-964-6462 wjwebber@earthlink.net

CONFERENCE IN INDIANA

The annual spring conference at

the Gospel Chapel, 321 Cliff Dr. Logansport, IN will be on Apr 17. Expected speaker: Rob Kerr (KS). Refreshments at 9:30 AM with sessions at 10 and 11 AM. Lunch provided. Brother Kerr will also speak at the Sunday morning meeting. Contact: Ralph Garver at 574-722-1012 e-mail: Leegar@Lneti.com

VANCOUVER EASTER CONF.

The Vancouver, BC conference is planned for Apr 9-11 to be held at Granville Chapel, 5091 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC. Speakers: Dr. Boushra Mikhael (ON) and Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON). Sponsored by seven local assemblies. There will be children's programs Friday and Saturday. Contact Norman Chandler at: 604-271-1083

WEEKEND AFTER EASTER

An open platform, multiple speakers conference is planned for Apr 17-18 to be held at the Gospel Chapel, Third and Chapel Sts, Baldwin City, KS. Sessions on Saturday at 2:00, 3:45, and 7:00. On Sunday, Breaking of Bread at 9:30; ministry at 11:00 and 2:00. Contact Ray M. Jones at 785-594-3374. 819 Indiana St Baldwin City, KS 66006 email: rmjones@idir.net

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

The second annual Believers' Challenge Young Adult Retreat will be held at the Country Lake Christian Retreat Center, 20 miles north of Louisville, KY, Apr 23-25. The speaker will be Craig Shakarji (MD). Conference begins Friday night and ends Sunday afternoon. Registration closes April 2. Contact: Tim Benson at 502-477-0077 email: kysredmtn@cs.com.

CHICAGO CONFERENCE

The Chicago area Spring Conference will be held, God willing, Apr 23-25 at Palos Hills Christian Assembly, 10600 South 88th Ave, Palos Hills, IL. Speakers expected: Doug Kazen (WA); Alan Gambel (UK), and William Burnett (ON). Special children's meetings. For more details/accommodations: Robert Fiebig at 708-448-2552

LIMON CO CONFERENCE

Limon Bible Chapel, 385 J Ave, Limon, CO, has its annual conference Apr 24-25. Speakers: Dan Smith (IA), and Tom Wilson (NJ). Accommodations and meals. Limon Bible Chapel PO Box 1208 Limon, CO 80828 719-775-9788 or 346-8547

WEEKEND IN THE WORD

Rex Trogdon (NC) is to be the speaker at the annual Weekend in the Word conference Apr 30-May 2, Lord willing. Topic: "Crowns Worth Winning," a study of the believer's rewards. To be held at the Bird-in-Hand Inn, Lancaster, PA beginning on Friday at 7 PM and concludes with dinner on the Lord's Day with the Monterey assembly. Cost for weekend: \$150 (deluxe accommodations and conference meals). Contact: Mark Kolchin PO Box 305 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734 mkolchin@att.net 732-506-6798

LADIES' WINDSOR CONF.

The 27th Annual Ladies' Spring Missionary Conference will be held May 1 at Oakwood Bible Chapel, 2514 Cabana Road W, Windsor, ON. Speakers: Priscilla Masuello (Colom-

bia) and Dr. Vimala John (India). There will also be a presentation of the Ezekiel Project. Registration at 9:30 AM. Conference from 10 AM to 3 PM. Lunch provided. A nursery for children under two years old.

NEW ORLEANS CONF.

Lake Park Chapel, 201 Schlieff Dr., Belle Chasse, LA holds its 60th annual conference May 1-2. Speakers, DV: Kevin Engle (TX) and Bob Brown (LA). Meetings begin May 1 at 3:30 PM. Contact Ray Cummings:

103 Dickson Dr.
Belle Chasse, LA 70037
504-394-3087 or 504-393-7083
ibelievegodslove@juno.com

UPWARD BOUND ATLANTIC

Upward Bound Atlantic at Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, May 7-14. A week of intensive Bible study seminars including a how to study the Bible project focusing on 2 Timothy. Extensive meetings on the initial weekend for those who can't stay for the week. Speakers: J. B. Nicholson (MI), Roy Houghton (ON), Sandy McEachern (NS).

Paul DeJager at 902-435-9132
upwardboundatlantic@yahoo.ca

CLAREMONT CA CONF.

Claremont (CA) Bible Chapel will host its 13th Annual Conference May 14-16. Speakers: Doug Kazen (WA) and Willie Burnett (ON). First meeting on Friday at 7:30 PM, Saturday at 10:00 and 1:30, concluding on Sunday. Info/accommodations:

J. Harry Elliott at 909-621-1064
email: jhdelliott@aol.com

IRELAND TnT TEAMS 2004

Teach and Testify (TnT) Teams Ireland is a cross-cultural missions opportunity that doesn't require

knowing another language to be effective. After three days of cross-cultural orientation and evangelism training, team members are hosted by assemblies in Ireland and involved in a concentrated 17-day program of evangelism and ministering to Irish believers. Various methods of evangelism. The program (May 25-Jun 17) concludes with a 3-day sightseeing tour. Must be 18 or older, in good health, believe that the Lord would have you get involved in this work, and someone whom your home assembly would recommend for this. Contact Ron Hampton at:

874 London St
Winnipeg, MB R2K 3P7
Ron.Hampton@TnTTeams.org
204-669-6026

PA MEN'S RETREAT

The annual men's retreat will be held at Camp Iroquoina on Mar 13. Overnight accommodations available Friday or Saturday. Tom Taylor (PA) is the scheduled speaker. Expect another good time in the Word. Pre-registration is required. Contact:

Tom Freeman at 609-585-1835
tfreeman3@juno.com

UPWARD BOUND ONTARIO

Upward Bound Ontario will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON Aug 15-27. The first week consists of numerous Bible study seminars on various doctrinal and practical topics. A canoe trip in Algonquin Park is planned Aug 22-27. Speakers: Rex Trogdon (NC), Brian Russell (UK), Brian Cretney (ON), Craig Beattie (ON), Joe Mikhael (ON), Charlie Tempest (ON), Sandy McEachern (NS).

S. McEachern at 902-420-9489
sandy-mceachern@hotmail.com.

VIRGINIA BIBLE STUDY

A Bible study on the Tabernacle is meeting in Galax, VA. Contact Scott Campbell: amalot@psknet.com
76-236-3242 or 276-773-2259
Bob Phipps: 276-773-2116

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Elie and Judith Nessim (BC):
eljnessim@shaw.ca

ADDRESS CHANGE

Slidell Bible Chapel has the same location, but a different address:
59334 North Pearl Drive
Slidell, LA 70461

COMMENDATIONS

Jean-Luc and Jeanne Tabailoux

The Christians at Norwood Gospel Chapel would like to formalize the commendation of Jean-Luc and Jeanne Tabailoux. They have served the Lord many years in France and they would like to officially commend them to the work of the Lord there.

Jimmy Allen

The Jefferson City (MO) Bible Chapel has commended Jimmy Allan to the Lord's work. Jimmy has served the Lord in the camp ministry at Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp for several summers, being in full time work at the camp since May, 2003. He is active in the assembly and young people's ministry. The assembly would ask us to pray for him that as a servant of the Lord Jesus he would be faithful and fruitbearing.

CORRECTION

The Nov/Dec *Uplook* gave incorrect phone and fax numbers for the Connaught Home. They should be:
Phone: 819-842-2164
Fax: 819-842-2667

GOD WORKS IN UTAH

Known as headquarters for Mormonism, Utah is also home to some fledgling assemblies.

Roger Wardell

The following is an update of the work in Utah in the Ogden area. It's been five years since UPLOOK magazine was instrumental in bringing us together to form the assembly here. There have been believers in other parts of the state (especially Salt Lake City area and south) who have called us regarding the assembly. Many of them got our address from UPLOOK or its staff. It is too far for them to meet with us in Ogden so we are prayerful that an assembly will be established there at some point.

HEARTS KNIT TOGETHER IN LOVE

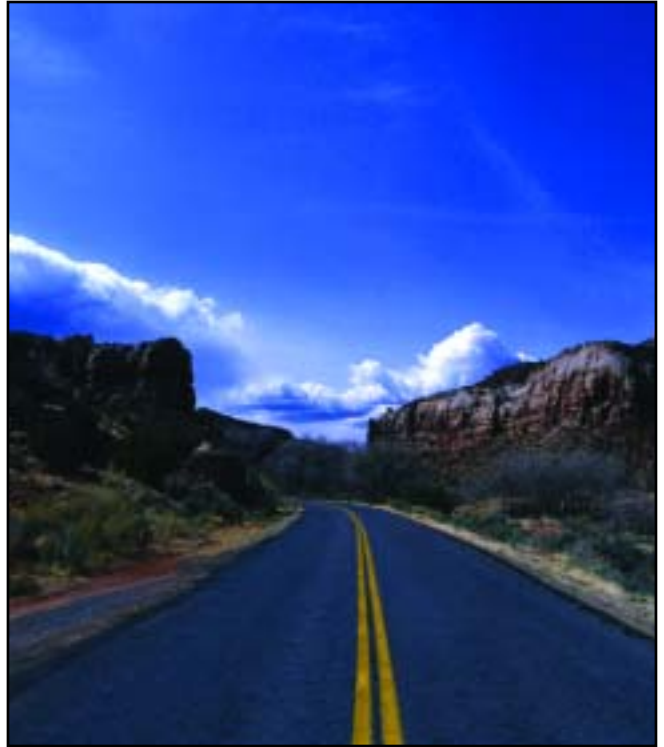
This February marks the fifth year that believers here moved from meeting in various homes to breaking bread together as an assembly body. Just as Utah is a crossroads of the West, this assembly has been a crossroads of various spiritual backgrounds brought together by the Lord for His glory. He has not only brought us together; He has knit us together in love for Him and each other through intense personal spiritual growth and building a foundation of respect and unity in Him collectively.

A FACILITY FOR MEETING

Now it seems He wants that spiritual building process to also take on a physical permanence. Still a small group of believers, we have flexibly met in rented rooms and homes in the Ogden area yet haven't been able to settle in a consistent place. Circumstances and health concerns have kept us migrating. Many of the families have some sort of severe allergies that limit the places where we can meet. Several families carry emergency nebulizers, asthma, and anaphylactic medications at all times.

Our first place came into question when the landlord painted, carpeted, and refinished the floors—all allergy hotspots. We temporarily moved to homes while the chemicals dissipated.

When we came back we found out the landlord had suddenly died from a heart attack and the building was going to be sold. Meeting in homes didn't turn out to be a steady solution since someone with a sensitive immune system is easily prone to illness. So at the last minute a



host family may have to cancel.

We have since been meeting in convention rooms at a local motel, mostly. We commonly have to meet in homes again when all the rooms are needed for a larger convention. We worked with that until the weekend when the hotel hosted a dog event in one of the rooms. After that one of the children went into a severe reaction and almost ended up in the emergency room.

Then one Sunday morning the room next door hosted a 'praise gathering' with music so loud during the warm up we could not hear each other. After talking to them we were able to get about half an hour of lower volume before the concert began. Afterwards the brethren discussed their situation and felt we should be very much in prayer about the Lord's leading. There were three criteria that we felt needed to be met:

1. A meeting place where all the saints and their families could come with a minimal amount of physical consequences.
2. A meeting place that would be consistent. As a 'cross-

roads of the west' with I-15 & I-80 intersecting in the Salt Lake area, we are blessed with visitors traveling through. It is not only nice for *us* to know where we are going every Sunday—it would be nice for *them* too!

3. A place with kitchen facilities to enable the believers to fellowship when desired.

The logical conclusion was that we needed a place that we could have for the long term and would be able to adapt it to the specific needs of the saints. Aside from buying a place, this is almost impossible to find. Yet buying a property and renovating it seemed to be cost prohibitive, but every other road we had explored was a dead end.

PRAY FOR APPROVAL

After much prayer, we decided to seek the Lord's will regarding purchasing a building. Shortly after that, the Lord brought to our attention a property for sale in the residential Ogden area. A former neighborhood grocery store converted to a dance school, it seems tailor-made to our needs. The dance school put in hardwood floors (a significant hypo-allergenic feature) and it has three specific areas we could modify for meeting area, kitchen, and entryway.

Because the city changed the zoning to "single family residential" the owner was having a difficult time in selling since prospective buyers couldn't get bank financing. We made an offer on the property based on seller financing with the down payment we had. They accepted.

However we still need Site Plan Approval from the city of Ogden before the deal can be finalized. The city guidelines for church buildings require one parking space per

40 square feet of the 'sanctuary.' The property only has parking spaces for less than half of the city's requirements. Because the Lord has opened everything so smoothly compared to our previous experiences, we have peace that He will overcome this obstacle as well, or have something even better in mind. We value your prayers in this area as the brethren go to the city to get approval.

As a small gathering of believers, it seems unnecessary to buy a building, yet the Lord seems to be showing us that He thinks it is necessary for the assembly here. And He has used allergies and circumstances among other things to lead us this way. We have a general feeling here that the Lord has a new chapter in mind, of which the building plays a needed part.

In the process of buying the building, we decided to change the assembly's name to Ogden Area Christians since most of the Christians live in this area. We see the Lord working in the Salt Lake City area and south and are prayerful that assemblies will be established in those areas as well.

We are so thankful for the prayers of those interested in what the Lord has been building in Utah. As He brings us through various experiences we are reminded over and over how this is truly His assembly and His work in Utah both in all our lives and those around us as well.

Contact information:

Roger Wardell
2130 W 700 S
Syracuse, UT 84075
801-779-2913 or 801-721-0822
rwardell@webpipe.net



DUBLIN ASSEMBLY SEEKS PRAYERS OF SAINTS

Although Dublin celebrated its millennium in 1988, the first known settlement there was called Eblana, mentioned by 2nd century geographer Ptolemy. The official name *Baile Átha Cliath* (Town of the Hurdle Ford) comes from an ancient river crossing. The prosperous trading port grew where the River Poddle joined the River Liffey in a black pool, in Gaelic *dubh linn*. The city now encompasses a third of Ireland's population.

Assembly life in Dublin has a significant history. Here in the early 1800s believers began to meet simply to remember the Lord—first in a house on Fitzwilliam Square,

then in an auction house on Aungier Street. Many beloved truths rediscovered in those days in Ireland have since blessed thousands worldwide and many *Uplook* readers are the grateful recipients. Now the believers who have been meeting for 10 years in the southern part of the city (Shanganagh) in a rented room are looking for premises of our own. They have a good start made on a building fund and believe that the time is right to move ahead as the Lord leads. Please pray with them regarding this. Anyone interested in encouraging the saints there may contact:

Home: + 353 1 285 6581 Eric Davis, 20 Watson Ave, Killiney, Co. Dublin, Ireland email: ecdavis@aol.com
Office Ph/Fax: + 353 284 3093

WHAT A BOOK!

“For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven” (Ps. 119:89).

“ We may be sure that all these things happened just as they are set out according to Holy Writ. The impressions these people received were faithfully recorded and have been transmitted across the centuries with far more accuracy than many of the telegraphed accounts of goings-on today. In the words of a forgotten work of Mr. Gladstone [former British Prime Minister William E. Gladstone, 1809-1898, ed.], we rest with assurance upon “The impregnable rock of Holy Scriptures”. Let the men of science and learning expand their knowledge and pride and prove with their researches every detail of the records which have been preserved to us from those dim ages. All they will do is to fortify the grand simplicity and essential accuracy of the recorded truths which have lighted so far the pilgrimage of man. —SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL (1874-1965), excerpted from his Essays ”

THE PRICELESS GEM by JOHN G. WHITTIER (1807-1892)

“O lady fair, these silks of mine
are beautiful and rare,
The richest web of the Indian loom,
which beauty’s queen might wear;
And my pearls are pure as thine own fair neck,
with whose radiant light they vie;
I have brought them with me a weary way—
will my gentle lady buy?”

And the lady smiled on the worn old man
through her dark and clustering curls
Which veiled her brow as she bent to view
his silks and glittering pearls;
And she placed their price in the old man’s hand
and lightly turned away,
But then she paused at the traveller’s call—
“My gentle lady, stay!”

“O lady fair, I have yet a gem
which a purer luster flings,
Than the diamond flash of the jewelled crown
on the lofty brow of kings—
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price,
whose virtues shall not decay,
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee
and a blessing on thy way!”

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel
where her form of grace was seen,
Where her eyes shone clear and her dark locks waved
their clasping pearls between;
“Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth,
Thou wanderer gray and old—
And name the price of thy precious gem,
and my page shall count thy gold.

The cloud withdrew from the pilgrim’s brow
as a small and meager book—
Unchased with gold or gem of cost—
from his folding robe he took.
“Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price,
may it prove as such to thee!
Nay—keep thy gold—I ask it not,
for the Word of God is free!”

The hoary traveller went his way,
but the gift he left behind
Has done its pure and perfect work
on the high-born maiden’s mind.
And she has turned from the pride of sin
to the lowliness of truth,
And given her yielding heart to God
in the beautiful hour of youth.



THEY ARE SPIRIT & THEY ARE LIFE

Watch the Word at work. This book is alive!

Randy Amos

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 6:63).

Definition of His Words

Some things are not only defined by what they are but also by what they are not. For example, in defining the color black we will say what it is not; it is the absence of light. The words of our Lord Jesus are not flesh. That is, they are not natural human reasoning and intellect like the myriad of human philosophies (of which we are to beware, Col. 2:8) that abound today. They are not the letter of the law (external religious rituals), for that kills (2 Cor. 3:6). They are not vain (empty, *i.e.*, devoid of truth) words that deceive (Eph. 5:6). Rather they are of God's realm: spirit. Thus the words of the Lord Jesus are living, able to impart God's kind of life—eternal (Jn. 6:68).

Discovery by His Words

Where there is life there is discovery; an increase of understanding. A child (because it has the spirit of life), unlike a rock (which doesn't), will increase in understanding. It is the words of the Lord Jesus Christ not only on earth (in the Gospels) but also from heaven (Acts and the Epistles) that can bring a believer into a correct and a more full knowledge of God and His ways. When the Lord Jesus wanted to exhort the seven churches of Asia to follow God-pleasing paths, He pointed them not to man's ways and wisdom, but to His own written words to them. And He equated heeding His words to hearing what *"the Spirit saith unto the churches."*

Dynamics of His Words

Since the Lord Jesus' words (unlike man's) are spirit, they are therefore life. As life, they have a dynamic to them. Spirits that are living possess certain dynamics such as growth, intelligence, power, emotion, etc.—which set them apart from inanimate objects. Thus the Lord's words, when taken in by faith, will have a dynamic to them. They can produce the following.



Growth. *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby"* (1 Pet. 2:2).

Joy. *"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full"* (Jn. 15:11).

Hope. *"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the truth of the gospel"* (Col. 1:5).

Operating Intelligence (Wisdom). *"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"* (Col. 3:16).

Power. *"For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"* (Heb. 4:12). *"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"* (1Thess. 2:13).

Direction from His Words

In every area of life we will come to a crossroad concerning the words of the Lord Jesus. It will be spirit (God's way) versus the flesh (man's way). The flesh is in contrast to our Lord's words: natural, divorced from the Spirit of God. The flesh is not from above, but earthly. It is death, not life. And the flesh profits nothing. The following are some areas where the battle rages between the flesh (man's natural ways) and the Spirit (the Lord Jesus' words of life).

Justification

Flesh: False gospels abound that inject human effort (flesh) into fully securing one's eternal salvation.

Spirit: One who is born anew by the Spirit has been given that new life by His Word, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pe. 1:23). The Lord's Word further teaches that justification is totally by faith alone in Christ alone – from beginning to end. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16)

Sanctification

Flesh: To be placed into God's family for His holy use (sanctification) also does not involve human effort. False doctrines abound that try to put the believer back under law (legalism) as a principle, lifestyle, and securer of God's favor.

Spirit: The Galatians were given the Lord's words so they should live the same way they started: faith alone in Christ and by His Spirit. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3).

Morals

Flesh: 2 Corinthians 7:1 speaks of the "filthiness of the flesh." There are many things that the world considers normal and one's rights today. They might even be legal.

Spirit: It is only the Lord's Word that will give direction in life as to what is truly right and wrong. One can be legally right and yet morally wrong. We know what the "works of the flesh" are because the Lord's Word defines them for us: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

Mind

Flesh: Colossians 2:18 speaks of someone "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (a mind not knowing the things of the living Spirit—the words of the Lord Jesus). This man finds it natural to lean toward human philosophies and traditions that seem to work and promise deeper insight into the mind of God.

Spirit: Here will be a mind that lets "the Word of Christ

dwelt in you richly in all knowledge" (Col. 3:16). Thus this mind is renewed and has the strength to survive in decision making. It will have right direction as it casts down human reasoning and brings every thought to the obedience of Christ and His Word (2 Cor. 10:5).

Marriage

Flesh: The marriage covenant and relationship is in disarray today. To break a marriage vow was once considered sin. Now it is simply considered irreconcilable differences. Multiple marriages are fairly normal and if everybody is "happy," no one protests anymore. Human reasoning and feelings (the flesh) now abound in this issue.

Spirit: The Lord's Word does address the area of marriage. And His words are life, not death. They will only bring the best to those who follow Him. His words concerning the duration of the marriage covenant are recorded in Romans 7:1-3 and 1 Corinthians 7.

Worship


Flesh: It is possible to worship wrongly: not in the spirit but in the flesh (Phil. 3:3). The spirit is an unseen realm appropriated by faith, while the flesh is a visible realm appropriated by the senses. There is much "worship" today that is geared to evoke the human senses rather than the heart of God simply in Christ.

Spirit: The Lord Jesus says: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:24). When it comes to true worship it will be in the realm of the Spirit (what the unseen Spirit produces in the heart) and grounded in the truth of God.

Church

Flesh: Second Corinthians 7:1 also speaks of the "filthiness of the...spirit." There is not only moral sin but also religious sin which offends God in His house. Second Corinthians 11:18 speaks of many in the Church who "glory after the flesh." They go by the external and the emotional. They delight in what looks good and feels good, that which produces outward success.

Spirit: However, one who is truly "spiritual" according to God is one who acknowledges the written commandments of the Lord Jesus for the assembly meeting and keeps His Word (1 Cor. 14:37; Rev. 3:8).

The words of the Lord Jesus touch every area of life. May we in faith display our full dependence on Him as we trust His Word, preach the Word and keep the Word until He comes. To follow the words of the Lord Jesus to His church is not legalism, but life and love (Jn. 14:15). This is what pleases the Lord of the churches (Rev. 3:8). 

WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

TURKEY: LAND OF THE EARLY CHURCHES

The Republic of Turkey is a land in the middle. Geographically it straddles two continents—Europe and Asia—making it a crossroads through history. More importantly it straddles two cultures. The Turks today are a different people than those of Asia Minor in NT times, many of whom responded to the gospel. Present-day Turks are mostly a Central Asian people who swept west in the 11th Century, conquering almost everything in their path. For hundreds of years the Ottoman empire, based in Turkey, was the guardian of all of Islam’s holy shrines.

World War I saw the demise of the empire and the establishment (officially) of a secular state. However in recent years Islam has made substantial political gains. The constitution guarantees religious freedom but harassment of believers is common, although there has been improvement since 2000 in some areas. A full 80% of the population is Sunni Muslim, making up the large bulk of the 99.64% Muslim country (*Operation World*).

A worker in Izmir, Turkey writes:

We have some good co-workers in a fellowship here in Izmir that was started in 1996 (before we moved to Turkey). Our model for the work is simple: 1. preach the good news; 2. strengthen disciples; 3. appoint elders; 4. leave; 5. visit to encourage—with “Timothy” types men alongside, who will in turn repeat the process of 1-5 themselves. The model comes from Acts 13–16 and 1 & 2 Timothy; it was used in this same region 2000 years ago.

There are half a million in the busy district where we meet and ours is the only fellowship in this area. We are thinking of buying a building for meeting the needs of the current fellowship (we are overcrowded in the small office space we now rent); also to have facilities for an outreach center in the community (as Turkey prepares to join the EU this makes us more legitimate in the eyes of the public). We would also like to use it as a training center for workers to unreached cities (there are 2 areas to the north of us that already have a few families and potential for this). We are starting a fund for a building in the area of the city where our fellowship meets. We are also looking for 1 or 2 teachers (or helpers) to work in a co-op school for a few foreign families here in Izmir for nine months starting Sep 2004. It would be a voluntary position, but we would pay for all housing costs and help with some other costs as well.



DEATH DOCTORS

Doctors in the Netherlands kill approximately 1,000 patients each year without prior consent. This figure was presented by Professor Henk Jochemsen, director of the Dutch Institute for Ethics in Medicine. The Netherlands was the first European country to legalize “physician assisted suicide” in April 2002. The law requires that the patient suffers from

an incurable illness, freely demands the termination of life, that a second medical opinion is heard, and the death is reported to the authorities.

But, according to Jochemsen, doctors often dodge these requirements. An anonymous survey had shown that in approximately 25% of the 3,600 annual cases no second medical opinion was sought and that only 45% of all cases were registered.

One in three patients asked for their lives to be terminated because they regarded themselves as an unbearable burden to their next of kin. Manfred Spieker, Professor for Christian Social Sciences at the German university of Osnabrueck, warned that “death on demand” was prone to regard patients as mere objects and cost factors.

—*Maranatha Christian News Service*

BEHOLDING AS IN A MIRROR

A mirror links two worlds: the real world and the reflected world. On which side are we?

Patrick Long

The old chorus said, “God’s Word is like a...mirror ourselves to see.” James tells us that it is possible for us to look into that mirror, “*the perfect law of liberty*,” and to either change our ways, or leave things as they are.

If any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (Jas. 1:23-25).

To what is he referring?

THE LAW

God’s law reveals, not only His commandments for us, but also His character. As we look into His law, our shortcomings are revealed to us in the light of what He has commanded and in view of His perfections. “*Be ye holy as I am holy*” is His command to us as well as the various commandments dealing with our worship of Him alone and our relationships with others.

POSITIVE EXAMPLES

Too often our role models are taken from a secular society whose values are diametrically opposed to God’s standards. The Bible is filled with accounts of men and women who lived lives pleasing to God: our Lord Jesus, David, Hannah, Paul, Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Barnabas, to name only a few. Often one particular aspect of their life is also identified for us to imitate. Only when we spend time in God’s Word meditating on those that He approves of, and seeking to pattern our lives after them, will we also be found walking as He would have us.

We read of the men and women of faith in Hebrews 11, and learn that these are the ones that God is pleased with,

and as we are surrounded by this witness, we understand that He wants us to live as they did.

NEGATIVE EXAMPLES

We read the account of Saul, and are warned that obedience is what counts. We read of Diotrephes and seek to avoid the sin of wanting to have the preeminence. We read of Lot and understand something of what it means to make the wrong choices. We read of Peter, and weep with him as he denied his Lord.

Even some of the obscure passages that tell of the failures of men and women who only briefly come onto the pages of Scripture can serve as warnings to us.

A MIRROR TO SEE CHRIST

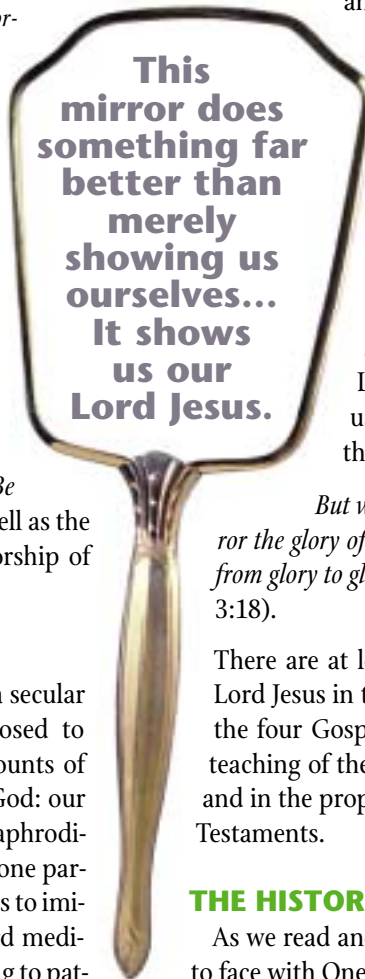
However, this mirror does something far better than merely showing us ourselves. More importantly it shows us our Lord Jesus, and as we study what it shows us about Him, we are transformed into that same image.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).

There are at least four ways in which we can see our Lord Jesus in the Scriptures: in the historical record of the four Gospels and the first chapter of Acts; in the teaching of the NT Epistles; in the typology of the OT; and in the prophetic passages of both the Old and New Testaments.

THE HISTORICAL RECORD

As we read and meditate on the Gospels we come face to face with One who excels in every way. Our Lord Jesus is the One whose words and deeds never conflict with the perfections of His person. It is important that we not only study the Gospels with this in mind, but that we also meditate on them. It is important that we allow His glories, in



every aspect of His person, to overwhelm us, and to cultivate in us a greater love for, and devotion to, Him.

In the Gospels we see the beauty of the Scripture in giving a fourfold view of our Lord Jesus. We must not come with a question in our minds as to whether or not differences in the records constitute contradiction. Each of the Gospel writers brings us a different faithful view of the same blessed person. Indeed, we could have a thousand views, but God in His wisdom has given us four. As we look at the various other witnesses to our Lord, in the Old and New Testaments, this fourfold aspect takes on a special significance (the four living creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation, for example).

THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES

Three of the epistles are known as Christological in that they focus on three aspects of the person of our Lord Jesus. They were written at a time when the deity of our Lord was under attack, and Paul gives us three views of our Lord, focusing on His headship, His relationship to His people, and His humiliation. In each of the three epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, there is much teaching directed to our day to day living, but it is important to keep in mind that in each case it flows from the doctrinal teaching of the first part of the epistle. This would reinforce what Paul tells us (2 Cor. 3:18) that it is as we gaze upon Him that we are changed.

It is not only in the Christological epistles that we learn of our Lord. When we come to those epistles that focus on our salvation, we learn there of what He has done, and the depths of His love. The epistle to the Romans is primarily concerned with the truths of the Gospel, and how God's righteousness is consistently displayed in it, and yet we pause when we come to passages like that found in Romans 8 where "*the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" is dealt with.

The Epistle to the Hebrews focuses on our Lord Jesus, God's Son, who is superior in every way: to the angelic beings, to Moses, to Aaron; as regards the covenants, the sanctuary, the sacrifices, and the promises. We learn of His faithfulness, that He is without sin, that He is the fulfillment of all the OT pictures, and that it is through Him that we have access to the very throne of God.

Also, the writers of the epistles sometimes use titles for our Lord Jesus that can also be helpful. One example would be Peter's statement about "*the chief Shepherd*." As we think about these various titles, they help us come to know our Lord better.

TYPOLGY

Turning back to the OT we are brought to the subject of typology. Typology has sometimes suffered from too little attention, and sometimes from too much. We tend to go to extremes in matters like this, and sometimes lose sight of what the Lord wishes to teach us. A type could be described as "a divinely-purposed historical person, object, or event which prefigures a NT person or doctrine." An example of a type would be the smitten rock in the wilderness. Paul refers to it in 1 Corinthians 10:4. We could learn from this picture in the OT that Christ was smitten for us, that He was only smitten once, and that the life-giving water flowed as a result of this smiting.

The types of the OT are a beautiful source of teaching regarding the person and work of our Lord Jesus. Who of us would not benefit from a study of Passover, the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, the Tabernacle and its furniture, the Feasts of the Lord, and other such things that help us learn more about Him?

PROPHETIC PASSAGES IN THE SCRIPTURES

The prophetic books of the OT are in two groups, the larger ones, and the smaller ones. Seventeen books, written over a long period of time, giving us glimpses into what God has in store for His people. In doing so, they reveal much about the One who was, is, and will be the center of His plans: our Lord Jesus.

We learn of His eternal nature (Micah 5:2), that He is very God (Isa. 9:6), and many other things concerning His person. Who is not moved as they read Isaiah 53, and read of the One who is "*the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief*"? In Zechariah we read of the One who was pierced and is also the One who bears the glory and the crowns. Daniel tells us of His authority and rule in the end times.

The last book in our Bibles is "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*" and we see Him in all His glory as the One who has conquered death, and who has the right to take the scroll, and who will put down all His enemies.

IN CONCLUSION

In Psalm 73 Asaph tells us that it was when he came in the sanctuary that he understood the important things in life. Would to God we also would spend time in the sanctuary of His presence, with His Word open before us, to learn more of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Then we will know what it is to be changed into His image, from glory to glory through the ministry of "*the Lord the Spirit*."



MILK & SOLID FOOD

Milk is food where someone else has done the chewing!

Paul Campbell

It is hard to describe our daughter Anna's delight as she anticipated her bedtime bottle of milk. Her face would light up, her eyes widen, her desire intensify as she uttered that single word, "Bottle!"—more a laugh than a statement. We couldn't help laughing with her at her obvious excitement. And the sigh of contentment once she received her bottle and snuggled into Mommy's or Daddy's arms was hard to miss. Her enjoyment of the bottle of warm milk was only outdone by her determination to finish it as quickly as possible.

The NT describes the edible Word of God in two ways: as milk and as solid food. What you eat more will determine your present spiritual maturity. There is no shame in drinking the milk of the Word, especially if you're a new or young Christian. After all, babies and children need their milk. Peter admonishes all Christians to crave the Word as newborn babes long for their milk (1 Pet. 2:2), though he undoubtedly has more than just spiritual "milk" in mind. But in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and Hebrews 5:11–6:3, believers are encouraged to move on to solid food. We all need to intensely desire the milk and solid food of the Word!

Wholesome Feeding = Holy Living

Each of the three NT passages referring to the milk and solid food of the Scriptures connects feeding on God's Word to holy living. In 1 Corinthians 3:1-4, Paul states that he had to feed the Corinthians with milk and not solid food because they were unable to handle anything more than the simplest food. He goes on to say they "*are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*" In this case, their fleshly behavior is an evidence of their inability to handle deeper spiritual truths (solid food). Is our conduct so much like the world's that Paul would have to talk to us in the same way?

In 1 Peter 1:23-25, Peter stresses the contrast between the eternal Word of God and our short-lived human exist-



tence. All flesh, he says, is like grass—here today and gone tomorrow! In contrast, "*the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.*" In light of this sharp contrast, Peter then urges his readers to get rid of the fleshly behavior exhibited among them: "*all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings*" (2:1), and to intensely desire the pure milk of the Word. Why continue in such wicked, dishonest, slanderous, unChristlike conduct when it—like our short lives—is like a patch of grass about to wither and die in the scorching sun? Get rid of the ways of the flesh which are short-lived and lead only to death. Like newborn babes, long instead for the pure, untainted, eternally valuable milk and solid food of the Word!

The writer to the Hebrews echoes the same idea: proper living comes from proper eating. "*For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the Word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat [solid food] belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*" (Heb. 5:13-14). Children need to be trained to drink from a cup, use a knife and fork, and not throw food on the floor. So too, spiritual children need

training—training in righteousness. Holy living is largely unattainable for those who continue on a diet of only spiritual milk. We should not expect to be spoon-fed from the Bible rather than digging into it to feed ourselves. How many of us rely almost entirely upon devotional books written and pre-digested by someone else? These can be a blessing as long as they don't become our only source of Bible food. Our growth in righteousness corresponds to our feeding on, and making an effort to understand, the solid food of the Word personally.

Can I Handle It?

Just as holy living is related to a balanced spiritual diet, so our level of spiritual maturity will determine our capacity to appreciate God's heart and mind. The Corinthians were believers and indwelt by the Spirit, yet they were unable to take in what Paul wanted to explain to them because they were fleshly and immature in their Christian life (1 Cor. 3:1-2). Similarly, in Hebrews 5, the writer longs to be able to explain in more detail the sufferings and High Priestly ministry of Christ but cuts short his teaching "*seeing ye are dull of hearing*" and these things are "*hard to be uttered*" (Heb. 5:11) or difficult to explain. Those believers lost out because of their own spiritual immaturity.

How often is this the case with us? Are we unable to appreciate more of the will and mind of God due to our own lack of effort in thinking about and studying the Word for ourselves? How does this make our Saviour feel?

Three Supernatural Stages

In 1 John 2:12-14, John the apostle suggests there are three general levels of maturity for believers. "*Little children*" corresponds to new or young believers. They have a fresh appreciation of being forgiven their sins and enjoy an intimate relationship with their newly-discovered heavenly Father. "*Young men*" corresponds to a middle category of believers who are growing in the Lord. They are spiritually strong and are conscious of overcoming the evil one. While the little children are conscious of overcoming the penalty of sin, the young men are overcoming the power of sin in their lives because "*the Word of God abideth in you*" (v. 14). They have made the food of the Word an integral part of their lives. "*Fathers*" corresponds to mature believers. Consistency in their walk with the Lord is evident in that it says twice about them that they "*have known Him that is from the beginning*" (vv. 13-14). They have an intimate and steadfast knowledge of the Eternal One and are anticipating deliverance which will come from the presence of sin.

However, the supernatural progress seen in the maturation of believers can be hindered or even reversed through worldliness or carelessness. Paul had to say to the Corinthian Christians, "*I have fed you with milk, and not with meat [solid food]: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able*" (1 Cor. 3:2). They should have progressed beyond the infant stage, but their carnal behavior was evidence of their stunted spiritual growth.

The Hebrew Christians had the opposite problem. They had regressed from spiritual maturity and needed milk again (Heb. 5:12). They should have been able to teach the Word and instead they needed to be retaught their spiritual ABCs.

How many of God's people find themselves in one of these two predicaments? Have you failed to progress beyond the infant stage and is it evident in your immature attitudes and behavior? Or were you once further ahead spiritually than you are now but have let things slip? Is there a way to regain lost ground and make real spiritual progress? Let's look again at 1 Peter 2.

Growth by Appreciation

"*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*" This causal statement in verse 3 is key to understanding the secret of spiritual growth: "*If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*" If the goodness of God leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4), then the grace of God teaches us to live godly lives in anticipation of our Lord's return (Titus 2:11-13). Think back to times when you tasted the grace of God. How did He save you? How has He helped you? In what ways has He provided for you? We have tasted His grace in the past. A renewed appetite for the enjoyment of His grace will increase our hunger for more of His Word.

Perhaps your Christian life is not what it should be. What can you do? First, desire to get rid of any known sin in your life (1 Pet. 2:1). Second, reflect on God's great kindness to you and desire to know Him better through His Word (v. 2). Read it over, think about what it says, memorize key verses, and discover more about our wonderful Saviour. What will happen? You will discover why the Father finds His Son so precious (vv. 4-7), because as you feed on the milk and solid food of the Word, you will find Him precious, too! It is through the true knowledge of Him that we grow and mature in our salvation.



AUTHORITY & SUFFICIENCY

God is as good as His Word.

Jim Cormack

The fact that the Bible is authoritative and sufficient has many implications in our lives. We want to consider three of them.

1. *The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, are the final authority in all matters of Christian conduct and doctrine.*

2. *The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, contain all that the present day believer requires to live a godly life.*

3. *The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, contain all that the Church of today requires to function in the way He intended it should.*



That there is a steady stream of new Christians who need to be taught these truths is a matter for rejoicing. But it is cause for concern that these same truths often have to be defended within today's Christian community.

While very few of us as individuals, and even the assemblies or churches we attend, have any difficulty accepting that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God, there does seem to be a problem when it comes to applying that truth in our lives. How else can we account for the wide range of principles either practiced or discarded by believers today? The same Holy Spirit indwells all believers and, at least in this country, we all have access to the same Scriptures and various helps to assist us in understanding the Bible's meaning and intent. Yet today there is massive confusion as to what we should believe and practice. New and old believers alike are making decisions with many of the old landmarks removed. And the confusion is not a passive one. Broken friendships and fellowships are all around us. None can escape their effects, and we ignore them at our peril.

FINAL AUTHORITY

The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, are the final authority in all matters of Christian conduct and doctrine. If they are not, then what or who is? *"All Scripture is*

given by God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:15-16).

Today, many people look to the example of others rather than the Scriptures. Through the years God has used people despite their differing doctrines and practices. However we cannot use that as our standard. Nor can we take refuge in the catechism or statement of faith of our church. *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isa. 8:20). So it was with God's people then; so it is with us now.

The question, "If God uses people despite their differences, then do differences matter?" must be balanced against the question, "Are God's requirements relevant?" If we say that results or personal preferences are what matters, and fail to submit ourselves to the teaching of Scripture, or refuse to give God the benefit of the doubt, then our actions show that we no longer consider His requirements and commands relevant.

The problem is not new, although in recent years it seems to have become more common. Certainly many of those known by some as Open Brethren and those who claim only to have roots in them are experiencing unprecedented change.

John Knox, the 16th century Scottish Reformer, records this discussion with the Roman Catholic Queen of Scotland, Mary:

Queen Mary: "Ye interpret the Scriptures in one manner, and they in another. Whom shall I believe? Who shall be the judge?"

Knox: "Ye shall believe God, that plainly speaketh in His Word, and further than the Word teacheth you, ye shall believe neither the one nor the other; the Word of God is plain in itself. If there appear any obscurity in one place, the Holy Ghost, which is never contrarious to Himself, explains the same more clearly in other places; so that there can

remain no doubt, but unto such as obstinately will remain ignorant.”

So then, whether it is the original writers or the godly who have followed in their footsteps, there has been no other standard for conduct and doctrine than the Bible.

ALL THAT THE BELIEVER NEEDS

The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, contain all that the present day believer requires to live a godly life. If they do not, then what does? Peter states (2 Pet. 1:2-4):

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and Our Lord Jesus Christ. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Why should we have any doubt about the sufficiency of Scripture for a godly life? Note that Peter tells us that our possession of “*all things that pertain unto life and godliness*” is dependent on our knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue. And our partaking of the divine nature comes from God’s “*great and precious promises.*” What is the source of our knowledge of Him? Where do we read of His promises? In the Word of God.

Apart from the Bible’s being inspired, the testimonies of godly people through the centuries attest to the Bible’s sufficiency. While God used the writings of others in the lives of these heroes of faith, their power can be seen to be their knowledge and use of the Scriptures.

ALL THAT THE CHURCH NEEDS

The holy Scriptures, being inspired by God, contain all that the Church of today requires to function in the way He intended it should. If they do not, then what does?

This is without doubt the greatest source of contention among us today. Few would argue that the Scriptures contain instruction for the functioning of the Church. The divergence is in whether we believe it contains too little, too much, or just the right amount.

Those who believe it contains too little and those who believe it contains too much often base their arguments on the same points. Some claim that having been written so long ago, all of today’s problems have not been addressed and therefore the Bible must be supplemented in order to make our message more relevant. Others, for the same reason of antiquity, claim that much was written to address

problems that no longer exist, and so those portions are irrelevant for today and can be discarded. Cultural practice and changing society are also used as reason to either add to or subtract from what God has written. Any uncertainty on the part of the reader is often taken as license to do as one pleases. But the Scriptures state: “*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you*” (Deut. 4:2).

When we look at how God meticulously designed and conveyed His requirements for worship and conduct to His people in the OT, can we really believe that He would leave His people of the New without equivalent guidance? Can we believe that Christ would leave the Church for which He died unsure of how to represent Him among all nations, in every age, exactly as He wanted to be represented? Or that knowing our nature He would deliberately leave us to do as we saw fit? No, we believe God wrote His instructions for the governing of a local church to cover everything that might be encountered in every culture as the gospel spread throughout the world during these last two thousand years.

John Knox pinpointed the problem when he wrote, “Man always thinks he can derive a more perfect honoring of God than that which He Himself has commanded.”

Herman Witsius, a 17th century Dutch theologian, dealing with man’s approach to God in worship since Adam’s time said, “In the matters of religion, nothing pleases Him, but what Himself has commanded. All will-worship is condemned.”

Daniel faced this problem, too. “*We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments*” (Dan. 9:5).

Our time here is short and we have been left here to witness to the truth, a truth that will make us fit for the Master’s use in our private and public lives, a truth that can restore unity among the Lord’s people. But how can these noble goals be realized if we do not understand the Word of God, if we ignore it or reject it?

Throughout history revival seems to have come when people returned to and followed the teaching of Scripture. Declension has come as they failed to follow what was there for them to know. “*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple*” (Ps. 19:7). Is it any wonder that Paul would say in Colossians 3:16, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.*”



THE LAMP & THE LIGHT

“A lamp unto my feet...a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105).

Russell Sutherland

Light cannot be understood. After centuries of investigation and experimentation, the world's finest scientific minds have failed to grasp its true nature. You may recall from your studies in high school physics that light has dual properties. Sometimes it behaves like a wave and at other times like a particle. Light is both visible and invisible. It is full of energy and yet has no mass. Even its formal scientific name—electro-magnetic radiation—seems confusing and complicated.

To the ancient mind, however, the concept was surprisingly simple. Light was that life-giving substance that poured forth from lamps and torches. It was the warmth and mysterious glow of fire; that energetic essence which so depended upon a steady supply of fuel. It was the regular shower of goodness that poured forth, day and night, from the heavenly bodies as they moved across the sky. The greater orb was welcomed each morning, its blazing heat endured at midday, and then its glorious departure observed as evening approached. Lesser lights would rule the night sky, giving guidance and hope to both seafaring sailors and land-based pilgrims.

For the children of Israel the idea of light was both foundational and central to their notion of God and His relationship with them. Moses wrote of Yahweh who merely spoke, and all the light which the universe could hold was created from nothing! God spoke to him first from a dry bush that was aflame and full of light. As he listened fearfully to the words, the fire did not burn out.

During their wanderings in the wilderness, the natural cold and pitch dark of the desert nights were miraculously moderated by a pillar of fire whose very presence was an affirmation of God's care.

As Mount Sinai was burning and shaking like a volcanic inferno, out of the smoke and light God spoke again. This time, however, it was with clarity and objective precision. The people received the law and commandments written by the hand of God on tables of stone. It was as if God had switched on a light in the moral universe. Every human thought and action could now be judged against

this bright standard whether it be good or bad. No wonder that later in their history Israel's poets, kings, and sages would liken God's Word to light.

Psalms 119 is an acrostic poem in which each stanza represents a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Furthermore each line of each stanza begins with that same letter of the alphabet. As each letter must have its turn, the psalm is lengthy and appears somewhat repetitive. Not so! By using this structure the author represents completeness. He is saying to the reader: “I am completely devoted to the law of God... and I can tell you why in 176 ways.”

In verse 105, we have the poetic form of duality used to compare God's Word with light: *“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*

A lamp is used only at night and has limited range. A flashlight can only illuminate a very small area. During the day, however, the sun shines and lights the entire landscape. The traveler easily sees the immediate road ahead as well as its full path to the horizon. Likewise the Word of God is a guide and road map for life, and it makes good sense for the creature to read and apply the Creator's user's guide—whether it is night or day. The Bible is full of detailed instructions needed for those difficult times of life when one is lost and in need of a lamp because all around is darkness and despair. The Bible also contains valuable information for the daily routine of life, when all seems perfectly normal. Staying on the path is key for along the road there are many objects that, though readily seen, are difficult to avoid. Often the terrain is tortuous and seems impassable. In all of life's situations the Word of God is the pilgrim's compass and manual.

The apostle John was very much taken up with idea of God's revelation to man being represented as light. In the prologue to his Gospel he writes:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear




witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The Lord Jesus Christ, as the living Word, not only created all the light of the Universe with its innumerable stars and galaxies, but He *is* the Light! His life is pure. In Him is no darkness at all. Light and darkness are mutually exclusive. The entrance of Christ into the world was announced by a great star in the heavens which caused the professors, philosophers, and astronomers to marvel. After seeing the full substance of God's light in human form, the wise men worshiped and returned home as changed men. Conversely, wicked kings in their dark kingdoms were greatly troubled and spread more darkness to fight back the light.

Likewise the prophets and priests of Israel at the time of His birth saw the Lord Jesus as a great light which brings

life and guidance: *"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up"* (Mt. 4:16). *"To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death..."* (Lk. 1:79).

As the living Word, the Lord Jesus has shone in a dark place and brought life where before there was only death. He has cut a clear path into the light and away from darkness where previously there was none. Are you ready to follow Him? Are you reading His manual? Have you been enjoying His poetry and love sonnets?

A curious young student, upon entering his new school for the first time, was puzzled by its strange motto: *Sto lucem*. Not being at all familiar with the classical languages, he searched for someone who knew the meaning of these words. At last he located a Latin teacher and the question was posed. There was a short pause and then a wry smile began to appear on the face of the elderly man: *"My dear child, Stand in the Light!"* 



"The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Ps. 12:6).

The Lord uses the picture of refined silver to emphasize to us the purity of His Word. This silver is not only tried in a furnace, but it is purified seven (not a random number!) times. In what way is it pure?

It is free from error. Over time skeptics have mocked the Bible, ridiculing, for example, its assertions that there was writing in the time of Moses, or that the Hittites existed. But while the cynics were mocking, other people were digging. And again and again the Bible has been proven true, forcing the critics to search for a new straw to grasp at. Its flawlessness makes it absolutely trustworthy. And not just as a source of facts, but as the foundation of the only life worth living. Over the centuries countless thousands have built their lives upon the rock of the Word of God. And not one has ever been disappointed. While the world flits from theory to theory, believers remain safely on the solid, unchanging, dependable ground of God's perfect Word.

It is free from corruption. The Bible is utterly undefiled. After the bombardment of the filth of this world, how

refreshing to turn to the pure, incorruptible springs of the Word of God! Paul urges us to drink deeply from these springs when he writes, *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things"* (Phil. 4:8). The holy Scriptures are God's alternative and antidote to the defilement of the world.

But silver is also valuable. The Bible is a treasure fit for a king—and more than a king. David declared that the Scriptures are *"more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold"* (Ps. 19:10). No earthly treasure can compare in worth to the Word of God—the treasured possession of the seed royal of heaven.

And what value do we assign to such a treasure? In our minds we know that its value is infinite. But the value we practically place on the Scriptures is easily measured by considering the place we give to them in our daily lives – both in our conduct and in our time. We are exhorted to *"buy the truth, and sell it not"* (Prov. 23:23). How do we buy it? We can't purchase it with money for *"it cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof"* (Job 28:15). We buy the truth with hours, not with gold; with obedience, not with silver.

How much did we invest in the Bible this week? —J. M.

THE WATER OF THE WORD

There's life and refreshment and cleansing to be found in that blessed River.

H. R. Ghezzi

"...Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

What would we do without water? We depend on its usefulness daily. Among other things, it refreshes us, quenches our thirst, bathes us, cleans our clothes, makes our plants grow, and takes us from one place to another. Most of the earth's surface is covered by water and our bodies are filled with it.

Since everyone can relate to the necessity of water, Scripture has often used water as a picture of spiritual truths. In the NT, it is frequently used to describe spiritual life and spiritual cleansing. For example, the Lord once likened the abundant life produced by the Holy Spirit to "rivers of living water" (Jn. 7:38-39). We are told that we were saved by the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). The latter illustrates receiving God's salvation and the transformation that results. Ephesians 5:25 speaks of this salvation by saying that Christ "gave Himself for [the Church]." However, verses 26 and onward speak of those who are presently saved. Here, living in contact with the Word is compared to being washed with water. The washing of regeneration is thorough and only needs to happen once. However, the washing of water by the Word is an ongoing process for believers.

Consider the priesthood of Aaron and his sons. One of the rituals for entering the priesthood required that the priests be completely washed once (Ex. 29:4; Lev. 8:6). However, after becoming priests they still had to wash

their hands and feet with water daily from the laver before going into the tabernacle of the congregation or ministering at the altar "that they die not" (Ex. 30:17-21). The Church of Christ is a holy and royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9) and, like the OT priests, we need daily cleansing.




Ephesians 5:25-27 teaches that the washing of water by the Word serves a three-fold purpose for the church.

The Consecration of the Church: This "washing of water by the Word" first of all sanctifies us, says Paul. We can recall the words of our Lord Jesus Christ to His Father as He interceded on behalf of His disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). This sanctification is the ongoing

process of living as God's own holy people, set apart from the world and zealous for good works (Titus 2:14).

The priests were a consecrated, sanctified, and hallowed people (Ex. 28:41; 29:1). As already mentioned, one of the steps of initiating a man into the priesthood was for him to be completely washed with water. But once he became a priest, the command to continually wash his hands and feet at the laver was "a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. 30:21). This shows there was an initial sanctification with the full washing, but sanctification did not end there. Practical, daily cleansing was still necessary—not in order to become a priest, but in order to serve as one. Likewise, our position as God's holy people was secured at Calvary. But the practice of holy living requires an ongoing sanctification through the Word.

A holy Church is one that has its roots in the Word of God. We often take comfort in comparing our lives to the one sitting next to us in the pew. However, it is not so much the standard of holiness set by our brother or sister that matters, but the standard that Christ Himself set, "because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16).



He is the standard; His very name is holy (Isa. 57:15).

We have seen the holiness and righteousness of God in the tabernacle. The priests were to die if they attempted to minister without washing at the laver (Ex. 30:20). Does today's Church esteem God's holiness as highly as the priests in the OT? All too often, the Church attempts to minister without the guidance of the Word of God and ends up looking and sounding like the world. Music, drama, and popular theology replace the truth of the Word of God, and in so doing we defeat the purpose of the holy priesthood, which is "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). It is the desire of our Saviour and Lord that the Church be set apart as a holy priesthood, grounded in the Word of God.

The Cleansing of the Church: Secondly, Paul says the washing of water by the Word cleanses us. As mentioned earlier, this is not to be confused with the washing of regeneration, for we are now speaking about those who already are saved. As the Lord Jesus Himself told His disciples after washing their feet, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (Jn. 13:10). Therefore, as we use water daily to cleanse us, so the Word of God is the agent which cleanses us from the defilement of the world.

Consider the daily duties the priests in the tabernacle undertook. The tabernacle had a dirt floor and the priests would need to wash their hands and feet at the laver of brass fairly regularly to cleanse themselves from the dirt, sweat, and even the blood of the sacrifices. We are told to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).

It would be both offensive and intolerable to go for days or weeks without washing one's hands and feet. But what about someone going days or weeks without reading the Word? Have we become a Church that tolerates and accepts only an occasional 'splash' or 'dip' into the Word? Are the Scriptures a part of our lives only on Sunday and only in the place where we gather as a local church? Without a daily walk in the Word we open the door for the filth of the flesh to accumulate and control our comings and goings. As a result, everything we touch is defiled as well.

Not only are we responsible for keeping ourselves clean, but we influence our brothers and sisters in the Lord, and our defilement hinders their growth as well. There is simply no better way to cleanse ourselves from


the defilement of the world than through the washing of water by the Word. David recognized this and wrote, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word" (Ps. 119:9).

The Completion of the Church: In Ephesians 5:25, Paul speaks of the justification Christ supplied by loving us and giving Himself for us. In verse 26, he speaks of the sanctification (or consecration) and cleansing of the Church by the washing of water by the Word. Now, in verse 27 he speaks of the glorification of the Church as one day He will present it to Himself a glorious, spotless, unblemished, and holy bride.

By the completion, or perfection of the Church, we are speaking of a qualitative perfection. We should not strive to give the Church material wealth or numerical strength. Our character should grow to be more like that of the Lord Jesus. From 2 Corinthians 3:18 we see that being transformed into the image of Christ does not begin in heaven; it begins now. Therefore, the current process of the washing of water by the Word results in a perfect glory to come.

The OT priesthood failed to reach the impeccable character described in Ephesians 5:27; we can't find even one priest who succeeded. The Lord accepted their offerings, but the priests who ministered were sinners themselves. Nevertheless, we have a great High Priest who displayed all of the glorious characteristics found in our passage and actually became the offering Himself: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament..." (Heb. 9:14-15).

What a hope we have in Christ Jesus! Not only did He save us, but He is sanctifying us, cleansing us, and He will one day present to Himself a Church which is as He is! And the instrument He is using to accomplish this is His own Word of truth.

Thus, the three-fold purpose of the washing of water by the Word is evident. Nevertheless, the question remains: what prompted it all? Why was all this activity necessary to begin with? Ephesians 5:25 simply tells us, "Christ also loved the Church," setting a precedent for the love of a husband to his wife. None of the riches and blessings of the Word of God would be at our disposal had not Christ first loved the Church. That resultant question is obvious: how much do we love Him? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come into him, and make Our abode with him" (Jn. 14:23). 

GOOD SEED

An evangelist pleads for more workers in the field. The harvest is quickly passing!

Jim Paul

“And He began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto Him a great multitude...And He taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in His doctrine, Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow...” (Mk. 4:1-3).

What a beautiful illustration of the Word of God was given to us by the Lord Jesus as He sat in the boat and began to teach the multitudes. No wonder the people flocked to hear Him as He spoke with simplicity and power. He later explained this first parable of Mark 4 to His disciples for their benefit when they were alone. It is interesting that He chose to privately give them a clearer understanding of the truths He taught publicly when they had retired into His presence. And it is still so important today to enter the quiet place with Him that He might instruct us more fully in His ways. Let’s take a look at what He revealed to them.



“Behold a Sower Went Forth to Sow”

There are two wonderful pictures of evangelism given to us in the NT. One is that of a fisherman going out to catch fish; the other is that of a farmer scattering seed. Fishing was a group exercise as the fishermen worked together in fellowship with each other. However for the farmer it was an individual and isolated work. In this picture the seed is the Word of God (v. 14). Four things are worthy of note regarding the farmer and his work of sowing the seed. And these four things speak to us of our work in spreading the Word of God.

1. There is *preparation for the task at hand*. The farmer had to select good seed, buy it, and get it ready for the work that lay ahead. When planning to reach out to the lost it is important to be prepared—to have a solid grasp of God’s Word. This will involve time! We must read,

study, and meditate on the Scriptures so that we will be rooted, grounded, and established in the faith. Furthermore, before going out, the right kinds of materials for distribution have to carefully chosen. We must be prepared!

2. There must be *an exercise to go*, resulting in the farmer’s leaving his comfortable surroundings and entering into a path of isolation, toil, and hardship. He would endure the various elements of nature as well as the dangers that lurked along the way. For us also it will be toil and possibly resentment. Without a genuine burden from the Lord, we will lose heart in the face of such trials. Let us

take care we do not become so comfortable in our assembly fellowship that we lose sight of the great need of the perishing around us. Oh for exercised hearts to reach out and touch lives that are broken by sin!

3. It meant *a time of great activity!* There was constant action as the farmer scattered the seed wherever he went. *“He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing precious seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him”* (Ps. 126:6, NKJV). Faithfully spreading the Word isn’t an occasional,

half-hearted undertaking. It requires hard work and long hours.

4. After the farmer had sown the seed, there was *need of patience* to wait for the fruit to appear. The outcome of the work was not in his control. Paul planted and Apollos watered but it was God who gave the increase (1 Cor. 3:6). So many today feel that sowing the Word of God is not worth the time because they do not see any immediate results. What surprises will be revealed at the Judgment Seat of Christ! The writer knows of many who were saved because someone placed the gospel into their hands and hearts, and passed on completely unaware of the result. The seed may lie hidden for a long time before taking root and then bursting through the soil in new life. But faithful sowers will one day see the true fruit of their labor and will be rewarded accordingly.

“And it Came to Pass as He Sowed”

We now consider what took place in the fulfillment of the farmer’s mission. It is here we have a fourfold account as to where the seed fell. Our Lord Jesus tells us of four things that could become of the seed after it reached the ground. And these same results are evident when the seed is sown today.

Some seed fell by the wayside and was snatched away by Satan as soon as it was sown. The enemy of our souls is always seeking to keep the Word out of the hearts of men.

Some landed on stony ground and there was immediate growth. But the growth was temporary because the seed had not taken root. This is like those who initially seem to receive the Word gladly, but stumble and fall at the first sign of opposition because their acceptance of the Word was shallow and superficial.

Other seed fell among the thorns but the thorns choked it so that it could not grow. And so it is in the hearts of many who hear the Word—there is initial curiosity, but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches rise up and smother that interest.

However what a joy to read that some seed fell on good ground, took root, and bore fruit! This speaks to us of those who genuinely receive the Word of God and let it take root in their hearts. In such lives fruit is the inevitable result, demonstrating the reality of the living Word of God in the lives of men, women, and children.

The Sower Sows the Word

The Lord makes it quite clear in His teaching that the only seed worth sowing is the Word of God! This is the only seed that can impart eternal, incorruptible life. Peter writes that we *“have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding Word of God...And this is the Word which was preached to you”* (1 Pet. 1:23, 25, NKJV).

The blessings that came to the Colossians (1:5) were in

the word of the truth of the gospel. To the Corinthians (2 Cor. 5:19) it was the word of reconciliation. To the Romans (10:8) it was the word of faith. To the Philippians (2:16) it was the word of life. To the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:13) it was the word of God. And the list goes on. What wonderful components and characteristics make up this incomparable good seed!

How Can We Sow?

What are some practical ways we can sow the good seed into the hearts of the people? There is the verbal presenting of the Word in public preaching and in personal witness. Or have you thought about good gospel literature which can be left in all public places? How about leaving a gospel tract in restaurants, washrooms, waiting rooms, buses, trains, planes, laundromats, etc.? What about correspondence, paying bills, or sending directly to various people who hit the news headlines? Or what about reaching people through the mail—regular mail or e-mail?

A dear brother in Scotland never left his home town until he went to be with the Lord, and yet he communicated with people all over the world by sending gospel literature. He received some excellent feedback and what a reward will be his for his faithfulness!

Some may find it hard or may have little opportunity to be in the frontlines of the work of sowing. They may wish to give thought to the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:10 (Moffat): *“He who gives seed to the sower and turns that seed into bread to eat will give you the seed of generosity to sow and, for the harvest, the satisfying bread of good deeds done.”* You can be a vital part of gospel work by giving practical and prayerful help to those who go forth to sow!

Maybe someone today will be challenged to make a start in sowing the seed. Young men and women, get involved early in life and you will be truly blessed. To those who faithfully sow, keep on and don’t give up! It is a work with fruit for eternity.

“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters” (Isa. 32:20). 📖



VIA MAGAZINE: GOOD SEED FOR DISTRIBUTION

Designed for mass distribution (more than 750,000 were distributed last year), **Via** for 2004 is now available. Up-to-date graphics and a full-color layout enhance the gospel story presented in an appealing way. This issue includes the testimony of Peggy O’Neill (excerpted from *Uplook*), as well as other testimonies and articles of interest—Marvels of the Human Body; the Two Roads and Two Destinies chart; and Rescue Mission, a gospel application from the Israeli Entebbe raid. Distributed freely for North American distribution (packaged 700 per box, although part boxes may be ordered). If you wish to invest in this ministry, per piece cost is approximately 12¢ Cdn.

Via Magazine, Box 551, Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 3B9 Canada

Phone: 204-857-8435

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THE SEVEN LAST THINGS

by David J. MacLeod

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The forward of this book explains that this originated as a series of expository sermons delivered to the congregation at Asbury Road Bible Chapel in Dubuque, Iowa. They first appeared in abridged form as journal articles in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, and now in their current format.

The Seven Last Things examines chapters 19 to 21 in John's Revelation of Jesus Christ which detail the culminating events of human history. The seven "Last Things" referred to in the title are the second coming of Christ, the defeat of Antichrist, the binding of Satan, the millennial Kingdom of Christ, the release of Satan and man's final rebellion, the last judgment and the end of the world, and finally, the new heaven and the new earth.

Each of the seven chapters bears the mark of a very capable expository preacher. MacLeod begins the chapter with an introduction of one of the *Seven Last Things*, highlighting the big idea (his term) behind each event. This is followed with a careful, well-documented and colorfully illustrated exposition of the text. His exposition is aided by a solid grasp of the original language and a vast exposure to Christian writings. He concludes his look at each event with several direct challenges, both to the believer and to the unbeliever. The reader cannot help but be stirred with MacLeod's presentation of Christ as He is revealed to us in these end time events.

In addition to the exposition of the text, MacLeod also takes time to explain several of the peripheral matters relating to the book. For example, as a self-professed "literalist" in his approach to the book of Revelation, he provides a very helpful discussion on how a literalist deals with symbolic and figurative language. He addresses as well the erroneous concept of annihilationism and demonstrates why there must be eternal punishment.

The timeliness of this book is significant, considering the growing segment of evangelical Christendom that rejects the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ. David MacLeod believes that "we must not join the conspiracy of silence in the churches and neglect this doctrine." Although the Revelation has often been described as symbolic and therefore difficult for the average reader to grasp, he suggests that "there is much in the Revelation that is clear and about that we must clearly speak out."

One of the refreshing aspects of this book was MacLeod's willingness to firmly yet gently present a scholarly defense of the premillennial advent of Christ. His chapter on the millennial reign of Christ begins with brief but helpful definitions of the pre-, a-, and postmillennial views before moving on to say that "our passage will be expounded from the premillennial point of view because I believe that interpretation is the true one and the only one that is theologically meaningful."

This book will awaken your spiritual senses as you are reminded of God's complete and sovereign control over His universe, and will motivate you as you consider the climactic events surrounding our Saviour's imminent return.

RANDY HOFFMAN

THE BOOK OF GOD

B. Manton

*The Book of God! And is there then a book
Which on its front that awesome title bears?
Who hold it, what high duty must be theirs,
And what high privilege therein to look,
To read, mark, learn, digest! But in this nook
Of earth pent up, and blinded by its cares,
Its hopes and joys, if man the treasure dares
To scorn, such scorn shall the great Author brook!*

*How longed the holy men and prophets old
God's truth to see! How blest, whom He hath willed
To know His truth in His own Book enrolled!
Pure is the Book of God, with sweetness filled;
More pure than unadulterated gold,
More sweet than honey from the rock distilled.*