

**Step Out  
in Faith**  
Mark Kolchin

**The Glory  
Road**  
Jabe Nicholson

**Introducing a  
special feature:**  
A fresh "Outlook!"

# UPLOOK

April 2013

[www.uplook.org](http://www.uplook.org)



## Come!



We all like to get invitations. There's something exciting about opening them. Sure, occasionally we get an invitation we'd rather avoid, but how much worse it would be to get no invitations at all because getting an invitation means that someone values us. 2000 years ago, the greatest Someone in the universe stepped out of Heaven and came down to Earth to issue invitations. What did He invite us to?

**To come away** with Him (Mk. 6:31). During their years with the Lord Jesus, the twelve disciples spent a great deal of time in the spotlight—on display due to their proximity to Him. But, as with us, their public ministry was shaped and fueled by their private time with Christ.

**To come forward** to Him (Lk. 6:8). The man with the withered hand was in an environment that was hostile to the Lord. Christ's enemies were watching, ready to pounce. When invited by the Lord, the afflicted man had a choice: come forward and take a stand for Christ regardless of the consequences, or remain in the safety of the crowd—unhealed. He wisely chose to ignore the critics (who cared nothing for Him) and embrace the only One who could help him.

**To come after** Him (Lk. 14:27). Christ has not called us to a life of religion. The Christian life is far higher and nobler than that. It is to follow after the Lord Jesus; it's to walk as He walked and, in so doing, to walk with Him. It will cost us everything we have, yet we will find that trading refuse for glory is no sacrifice at all.

**To come down** to Him (Lk 19:5). Zacchaeus was considered an important man by the world (and, no doubt, by himself as well). He was a chief tax collector and he was rich. Is it reading too much into the passage to say that the Lord wasn't only referring to Zacchaeus's lofty position in the tree when He told him to come down in order to be with Him?

**To come forth** to Him (Jn. 11:43). If Lazarus had served any other master, then his ability to respond to invitations would have ceased four days earlier. But Jesus had promised, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live"* (Jn. 5:25) and He was, as always, as good as His Word. This is a little picture of a far greater resurrection yet to come: *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout...and the dead in Christ will rise first"* (1 Th. 4:16). He will call us and every last Christian, dead or alive, will come forth to Him.

**To come** to Him (Mt. 11:28; Mk. 10:14; Lk. 18:16). Lastly, sometimes we're simply invited to come to Him. Whatever our position or age or need, He loves each one of us and—I can hardly believe it!—desires our fellowship.

So, regardless of the circumstances, every one of the Lord's invitations is really an invitation to Himself, isn't it? Forward out of the crowd to Him; down out of the tree to Him; up out of the boat to Him; forth out of the grave to Him. The point isn't what we're leaving; it's where we're going: to Him.

—James Martin editor@uplook.org

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## The Urgent Call on Your Life Today

### 8 Come unto Me

Keith Keyser gives a thoughtful treatment of a well-loved verse, reminding us that Christ's offer is an invitation to an intimate relationship with Him, involving both His loving care and training.

### John 6:37 and Election

This is a favorite verse of the Calvinists, says David Dunlap. But maybe we need to take another careful look at it.

### 14 If Any Man Thirst

Shawn Abigail takes us back to the well at Sychar to show us the Master's tactics in reaching thirsty people. In this desert world we meet them every day.

### Step Out in Faith

In this helpful article, Mark Kolchin takes us across stormy Galilee that night. Can you hear the Lord inviting you out of the boat to walk with Him?

### 18 One with Christ

Linking together several verses, veteran Colin Anderson shows us how the apostle John describes how "as He is, so are we." It will do your soul good!

### The Call to Battle

It's a classic! C. H. Mackintosh describes Israel's new experience of actually fighting in battle vs. Amalek and draws priceless links with our lives in the present.

### 30 Go Therefore

In an Anonymous article, a young couple describe the surprising ministry opportunities that opened up in their own neighborhood. Be inspired!

### Crop Failure!

Born and raised in farm country, Randy Hoffman knows the heartache of crop failure. He calls on us to think about the Lord's grief when we have nothing to show in our lives for all His labor.

### 32 Give Me Children

In a short, pointed piece Donald Norbie underlines the passion of one Bible woman to have children. He applies the story as a parable to our lives.

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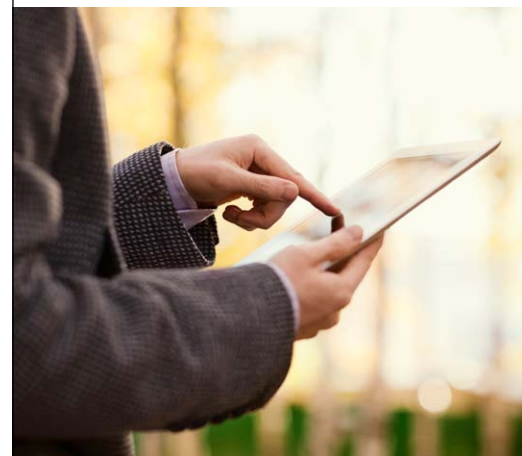
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Go!

cover illustration: www.lightstock.com



## Galilee 2013

Named after the location where the Lord Jesus first called young men to be His disciples, GALILEE 2013 is a seminar-style, discipleship-based, three-week course of biblical studies and training. It is for **young adults, male and female, ages 20 to 30**. The organizers and primary teachers are Jim McCarthy (CA) and Brady Collier (TX). Southside Bible Chapel, Lafayette, LA, will be hosting the program Jul 21-Aug 9. To learn more, visit [www.galileeprogram.com](http://www.galileeprogram.com)

**Contact:** Jim McCarthy

**email:** [mccarthyemail@gmail.com](mailto:mccarthyemail@gmail.com) **phone:** 408-515-1584



### CONFERENCES, CAMPS & RETREATS

#### LADIES MISSIONARY CONF IN PA

A weekend of informative and inspirational reports Apr 26-28 from sisters serving on the mission field with the purpose of encouraging women of all ages to be actively involved in the work of the Lord through prayer, communication, and other similar means. Speakers are Krista Besselman, Holly Wooler and Cathy Young. **Contact:** ph: 717-352-2150 email: [mstoudt@greenwoodhills.net](mailto:mstoudt@greenwoodhills.net) web: [www.greenwoodhills.net](http://www.greenwoodhills.net)

#### CHICAGO AREA CONFERENCE

The Palos Hills Christian Assembly is planning to host its annual conference Apr 26-28. The speakers expected are Mike Atwood (MO), Joe Reese (ON), and John Heller (AR). Further information at [www.paloshillsassembly.org](http://www.paloshillsassembly.org)

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

This junior and senior high school event will be held at CMML in NJ Apr 27. Enjoy a day of outdoor activities, food and fellowship while learning about challenges faced after high school, the work of missions and short-term overseas experiences!

Nate Lauro (MA) and Craig Fritchey (NJ) will be the speakers.

**Contact:** Craig Fritchey, PO Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762 ph: 732-449-8880 ext. 106 email: [info@cmml.us](mailto:info@cmml.us) web: [www.cmml.us/events](http://www.cmml.us/events)

#### FLORIDA LADIES SPRING CONFERENCE

Land O' Lakes Bible Chapel, Lutz FL will host a ladies conference Saturday, Apr 27. Jan Johnson (NC) will speak on the book of Ruth, "A Romance of Redemption, God's Beautiful Love Story." **Contact:** Joy Chambers ph: 813-948-9501

#### LOUISIANA BIBLE CONFERENCE

Lake Park Chapel, Belle Chasse, LA will hold its 69th Annual Bible Conference May 4-5 with Dale Gleason (NE) speaking. Plan to attend for a spiritually refreshing weekend in God's Word. The conference begins Saturday at 3:30 PM. **Contact:** Ray Cummings, 103 Dickson Dr., Belle Chasse, LA 70037 ph: 504-239-7068 or 504-393-7083 email: [lakeparkchapel@att.net](mailto:lakeparkchapel@att.net)

#### SPRING CONFERENCE IN ILLINOIS

Lombard Gospel Chapel, Lombard IL extends an invitation to their conference

on May 17-18 featuring Alex Strauch. Based on his book *Love or Die: Christ's Wake-Up Call to the Church*, the theme is *How to Cultivate Love*. To register, go to [conferencelombardgospel.eventbrite.com](http://conferencelombardgospel.eventbrite.com) or call 630-620-9700.

#### CLAREMONT, CA SPRING CONFERENCE

You are warmly invited to Claremont Bible Chapel's 22nd annual conference on May 17-19. The speakers will be Joe Reese (ON) and Joe Mikhael (AZ). Mid-day meals on Saturday and Sunday will be provided by the assembly. **Contact:** Rod Chance ph: 909-224-2299 email: [rod.chance@claremontbiblechapel.com](mailto:rod.chance@claremontbiblechapel.com) web: [www.claremontbiblechapel.com/spring\\_conference.html](http://www.claremontbiblechapel.com/spring_conference.html)

#### HOME SCHOOL CAMP IN GEORGIA

Camp Hope will have their Home School Camp (ages 7-19) May 20-25. The speaker for junior campers is Joe Hawkinson (KS) and Scott DeGroff (KS) for teen campers. The week begins Monday with registration starting at 3:00 PM and ends Saturday after breakfast. **Contact:** Steve Roys, 7011 Pony Lake Rd., Dahlonge, GA 30533 ph: 770-536-4787 email: [camphopega@gmail.com](mailto:camphopega@gmail.com) web: [www.camphopega.org](http://www.camphopega.org)

# front lines praise around the clock

## IN TENTS 2013

*In Tents* is a hands on, in depth training for passionately serving God from the home, while learning to be women who can strike a victory for God like Sarah and Jael. This event for young women 18 yrs old and above will be held Jun 8-22 in the home of John and Ann Bjorlie (Grand Rapids, MI). Younger teens are welcome with an older sister attending.

**Contact:** Ann Bjorlie ph: 616-821-0303  
email: [abjorli@hotmail.com](mailto:abjorli@hotmail.com)  
video: <http://youtu.be/6n-rWmpPREU>  
visit the Facebook event: *In Tents 2013*



In Tents

## CAMP HOPE'S SUMMER SCHEDULE

The summer schedule for juniors and teens can be found on the camp website at [www.camphopega.org](http://www.camphopega.org) **Contact:** Steve Roys, 7011 Pony Lake Rd., Dahlonega, GA 30533 ph: 770-536-4787  
email: [camphopega@gmail.com](mailto:camphopega@gmail.com)

## S.T.E.P. 2013

Summer Team Evangelism Partnership is a ministry opportunity Jun 15 to Jul 1 for those eighteen years and older that will give a flavor of God's work in Mexico, Central and South America without needing a visa or passport. Benefit from teaching and training in Bible, evangelism and cultural issues, along with practical hands-on experience working among Latino children in the greater Los Angeles area. Application deadline May 20.

**Contact:** John Duckhorn  
email: [info@step.latinoministries.org](mailto:info@step.latinoministries.org)  
web: [www.step.latinoministries.org](http://www.step.latinoministries.org)

## LAKE GENEVA SUMMER CONFERENCE

The 73rd annual conference will be held in beautiful Williams Bay, WI at Conference Point Camp Jul 20-27. Speakers for the week are Dr. Dave MacLeod and Jon Glock both of Emmaus Bible College. This event is for the entire family with age appropriate classes and activities.  
web: [lakegenevasummerconference.org](http://lakegenevasummerconference.org)

## FAMILY WEEKEND CONF IN GEORGIA

Camp Hope will be hosting the Southeast Family Weekend Conference Jul 26-28. Speakers will be Randy Amos (WA) for the adults and Andy Scott (GA) for the children. Registration will begin Friday evening (no supper provided) and the event will end with a light lunch on Sunday. Please note this is a change from the week long family camp and is now for a weekend only.

**Contact:** Steve Roys ph: 770-536-4787  
email: [camphopega@gmail.com](mailto:camphopega@gmail.com)  
web: [www.bit.ly/XSIYju/](http://www.bit.ly/XSIYju/) for more information or a registration form.

## YOUTH CONFERENCE IN GEORGIA

Camp Hope will hold their youth conference Aug 31-Sep 2. Nathan Bramsen will be the speaker. Cost: \$75/person.  
**Contact:** Jamie Wolfgram ph: 706-650-2693  
Camp Hope ph: 770-536-4787  
email: [camphopega@gmail.com](mailto:camphopega@gmail.com) or visit [www.camphopega.org](http://www.camphopega.org) for registration.

## LADIES CONFERENCE AT CAMP HOPE

Camp Hope will host their annual ladies conference Sep 27-29. Joyce Barinowski (SC) will be the speaker. The conference

begins at 7 PM Friday with registration and ends Sunday at 10 AM. Cost: \$70.

**Contact:** Barbara Thorpe  
ph: 706-359-6297  
email: [sambarb@nu-z.net](mailto:sambarb@nu-z.net)  
Camp Hope ph: 770-536-4787  
email: [camphopega@gmail.com](mailto:camphopega@gmail.com) or visit [www.camphopega.org](http://www.camphopega.org) for registration.

## HAWAII INT'L CONF - "ONE BODY"

Hawaii's inaugural "no tie" Bible & fellowship retreat will be held Nov 7-10 at Camp Pu'u Kahea in Waianae, Oahu. Co-sponsored by Oceanview Bible Chapel and Waialae-Kahala Chapel. Speakers: Joe Reese (CAN), Ed Anthony (US), Randy Amos (US) and Gochiro Takahara (JPN). Includes free R/T airport shuttle & all ground transp. \$175. per person. Please register by Sep 30. **Contact:** Mark Saruwatari ph: 808-772-2535  
email: [Oceanview.contact@gmail.com](mailto:Oceanview.contact@gmail.com)

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## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

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### LICENSED LAWYER POSITION

Believers Stewardship Services, Inc., located in Dubuque, IA, is seeking the services of a licensed lawyer to join its staff. This is a paid position. The ministry is designed to glorify God by helping Christians accomplish their financial and estate planning goals in fulfilling biblical stewardship. **Contact:** David M. Allison, ph: 888-338-7810  
email: [dallisonbss@aol.com](mailto:dallisonbss@aol.com)

### MINISTRY POSITIONS IN CALIFORNIA

High Desert Ministries is looking for an Assistant Director and a Caretaker who can interact for Christ among students in their discipling center. Both positions require Bible knowledge and a mature Christian

life to manifest the grace of God among men who are on probation or parole. For qualifications, visit the website. **Contact:** Doug Crabb email: [ask@hdpn.info](mailto:ask@hdpn.info) web: [www.hdmca.org](http://www.hdmca.org)

## MEDICAL DIRECTOR POSITION IN ON

Elim Homes is a retirement home located about an hour north of Toronto in a quiet country setting of Waubaushene, ON. The home has 30 rooms, where for over 65 years the staff have been committed to providing a safe and loving Christian environment for seniors. The residents enjoy home cooked meals, daily devotions and receive 24 hour nursing care as required. Over the years, hundreds of elderly people have appreciated the dignity and respect with which they have been treated while at Elim. Currently Elim is in search of a replacement for the Medical Director who, after many years of dedicated service, is retiring. Interested candidates should be experienced RN's who are interested in serving the Lord in this mission work. Email resume to [elimhomes@rogers.com](mailto:elimhomes@rogers.com) web: [www.elimhomes.ca](http://www.elimhomes.ca)

## HEALTH CARE POSITIONS IN TN

Horton Haven Christian Camp in Chapel Hill, TN requires an individual to serve this summer as Health Care Director. Candidates need to have a nursing degree and will oversee the health center including caring for health needs of campers and staff, administering medications and working with nurse volunteers who assist at times. Camp runs Jun 2nd - Aug 5th. There is also a need for nurses who are able to work one week sessions through the summer. **Contact:** Matt Phelan ph: 931-364-7656 email: [Matt@hortonhaven.org](mailto:Matt@hortonhaven.org) web: [www.hortonhaven.org](http://www.hortonhaven.org)

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## COMMENDATIONS

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### DAN AND HOLLY ALLAN

The believers at Southside Bible Chapel, St. Louis, MO commend Dan and Holly Allan to the Lord's work in evangelism and discipleship among college students through the ministry of Cru (previously Campus Crusade for Christ) in the Pacific south-west. Dan and Holly have been in fellowship since 1996 where their scope of ministry included the campuses of eastern MO and southern IL. Dan remains involved in giving leadership to the summer mission and training projects with Cru.

### KEN AND MARTHA MILLER

The Christians at East Tulsa Bible Chapel extend their commendation of Ken and Martha Miller to full time ministry to assemblies in OK and further afield as the Lord may lead. Ken was commended to the Lord's work part-time in Feb 2000. Since that time, he has been involved in conference speaking, children's work, summer camp work, evangelism and counseling. Martha has also been active in the Lord's work speaking to women at conferences, summer camp work, evangelism and leading women's Bible studies.

### JC AND KELLY SCHROEDER

Believers at Calvary Bible Chapel, Clinton Township, MI and at Jefferson City Bible Chapel, Jefferson City, MS are jointly commending JC and Kelly Schroeder to the grace of our Lord Jesus and His work. Recently married, JC and Kelly have already been faithfully serving in areas of Bible teaching, evangelism and administration with the Ezekiel Project. Please pray for their continued service together in the Lord's work.

### SCOTT AND MARY THOMSON

Those gathering in the name of the Lord at North York Gospel Chapel, York PA commend with joy Scott and Mary Thomson. Scott and Mary are in happy fellowship and are using their lives to honor and serve the Lord. Scott is a capable Bible teacher and feels that the Lord is leading him to expanded work for God in this way. Mary is in wholehearted agreement with her husband's calling and desire. The Lord has blessed them with three young children: Stephen, Dylan and Ashley.

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## MISCELLANY

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### SCRIPTURE ON CREATION

Ben Scripture's radio program *Scripture On Creation* is now being broadcast on the Calvary Radio Network, Saturdays at 3 or 4 PM (depending on location). The network has 29 stations covering the greater Chicago area, southern WI, south-western MI, northern IN and northern IL. The program has been carried on the Good News Network (southeastern US) for many years (Fri 7:30 AM, Thurs and Sat 5 PM). Local station information can be found at [www.scriptureoncreation.org](http://www.scriptureoncreation.org) where the programs are archived and available over the internet anytime. **Contact:** ph: 574-551-1524 email: [scripture@scriptureoncreation.org](mailto:scripture@scriptureoncreation.org)

### "PROPHET'S CHAMBER" AVAILABLE

A family living near Portland, OR has a small apartment over their detached garage. Any missionaries or other believers coming through the Portland area are welcome to stay for a few nights. Contact the Pearson family at 503-656-4234.

## NEWS FOR MISSIONARIES

The elders and believers at The Park of the Palms Church inform missionaries that a Florida guest home has been developed. A two bedroom, fully-appointed property in North central Florida is available for short-term or year-round occupancy. Surrounded by loving Christians in the Park of the Palms Christian Retirement Community, this home welcomes active, furloughed as well as refocused and retired Christian workers to rest and refresh themselves.

**Contact:** Bruce Whittaker  
ph: 352-235-6492

## HEAD COVERINGS

A variety of head coverings are available to view and purchase from the web site: [www.headcoveringsonline.com](http://www.headcoveringsonline.com)

**Contact:** Susan Crowe ph: 905-640-4218  
email: [pandscrowe@gmail.com](mailto:pandscrowe@gmail.com)

## CONTACT FOR CWF FUND REPORTS

A financial report may be requested from: The Treasurer  
Christian Workers' Fellowship Fund, Inc.,  
Box 1117, Lawrence, KS 66044

## HOME CALLS

### LEONARD C. BROOKS

*Nov 28, 1924 - Jan 11, 2013*

Leonard was born in Manila, Philippines to missionary parents Cyril and Anna Brooks. After serving in the US Army during WWII, he graduated from



Emmaus Bible School, where he met Esther Christensen. They married and in 1957 returned to the Philippines with his own family, serving in

many different capacities, including the formation of Faith Academy, a school for missionary children. In 1972, they returned to the US and Len served as building administrator at Christian Missions in Many Lands for 20 years. The legacy of his deep personal faith and his life of service are gifts that have shaped his family and will be cherished for the rest of their lives.

### SAMUEL E. ROBINSON

*February 2, 1925 - March 2, 2013*

Sam Robinson, 88, was called into the presence of his Lord and Savior on Saturday, Mar 2.

Sam was actively involved in Christian missionary work for most of his life, and was the president of Christian Missions in Many Lands for over 25 years. While in New Jersey, Sam faithfully attended Fifth Avenue Chapel in Belmar. Sam is survived by his three daughters Jane Gilpin, Karen Feher, and Ruthann Balsasy and their husbands and four granddaughters Katie, Jessica, Rebecca, and Rachel. His beloved wife of 62 years, Ruth, went to be with the Lord in 2010.



## NOTE: NEWS SUBMISSIONS

The news editor reserves the right to determine those items best suited for the magazine. Editorial decisions are final. Photos accepted. **Send news to: [frontlines@uplook.org](mailto:frontlines@uplook.org)**

## ISRAEL TOUR UPDATES—NEW DATES!



### ISRAEL TOUR 2013 WITH ROB SULLIVAN

Israel is a modern-day miracle that stands as a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Consider joining Rob from **Oct 31-Nov 10** on a tour that promises to have a profound impact. Download an itinerary and learn more at: [www.christianevidences.org](http://www.christianevidences.org)  
email: [info@christianevidences.org](mailto:info@christianevidences.org)



### ISRAEL TOUR 2014 WITH STEVE PRICE & JOHN HELLER

The teaching tour of Israel planned for Apr has been postponed until **Mar 2014**. Led by Dr. Steve Price (KS) and John Heller (AR). The trip will involve discussion of Biblical history and geography and will include visits with local believers. Contact: [jimmythrbc@yahoo.com](mailto:jimmythrbc@yahoo.com)



### ISRAEL TOUR 2014 WITH REX TROGDON

The Bible Lands Study Tour to Israel with Rex Trogdon has been postponed until **March 17-27, 2014**. If you would like to know more details and how you can go along on this trip of a lifetime, contact Rex at 704-843-9632 or email: [RexTrogdon@me.com](mailto:RexTrogdon@me.com)

KEITH R. KEYSER

# Come Unto Me

**GOD'S AWE-INSPIRING INVITATION TO FULFILLMENT**

**S**ince Adam's fall (Gen. 3:8), mankind has instinctively hidden from its Creator. Religion, irreligion, philosophy, and science are all employed by people in futile attempts to guard against an intimate encounter with the living God. Despite this habitual human unbelief and evasion, the Lord repeatedly offers Himself to His creatures. This is exemplified in the Savior's famous words, "*Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Mt. 11:28).

## THE CONTROVERSIAL CHRIST

In this section of Matthew, the Lord Jesus is facing continual opposition from Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees. Under this persecution, His forerunner is prompted to ask, "*Art Thou He that should come or do we look for another?*" (Mt. 11:3). Christ responds affirmatively by citing the messianic signs that He performed in healing various maladies—especially authenticating Himself by giving sight to the blind (Jn. 9:31-33). In spite of this overwhelming evidence, His enemies continue to deny His obvious credentials (Mt. 11:16-19). Accordingly, the Lord denounces the cities that were most culpable in rejecting His light: Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (vv. 21-24).

Christ then rejoices in His Father's gracious revelation to spiritual babes instead

of the self-sufficient people that the world thinks of as wise and prudent (v. 25). His next statement sounds remarkably exclusive: "*All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him*" (v. 27). Indeed, knowledge of the triune Godhead is found nowhere else but in Christ, who perfectly manifests what God is like (Jn. 1:18; 14:9-11; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). Those who want to know the Almighty must receive the Lord Jesus; no other self-professed sage, guru, cleric, or holy man can impart accurate knowledge of the true and living God.

## EXCLUSIVE TRUTH FREELY OFFERED

Keeping in mind that real knowledge of God resides in Christ, one might well wonder if He will make this truth available to anyone. Thankfully, there is no doubt that God desires to reveal Himself through His Son, for Jesus clearly states this in His celebrated invitation to come to Him and wear His yoke (vv. 28-30). Knowing God depends on knowing Christ. Thankfully, knowing Christ is open to whoever will respond to His call. Modern thinking exalts tolerance as the chief virtue; in the end, however, this same worldview refuses to tolerate belief systems that affirm absolute

truth—dubbing them "intolerant." In contrast, biblical Christianity restricts truth and salvation to God's Son but calls on everyone to receive Him (Jn. 1:12; Rev. 22:17). What begins as seeming so restrictive, actually turns out to be gloriously liberating!

As evangelist Michael Green remarks: "What grace, that God should come to seek His rebel subjects with no word of condemnation on His lips, but an invitation, 'Come'! That one word shows us the very heart of God. That is His attitude to sinners."<sup>1</sup> Another adds: "Every search after rest or joy is vain without Christ. The promises of the gospel are general; he alone is excluded who excludes himself."<sup>2</sup>

The invited ones are described as those who "*labor and are heavy laden*" (v. 28). The former term indicates what strenuous work one takes upon oneself; the latter term connotes a burden that is imposed from outside oneself. Thoughts of guilty consciences and the bondage of sin naturally come to mind. One also thinks of the incessant—and ultimately futile—labor of trying to be accepted before God by one's own religious "good" works (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:21). Nevertheless, the larger context of Matthew



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How can we fully set forth the “rest” to be found in Jesus? Let those testify who took their guilt to His blood, their vileness to His righteousness, their sins to His grace, their burdens to His arm, their sorrows to His heart. Let them tell how, in a moment, their sense of weariness fled... **Are you a sin-weary soul? Then to you is this invitation addressed:** “Come to Me—to Me, a Savior whose willingness is equal to His ability. To Me, who never rejected a single soul that sought salvation and heaven at My hands. Come to Me—I will give you rest.” —O. WINSLOW

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points to specific labors and burdens that Christ had in mind. The next section (Mt. 12:1-13) details examples of the onerous bondage that rabbinic Judaism imposed on its first century adherents (if anything, it is even worse today for Orthodox and Hasidic Jews). The rabbis were fond of speaking about “the yoke of the Law,” but it only weighed down those who bore it with heavy cares (Acts 15:10). In Matthew 23:4, the Lord criticized this legalism and hypocrisy, saying that “...*they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*”

### AN EASY YOKE

Christ invites people to put on His yoke; this means that they submit to His authority as Lord. In return, they find that their new Master-Teacher gives them rest in Himself and instructs them in the right way to live (v. 29). Green points out Jesus’ intention: “He wants not only to welcome back the sinner, but to train the disciple.”<sup>3</sup>

Kelly agrees and amplifies the point:

Grace does not leave men to do as they list, but makes its object desire to do the will of God. So, immediately after saying, ‘I will give you rest,’ He, our Lord, adds, ‘Take My yoke upon you’—not the yoke of their fathers, but that of Jesus...The Lord

thus secures His dignity, and keeps up His moral government over His people. They are more disturbed than any, if not subject to Christ; they can neither enjoy Him nor the world. If I have got such a blessing as Christ, and yet am not bearing His yoke, God does not intend that I should be happy. All else is a false happiness. The only true enjoyment for our souls, now that we have got Christ, depends on taking His yoke upon us, and learning of Him, bound to Him as One that we have evermore to serve and to worship.”<sup>4</sup>

The offer of Christ’s easy yoke is an invitation to an intimate relationship with Him, involving His love and tutelage, along with obedience on the believer’s part.

### A YOKE OF REST

The Lord Jesus’ original audience was accustomed to arrogant and self-obsessed rabbis (Mt. 23:5-7; Jn. 7:49). But the Lord Jesus is meek (“gentle” NKJV, NASB, ESV & NET): His strength is exactly moderated to the needs of His people. Instead of pride running amuck, in the Lord Jesus they encounter One who condescends to help the humble and undeserving because He is “*lowly of heart*” (v. 29). In submitting to the Lord, they find an “*easy yoke*” (v. 30)—a word that is rendered “good” elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g. Rom. 2:4).<sup>5</sup> A yoke helps one to carry a load, but the burden in this case is described as “*light*” (v. 30).

In place of religious toil and dissatisfaction, they obtain rest in the Savior who loves them and transforms them by His grace (2 Cor. 5:17). A righteous standing in God’s sight, as well as peace, joy, and contentment are all part of the rest that is offered under Christ’s leadership.

As Ironside insightfully explains: “Many shrink from submitting to His yoke, fearing it may involve greater sacrifices than they are ready to make. But all who acknowledge His authority and blend their wills with His find they enter a rest such as the weary of this world never know.”<sup>6</sup> ■

### ENDNOTES

- 1 Michael Green, *The Message of Matthew* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), p. 142.
- 2 Samuel Cramer, quoted in John Peter Lange and Philip Schaff, *Matthew* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), p. 215.
- 3 Green, p. 143.
- 4 William Kelly, *Lectures on the Gospel of Matthew* (London; Glasgow: G. Morrish; R.L. Allan, 1868), p. 182.
- 5 “The word rendered ‘easy’ means agreeable and serviceable—a yoke that does not gall the neck, nor cramp so as to hinder the drawing.” John Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society, 1886), p. 254.
- 6 H. A. Ironside, *Expository Notes on the Gospel of Matthew* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1948), p. 139.

# John 6:37 and Divine Election

David Dunlap

**J**ohn 6, and especially John 6:37, is considered by Calvinist scholars and Bible teachers to be among their most convincing texts. Calvinist author James White believes it to be the strongest Calvinist passage in the entire Bible. In his book, *The Potter's Freedom*, he writes:

John 6:37-45 is the clearest exposition of Calvinism in the Bible... There is a good reason why non-Calvinists stumble at this point: there is no meaningful non-Reformed exegesis of this passage available.<sup>1</sup>

To many, John 6:37 may seem to give strong biblical support to the Calvinist viewpoint of unconditional election and irresistible grace. However, is this verse an "exposition" of the Calvinist doctrine? Does John 6:37 unquestionably support the Calvinist view of divine election? Our premise is that this text is taken out of context, misinterpreted by many Calvinists, and does not support Reformed theology at all. That may seem like quite a statement. However, let us to examine this passage in the light of Scripture.

#### THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The fundamental issue of this passage

is not divine election but the deity of Christ. The Jewish opposition and rejection of Christ did not lie in election but rather in their rejection of Christ's deity and the teaching He had received from the Father. In chapter 5, the Lord explained that both Moses and John the Baptist testified of His relationship with the Father (vv. 33, 46). Nevertheless, these Jews rose up in opposition to the Lord Jesus Christ, dismissing the teaching of both Moses and John.

If they had received Moses' teaching and had truly come to know the Father, they would have belonged to the Father's flock, and the Father would have drawn them to the Son and placed them into His shepherd care (Jn. 6:45). Our Lord's phrase "give to Me" in chapters 6 and 17 of John's Gospel expresses a two-fold spiritual truth. The primary meaning of it was to come under His shepherd care (Jn. 17:11-12). Secondly, it meant to come to Christ by faith (Jn. 17:1-2). All that the Father gave the Son would come under His spiritual shepherd care, and the majority would also move from faith in the Father to faith in Christ but, sadly, not all, such as Judas Iscariot.

"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

#### THE CALVINIST PERSPECTIVE

All Calvinists are united in seeing unconditional divine election and irresistible grace taught in John 6:37. Calvinists equate the word "gives" with divine election. They reason that the people whom the Father gives to the Son are the elect, and the Father will irresistibly draw these to the Son for salvation. The Father draws and elects only some to salvation in Christ; the others are not drawn, and, so, they are eternally lost. Representative of this view is Calvinist author Edwin Palmer:

Only those whom the Father gives to Christ can come to Him. Salvation is entirely in the hands of the Father. He it is who gives them to Jesus to be saved. Thus, salvation depends entirely on the Father giving some to Christ. This is nothing else than unconditional election.<sup>2</sup>

At first glance, this view may seem like the proper teaching of Scripture.

However, upon closer examination, several difficulties in the Calvinist interpretation present themselves. Let us take a look at some of these objections.

**The context of John's Gospel.** Firstly, there are at least seven other verses in John's Gospel which speak of the Father giving individuals to the Son (Jn. 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24). When we compare these verses with each other, we discover that the ones whom the Father gives are not the elect of past and future ages, but, rather, these are those for whom the Lord prayed, to whom the Lord taught the Scriptures.

**Faith: before or afterwards?** Secondly, do those who are given to the Son have faith in God prior to being given or afterwards? Scripture seems to indicate that those who are given to the Son already belonged to the Father and have faith prior to being given to the Son (Jn. 6:45). There is not one verse in all of the Bible which indicates that God grants salvation to anyone apart from faith in Christ. *"All those who the Father gives Me"* were those who had faith in Christ. Faith in Christ is the key to understanding this section in John's Gospel. Well-known Calvinist author and lecturer R. C. Sproul, Sr. writes,

This qualifies His statement about what the Father has given Him that would never be lost. It is **believers** that are given to Christ by the Father, and these believers will never be lost. This affirmation builds on what Jesus declared only moments earlier" (Jn. 6:36-37).<sup>3</sup> (Emphasis mine.)

Moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in His high priestly prayer, teaches that before individuals were given to Him, they were believers. In John 17, we read, *"They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word"* (v. 6, NKJ).

**Shepherd care or election?** Thirdly, regarding the individuals that were given by the Father, were they given in the sense of election, or were they given for the shepherd's care and spiritual protection? It seems that these given ones, the majority of which already knew God, were given to the Son primarily for keeping or spiritual protection.

In the Old Testament, especially in Psalm 121 and Ezekiel 34, we have many rich images of the guiding, keeping, and "watchman" ministry of God over Israel. In Psalm 121, the words "keep" and "preserve" are each used three times. *"He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, He who keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy Keeper...The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, He shall preserve thy soul"* (Ps. 121:3-8). This keeping work of the Father in the Old Testament is given to the Son in the New Testament.

John 17 is a very interesting passage in this regard. In our Lord's high priestly prayer, He prays, *"...these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those Thou hast given Me...while I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name; those Thou gavest Me I have kept"* (Jn. 17:11-12). In these verses, the Lord is returning the ones He has kept back into the Father's spiritual care. Now, this language would be indeed strange if the giving by the Father meant election to salvation; but, if it were primarily for special spiritual care while He was on earth, it makes perfect sense. It seems that the Father gave to the Son the special role of "Shepherd Keeper" while He was with His disciples in the world. Even the moderate Calvinist, the late James Montgomery Boice, makes this same point:

But God does keep us. That is the point of these verses and the object of our Lord's petition. While He was here, He kept those whom God had entrusted to Him, and He kept them well. None was lost. Now He is about to return to the Father, and therefore, He recommitting those whom He had cared for again into the Father's keeping.<sup>4</sup>

We would suggest that the giving work of the Father and the keeping work of the Lord Jesus Christ do not refer to divine election or irresistible grace but to the vital shepherd care of the Lord Jesus Christ for His disciples.

**The case of Judas Iscariot.** Fourthly, if, according to Calvinism, the giving of some to the Son is essentially the same as election, and if the elect can never be lost, then how are we to understand the situation of Judas Iscariot, of whom the Bible says he was "given" by the Father but was also lost (Jn. 17:12). The Father's giving of some to the Son must be something less than sovereign divine election to salvation. Theologian Dr. Lawrence Vance explains that the giving of the Father does not meet the biblical standard of divine election:

That this will of the Father was not a sovereign, eternal decree is apparent from the fact that one of those given to Christ was a devil (Jn. 6:70) who was lost (Jn. 17:12)...<sup>5</sup>

Before we move on from this point, we need to look more closely at a detail concerning Judas. In this regard, how do we reconcile the fact that Judas, a "given one," was lost, with the words of the Lord Jesus that state that none of the given ones shall ever be lost? The Lord stated, *"...that of all that He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day"* (Jn. 6:39); and *"Those Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled"* (Jn. 17:12).

# the Shepherd keeps His sheep

How is it that Judas is lost, considering what the Lord says about keeping all those given to Him? This is important because it touches on the doctrine of eternal security. We would suggest that Judas was “given” but did not know Christ as Savior.

Judas is an example of one who was a follower of God, like many others in Old Testament, but did not come to know Christ as his Savior. The Father gave him to the Son, but he was not regenerated and later ended his life without faith in Christ. When we consider the

case of Judas Iscariot, it causes us to dig a little deeper to discover the difference between one who was given to Christ and one who was saved through the finished work of Christ.

Many Calvinists have long argued that John 6:37 is one of the best descriptions of Calvinism in the Bible. But when this verse is examined within its context, along with other relevant verses in John’s Gospel, it does not support the Calvinist viewpoint. It is speaking of shepherd care, not election to salvation. ■

## ENDNOTES

1. James White, *The Potter’s Freedom* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press Publishing, 2000), p. 155.
2. Edwin Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1979), pp. 27-28.
3. R. C. Sproul, *Loved by God* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2001), p. 123.
4. James M. Boice, *Gospel of John*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), p. 392.
5. Lawrence Vance, *The Other Side of Calvinism* (Pensacola, FL: Vance Publications, 1995), p. 342.



## ON THE OTHER HAND

Perhaps we could continue with the subject discussed in brother Dunlap’s helpful article. As noted, John 6:37 should not be assumed to describe one group of people to whom both ideas apply. Is it not possible that “*All that the Father gives Me will come to Me*,” and “*the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out*” differentiate two distinct classes of humanity? Note that the first speaks of a group given, “*all*”; the second of those who make an individual choice, “*the one who comes to Me*.”

This becomes clearer as the Lord Jesus explains: “*This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day*” (vv. 39-40). Here the action of the Savior raising persons up “*at the last day*” seems to be repeated to emphasize this thought of two distinct categories of those who are “*His own*.” Again notice the group/individual distinction: “*all*” and “*everyone*.” Who were these two kinds of believers?

When the Lord Jesus arrived on the planet, there were people living who were the spiritual children of Abraham by faith. They had, like the patriarch, a living relationship

with Jehovah, though they had not yet met Jesus. As He would later say, “*You believe in God, believe also in Me*” (14:1). But a new society was about to be birthed, the Church. And some of those who previously would have been “*the Israel of God*” were now being transferred by the Father to the care of His Son: “*All that the Father gives Me*.” Please note that salvation in the present age is described as involving the Spirit wooing people to Christ, not as the gift of the Father to His Son.

From this point forward, those like us who “*see the Son and believe*” and therefore “*come*” to Him (see vv. 37 and 40) would also be included in the flock that belong to the Good Shepherd. He will not reject one sinner who comes believing.

This is what irritated His Jewish audience that day. They considered themselves in Group A—those who already belonged to the Father—but Jesus explained that the proof they were not the Father’s was that they did not recognize the Son. We are so alike, He told them, that “*If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also*” (8:19; see 14:7, 9; 16:3). But, He added graciously, there is no reason you cannot now believe and become part of Group B, those who spiritually see and so come to Me.

The scene is similar in John 10: “*The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I*

*said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me*” (vv. 25-27). When Jesus came to the sheepfold of Judaism, there were some who did not recognize His voice. They did not believe because they had no living relationship with God. But could they *never* be His sheep? The rest of the chapter shows how they can! “*If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him*” (vv. 37-38). They were not the Father’s to be transferred to the Son, but if they would begin their journey by believing His works were of God, they could eventually “*know and believe*” and if they came to Him, He would not cast them out.

What of Judas? “*Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition*” (17:12). This construction is awkward to our ears, similar to Luke 4:26, 27, where we should not suppose that the woman of Sarepta was one of the widows of Israel, nor Naaman the Syrian one of the lepers in Israel. Perhaps a better reading might be “*None of them is lost; but the son of perdition is lost, that the scripture might be fulfilled*.” Clearly Judas, though never one of the Shepherd’s sheep, was chosen: “*Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*” (Jn. 6:70) but he was chosen for a role, not for salvation, just as 15:16 is often misconstrued. Similarly, we are chosen for this lofty role: “*Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love*” (Eph. 1:3). What an honor!

—Jabe Nicholson

## iPads In The Pulpit

R. Scott Thomson

The iPad is ideally suited to the unique needs of preachers—especially itinerant preachers. Skeptical? Here are just a few of the reasons why I have found the iPad to be an ideal tool while preaching:

- **Portability:** Small enough to take virtually anywhere
- **Multiple translations:** Instant access to numerous translations
- **Virtual library:** Access your entire library of study tools anywhere, any time.
- **Sermon notes:** Never forget your sermon notes again.
- **Inexpensive:** The vast majority of apps and other resources you will need are either inexpensive or free.
- **Multimedia presentations:** Present audio, video, and slide presentations on your existing A/V equipment.
- **New possibilities:** Record sermons in audio and video, count up or countdown timers, re-size your note's font, edit notes on the fly, and much, much more.

### BEST IPAD BIBLE APPS FOR PREACHING

The features to look for in an app that you will use while preaching include:

- **Translation of choice:** The app must offer the translation you will be using.
- **Easy to use:** When speaking in front of a live audience, reliability and simplicity trump sophistication.
- **Scalable fonts:** Ability to quickly change font size
- **Split screen functionality:** To simultaneously view two different Bible translations or to display both the Scripture text

and sermon notes

- **Cloud sync:** The app should be supported in all the computing environments you use and offer the ability to seamlessly sync highlights, bookmarks and notes.
- **Strong developer support:** The app's developer must be committed to keeping the app up-to-date.
- **Third party integration:** Ability to integrate cloud-based services such as Evernote, Dropbox, and Google Drive

While I am not aware of a Bible app that offers all of these features, here are three excellent apps to consider:

Bible+ by Olive Tree Bible Software, Inc.  
eBible.com by Osprit, Inc.  
Bible! by Logos Bible Software

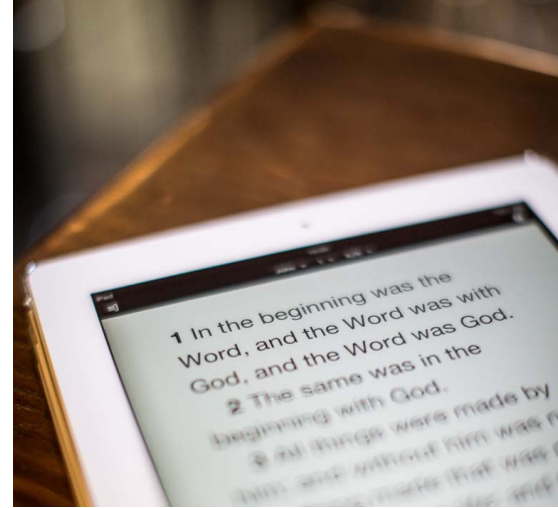
### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS

When we examine the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, we find that He often used illustrations to powerfully emphasize His teaching. For one example of this, see Mark 10:13-16. The right visual at the right moment can transform an otherwise mundane sermon into something unforgettable. This is another area where the iPad can be of great value. Slideshows, audio, and video can be easily exported from the device to your existing audio/visual equipment.

### IPAD PREACHING TIPS

*Before preaching:*

- Test the apps and equipment.
- Fully charge your iPad.



- Mute your iPad.
- Disable Wi-Fi.
- Disable cellular service.
- Close all running apps.
- Slippery podium? Use a 6"×8" piece of kitchen drawer liner.

*While preaching:*

- To quickly switch between apps, use the four finger left/right swipe gesture. This is significantly faster than using the multitasking bar.
- If you experience a technical glitch during your message, pause, remain calm, and try to find a solution. Resist the temptation to tell your audience about the problem. A prearranged, technically savvy assistant in the audience is a good idea as a last resort.

*After preaching:*

- Re-enable sound, Wi-Fi, and cellular data as needed.
- Note any technical glitches that you experienced so you can research and resolve them before your next message.

Paul wrote to Timothy, “*preach the Word*” (2 Tim. 4:2). Should we do anything different? Absolutely not! While we should become proficient with the tools we use, ultimately preaching is not about the latest and greatest technology; it's about preaching His Word.

*For more detailed posts on preaching with an iPad, see more on WhyWeWeb:*  
<http://bit.ly/preaching-w-iPad>

# IF ANY MAN THIRST



SHAWN ABIGAIL

**W**e were out in the bush of Northern Ontario, picking pine cones to be sold to the Ministry of Natural Resources, who would then grow seedlings for the next year of tree planting. It wasn't particularly hard work, but it was hot work. The insects were buzzing around, and there was no shade. But worst of all, on that first day out, we had forgotten to bring drinks. The sweat dripped from our foreheads as we worked for several hours. And then an advertisement came over our radio: "Wouldn't you like a nice glass of ice cold milk?" That was it! We packed up and went looking for a store by the side of the highway where we could buy something to drink. Thirst has a particular agony of its own.

The Bible speaks of living waters in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jeremiah 2:13 and 17:13 make it clear that the Lord Himself is the fountain of living water. This is consistent with John 7:39 which says that the stream of living water is the Holy Spirit. Of the one who trusts Christ for salvation, John 7:38 says that *"streams of living water will flow from within him,"* a likely reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). Indeed, based on Romans 8:9, we can say

that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is synonymous with salvation.

## SOUL DROUGHT

So what is the condition of the person who does not have this living water? Certainly, he or she is an unbeliever and headed for a lost eternity. But the Bible is very good at using descriptive language and metaphor to illustrate deep truths. And so we see Isaiah 55:1 comparing this lost condition to physical thirst, *"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."* Interestingly, this Old Testament passage is not calling the people of Israel to a greater zeal for the Law but rather *"let him return to the Lord... for He will abundantly pardon"* (Isa. 50:7). To be lost is to have an aching, burning thirst.

The man or woman who does not have salvation is missing something essential. Whether they realize it or not, there is a Christ-shaped hole in their lives. So they try to fill the void with whatever they can find. Some throw themselves into works of mercy, which, while commendable, are not meritorious for salvation. Others throw themselves into false religions, some of which appeal

to the senses and others that teach asceticism, but all deny the essential truth of Christ's finished work. Still others throw themselves into complete hedonism, living for the flesh and making no attempt to deny it. But Jeremiah 2:13 teaches us that to deny the fountain of living waters is to build for yourself a broken cistern. Instead of a ready supply of water to quench one's thirst, one is left with something that looks like it will quench thirst but will not. The thirst remains.

We can sometimes become discouraged when trying to reach out with the Christian faith. It's not so much the opposition that discourages us, it's the atmosphere of studied indifference. It often seems that the average person is completely indifferent to the offer of eternal life, but this is not quite so. While they may refuse the living water, they still know they are thirsty. The man who has abandoned himself to living for the flesh knows that the flesh will not satisfy his deepest need. He may proclaim his happiness to you; he may tell you he doesn't need salvation; but you can be sure that when nobody else is around to watch, he cries the bitterest of tears.



Our bodies are composed of between 50% and 75% water, depending on age and weight. But it's the soul that really gets thirsty!

## The people of this world are thirsty, and they know it.

### THIRST AT A WELL

John 4 presents an excellent pattern for personal evangelism. The Lord doesn't start by cornering someone and blurting out a formula for a quick conversion. His approach to evangelism flows quite naturally: He was weary from His journey, sitting beside a well, and simply asked a woman for a drink. Thus a conversation is initiated which will soon turn to spiritual matters. The woman raised a protest based on centuries of religious and cultural strife. But instead of being drawn into the debate, the Lord Jesus used her spiritual thirst to turn the conversation to living water. We read in John 4:10, "Jesus answered and said to her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, "Give Me a drink," you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.'" When the woman tried to move the conversation in a different direction, the Lord returned to the topic of living water in verse 14, "but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

Further along, when confronted by her personal sin, the woman sought to depersonalize the situation by engaging in a religious debate. The tactics the woman used are well known to those who seek to share their faith today. But central to this whole conversation is the fact that the lost have a deep thirst.

Given this deep thirst and the fact that the lost know they are thirsty, it is not surprising that the Lord Jesus extends evangelistic invitations in John 7:37 and Revelation 22:17 using the idea of thirst. Some scholars have suggested that there were drink offerings on the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles but that on the eighth day there were no drink offerings, lending poignancy to the Lord's proclamation in John 7. But this fact is not needed to understand the essential point, and it is that Jesus is extending an invitation that meets the deepest need in winsome words which are designed to stir the lost. So we read, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water'" (vv. 37-38).

This same invitation is extended at almost the very end of the Bible, in Revelation 22:17.

There we read, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost." Here, at the end of the Bible, we are reminded that this great offer is without cost to us. While it cost the Lord Jesus Christ His very life, the work was done. To the man or woman who has been living in a dry place, to the one who has worked his way into a sweat while trying to earn salvation, to the individual who has hoped in the cisterns of the world and found them dry, the Lord Jesus offers Himself as the water of life—the cool refreshment that eliminates thirst permanently and just gets better and better as time goes on and we pass into eternity. ■

*When Israel's tribes were parched with thirst,  
Forth from the rock the waters burst;  
And all their future journey through  
Yielded them drink, and gospel too!  
In Moses' rod a type they saw  
Of his severe and fiery law;  
The smitten rock prefigured Him  
From whose pierced side all blessings stream.  
But ah! the types were all too faint,  
His sorrows or His worth to paint;  
Slight was the stroke of Moses' rod,  
But He endured the wrath of God.  
Their outward rock could feel no pain,  
But ours was wounded, tom and slain;  
The rock gave but a watery flood,  
But Jesus poured forth streams of blood.  
The earth is like their wilderness,  
A land of drought and sore distress;  
Without one stream from pole to pole,  
To satisfy a thirsty soul.  
But let the Savior's praise resound;  
In Him refreshing streams are found,  
Which pardon, strength, and comfort give;  
And thirsty sinners drink and live.*

—John Newton, *The Olney Hymns*

BY MARK KOLCHIN

# The Call to STEP OUT IN FAITH

*Matthew 14:22-33*

**D**uring His earthly ministry, the Savior called to many people in many situations. He called the weary and heavy-laden, laboring through life's toils and troubles, to find rest in Him (Mt. 11:28-30). He called those who were spiritually thirsty to come to Him and drink deeply and find that He alone is able to quench the deep needs of the human heart and become a source of refreshment to others (Jn. 7:37-39).

He called the poor and needy, who had no means to enter a lavish feast, to *"Come, for all things are now ready"* (Lk. 14:17). He called the children (Mk. 10:14); He called the dead (Jn. 11:43). The spiritual lessons are obvious and are just as applicable today for those who respond to those same invitations from the One who continues to graciously offer them.

## Comfort in trials

Depending on the situation, these invitations can apply to sinner or saint, for salvation or sanctification, whatever the need may be. In Matthew 14, there is an incident in the lives of His disciples that illustrates the latter and underscores the call for believers to step out in faith in the midst of trials.

The event occurred just after the disciples had been successfully employed in the work of the ministry with the feeding of the five thousand. No sooner had they launched than they found their boat reeling on the Sea of Galilee, battered by the wind and the waves.

It would not be the only time that they experienced trouble so soon after a high point in ministry (cf. Lk. 9:27-43; Mk. 4:35-41). The Lord had constrained them to get into the boat, in order to place them in a situation that forced them to build upon the elementary principles of their faith. He does the same with us, as the hymn aptly states:  
*Every joy or trial falleth from above  
Placed upon our dial by the Sun of Love.*

(FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL)

The Lord had gone up on the mountain to pray and, when He saw the difficulty they encountered, He flew to their relief—a wonderful picture of His active intercession on behalf of the heirs of faith (Rom. 8:34). Ministry has its rewards but also its dangers, toils, and snares. However, the Lord knows this and surely sees His people through those trials.

When the disciples saw the Lord approaching their vessel, it was the fourth watch of the night—the darkest time. They thought they had seen a ghost (v. 26). Strangely, they weren't expecting that He would come to their aid. He had helped them at other times, why not now?

The parallel passage in Mark 6:48 states that when the Lord came to them, He would have passed them by as if to simply reassure them of His presence and let them know He was aware of their need. It is always reassuring to know the Lord is there and aware of our plight. "He comes to me with new assurance" are the words we need to sing, to strengthen our hearts especially in time of trial. *"Be of good cheer, It is I; be not afraid."* These were indeed the Lord's comforting words to His frightened disciples. How needed for us also!

## A supernatural walk

But the Lord has more in store than simply our comfort. The story isn't just about the Lord coming to them in their time of need. It also includes a wonderful miracle. Characteristi-



*"He alone spreads out the heavens, and treads on the waves of the sea" (Job 9:8).*

cally, it is Peter who called out to the Lord and requested that He call him out of the boat onto the troubled seas. How we admire Peter! Troubled like the rest, he was still willing to take the Lord at His word and venture out into the darkness. With the invitation to *"Come!"* he did, regardless of his reservations and fear. But note that Peter waited for Christ's invitation. This flies in the face of modern-day positive thinkers.

Peter's struggle is also instructive. Believers are encouraged to boldly come to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16) and not doubt the Lord (Jas. 1:6); but, realistically speaking, we are prone to the frailties of the fallen human condition, fraught with worry, doubt, and fear. This is what Peter exhibited. Despite the fact that he desired to walk on water with the Lord, he began to sink when the realization of his predicament fully gripped him. Would the Lord fail him, even though He had called him out of the boat?

What about us? Will the Lord fail us if He has called us out of the boat to trust Him more completely than we ever have before? When He has called us to rise above our circumstances? Not at all! He would not let Peter sink amidst the waves and neither will He let us sink beneath the storms we face! The feet go down; the prayer goes up; and the hand comes out—to catch the sinking soul in the middle of

the sea, in the middle of the night, amid the wind and the waves. What mercy and help to buoy the one who is of little faith (vv. 30-31). What a testimony to the keeping power of the Lord (1 Pet. 1:5). It is a powerful lesson for us all.

### **Walking by faith**

How does it apply to us in the crucible of life? As with Peter, the Lord challenges us to step out in faith in response to His call. He enables us to walk supernaturally as we rise to whatever occasion we find ourselves in.

What was the consequence of all these events? Verses 32-33 gives us a hint. Note that the storm didn't cease when Peter stepped out of the boat. Rather, it was when Peter stepped back into the boat that the wind ceased. What, then, was the purpose of Peter's walk? Could it not have been conveniently skipped? Why did the Lord allow it to happen?

Perhaps it was meant to show Peter and the other disciples what they could do when they were put to the test—a call to a higher level of understanding and ability with the help of the Lord. Peter could have stayed in the boat, but he would have missed the opportunity to learn that Christ can sustain us when we take Him at His Word and step out in faith.

Further, when the event ended, the

disciples had a heightened sense of Christ's power and of His person. They had a deeper conviction of a truth they had known previously but now knew experientially, and they confidentially declared, *"Truly, You are the Son of God!"* (v. 33).

Hebrews 11:6 pointedly reminds us that *"they that come to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him."* Just as we received the Lord Jesus (i.e. by faith), so we are to walk in Him (Col. 2:6). We are to walk as He walked (1 Jn. 2:6). Faith should be the ongoing, operative principle in the life of every Christian, not just a few.

This call of Christ to those that already knew Him is the same call that is directed toward us: to walk by faith in a way that we have never walked before, even in the face of adversity. In doing so, we prove both the power and the promises of the Lord. ■

*So rages my tumultuous breast,  
So chafes my restless will;  
Speak! and these troubled seas shall rest;  
Speak, and the storm is still.*

—WILLIAM B. TAPPAN

# ONE WITH CHRIST

*as He is,  
so are we.*



The apostle John uses the phrase “*as He is*” several times in his first letter to Christians. It describes an affinity or oneness which is true of the individual believer in his or her relationship with the Lord Jesus. He has in mind something more fundamental than a similarity between the Savior and the saved, for that might suggest merely an external likeness. And it is not something to be reached simply by human effort to imitate Christ, even though believers are called to “*follow His steps*” (1 Pet. 2:21). John uses this phrase to describe both what is true of all believers (positionally) and what all who profess His Name should be (practically). It is a trademark of the genuine believer and at the same time a test for all who profess to be “*in the light as He is*” (1 Jn. 1:7).

## IN THE LIGHT AS HE IS

That God is light raises no question in our minds, nor does the fact that our Savior is “*in the light*” surprise us. What startles us is that we are there also, even “*as He is in the light*.” Our first response might be, “Surely not!” as we think of the many times we poorly reflect His character. But

here the apostle uses those three words “*as He is*” to speak not so much about what we ought to be, but about where we are: in the light. In contrast, those who wish to deceive themselves and others, deal with the problem of their sins by saying that they have no sin or have not sinned (1:8, 10). They walk in darkness. In contrast, those who are genuine confess their sins. It is their habit to do so. Nothing less would be true to the light in which they walk. (Note that John is not at this point thinking of the believer’s need to confess some particular sin as with David in Psalm 32:3-5, but an ongoing confession that characterizes those walking in the light.)

How then can we be at peace when the light uncovers our sins? (And it uncovers many more than those of which we are aware.) The same light which exposes them also reveals that which has permanently removed them: “*the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*” (1:7). “*Our sins are forgiven for His name’s sake*” (2:12). We thus are enabled to enjoy a threefold fellowship: with the apostles, with other believers, and—*even more importantly*—with God Himself (1:3).

Note, then, the way the apostle uses “*if*” in this chapter. He is supposing two classes of persons: those who enjoy fellowship with the apostles and the truth they proclaimed, and those who do not. Observe the “*if we say*” in verse 8 and contrast it with verse 9. Throughout this letter, he is contrasting the confession or admission of believers with that of those who were trying to lead them astray. The ifs are those of reasoned argument—if this is characteristically what is believed and confessed, then that is also true of those who do so. Now please read 1 John 2:6 carefully.

## JUST AS HE WALKED

The apostle has changed from the present tense to the past. In doing so, he brings us down from heaven to earth, so to speak. We are now to focus on current practice rather than permanent privilege. The emphasis has shifted from our calling to our conduct. It is now what those professing His name ought to do: to walk just as He walked.

In His walk on earth, the Lord Jesus gave us an example. It was a multifac-

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” – 1 John 3:2*

eted example of obedience to His Father: love, faithfulness, humility, and sacrifice. In short, He was full of grace and truth. It should be plain from the Scripture and from experience that we could never approximate such a standard. Obviously it is not being suggested that we could do so. Any fancied success would be nothing but the presumption and arrogance of the human heart. This call to walk as He walked is not referring so much to the degree we, by grace, follow His example as to the direction we take, the path we are on rather than the progress we have made on the path.

Who then is especially in view in those words *“to walk just as He walked”*? It is written concerning those boasting of great attainment, who said they had no sin in them or had not sinned (1:8, 10) and claimed unbroken fellowship with Christ (2:6). Their conduct would be the test. Their bold assertions put them in great debt. Were these pretenders truly obeying His commandments and keeping His word (2:3-5)?

Let true disciples be encouraged by understanding that though they may stumble and sin (2:1), they have in Christ an unfailing Advocate. They are *“as He is,”* in the light, and they walk *“as He walked,”* following their Master’s steps, though not, of course, with the great and steadfast strides that marked His earthly path.

## **WE SHALL SEE HIM JUST AS HE IS**

This is the blessed hope of the believer. Two apostles, John and Paul, provide similar testimony regarding the future manifestation of the Son of God, and in

the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established. In 1 John 3:1-3, John first points to what we are already: children of God, born into His family, imbued with the life of His Son.

Paul affirms that our life is *“hidden with Christ in God”* (Col. 3:3) and also goes on to say, *“when He appears then you also will appear with Him in glory”* (v. 4). In the same way, John refers to the time when Christ will be revealed: *“we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.”* This glorious sight will bear indisputable and final witness to the oneness between the Redeemer and the redeemed. We shall be like Him and with Him forever (1 Thes. 4:17). Having such a hope, the believer purifies himself *“just as He is pure.”* This is further emphasized by the contrast in 3:4-9 where we are told that whoever continues to live in a lawless way *“has neither seen Him or known Him.”* Those who are born of God cannot help taking character from Him, just *“as He is righteous”* (3:7).

These references to the oneness or harmony between the disciple and His Master are not only a great encouragement to the believer but also a test to be applied to those professing His name. John calls on his readers to discern between deceivers and those they sought to deceive by paying attention to the things they say (1:6, 8, 10), the way they conduct themselves (3:7), and whose well-being they sought (the love test, 3:14; 4:12,21). These provide a sure guide. May we, in our measure, speak, behave, and love in true harmony with our Lord.



## **AS HE IS IN THE WORLD**

Preceding the last use of these three words in 1 John 4:17, we have been reminded twice that His Spirit has been given to us (3:24 and 4:13). His presence seals us and guarantees our inheritance (Eph. 1:13,14). But of necessity, His indwelling also produces the fruit described in Galatians 5:22, the fundamental element of which is love. It is this grace which John has been focusing on from 3:10 up to this point. It is contrasted with the hatred of the world which was initially directed towards the Son of God and now, in His absence, is directed towards those born of His Spirit (compare John 15:18-21 and 1 John 3:13). So we are indeed as He is in this world. In a negative way, we experience the world’s hatred; and in a positive way, we love God and fellow believers (4:21; 3:14), a sure indication that we have passed from death to life.

The late C.F. Hogg would add another thought. He writes that believers *“have boldness in (view of) the Day of Judgment; because as He is (beyond judgment, inasmuch as He endured what was due to sin at the Cross), even so are we in this world, that is here and now, for what is true of Him is true also of all that are in Him.”* ■

# Princes of Egypt Part 3

BY ROB SULLIVAN



**T**here are a number of infamous characters that show up in the pages of Scripture. Herod the Great thought nothing of killing Bethlehem's infant sons in an effort to save his throne. Goliath blasphemed the Lord and taunted Israel before he met a well-placed stone with his forehead. The hands of Ahab and Jezebel were stained with innocent blood. And, of course, Judas Iscariot may be the most tragic figure in history. These are all names with which a typical Sunday school student would be acquainted.

Yet the name of one of the greatest villains of all is barely known by even the best of Bible scholars. I am referring to the main antagonist of the book of Exodus, the pharaoh who opposed Moses and, in the process, defied the living God.

## WHICH PHARAOH AND WHEN

The Scripture refers to him by the titles of "Pharaoh" and "king of Egypt." However, his specific name is not given. This is left for the diligent to find by doing background research on Egypt of that day. A good principle for studying the Scripture is to research historical context. When did the exodus occur? Once we know that, we can determine who was sitting atop Egypt's throne.

First Kings 6:1 says, *"And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he*

*began to build the house of the Lord."* This passage gives us an important clue as to when Israel's departure from Egypt occurred. For reasons we won't go into here, many archaeologists and Bible chronologists believe that Solomon laid the foundation of the temple in 966 BC.<sup>1</sup> When we work back 480 years earlier as the verse instructs, we are left with 1446 BC as the date for the parting of the Red Sea.

Who was pharaoh in 1446 BC? The best evidence suggests the pharaoh who hardened his heart in the face of those miraculous plagues was Amenhotep II.<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT PLAGUES AND WHY?

Amenhotep II reigned during the 18th Dynasty and was a member of the New Kingdom. These rulers had driven the Hyksos from the Nile Delta and brought in a style of worship that focused on the worship of nature.

The plagues that God brought about in the book of Exodus were an amazing display of His power. Through them, the Lord demonstrated His awesome (indeed infinite) might in comparison to all the gods of Egypt.

Yet these plagues were also a tremendous act of grace on God's part. He was demonstrating to the Egyptians that they were worshipping false gods. Their gods were no gods at all! The Lord deliberately chose plagues that would unmask these mother-nature type deities and reveal what they truly were: imposters. In so doing, the Lord both enlightened Egypt and demonstrated

the existence of the one true God.

Even Pharaoh himself was considered a deity by Egypt, but he could not prevail against the God of Israel. The plague of the firstborn reached all the way to the household of Amenhotep II (Ex. 12:29f), and Pharaoh's own son died when the Destroyer passed through the land.

## WHAT OUTCOME AND WHO?

The plagues had a devastating effect on Egypt. In the words of Pharaoh's advisers, *"Egypt is destroyed"* (Ex. 10:7). Combine this with the subsequent destruction of Egypt's army in the Red Sea, and the impact on the national psyche was profound. Egypt would never be the same.

Amenhotep II lost his son and the heir apparent to Egypt's throne during the plague on the firstborn. Found between the paws of the Great Sphinx in Giza is great extra-biblical confirmation of this event. Here, a stone slab rests that is known as the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV. This man was the son of Amenhotep II and the ruler who replaced his father on the throne. Remarkably, Thutmose IV conveys within the stela that he never expected to be ruler in Egypt. If he had been the oldest son of Pharaoh, there would have been no surprise over his being the next ruler—from his earliest recollection, he would have been groomed to be the next king. Egyptologists have concluded that something clearly happened to his older brother: an early death that caused the nation's rule to fall to Thutmose IV.<sup>4</sup>

# The Pharaoh of the Exodus



It wasn't just Thutmose IV who had been heavily impacted by the events of Exodus. This is the one time in antiquity where Egypt flirted with monotheism. They had just seen what the one true God had done to their set of deities. For at least a short time, they began to rethink their polytheism. God is a God of grace and mercy; His demonstration of power was not only for the children of Israel, but also for the children of Egypt (Ex. 10:1f).

The son of Thutmose IV and next ruler of Egypt was Amenhotep III. He and his wife, Queen Tiye, ushered in one of the greatest periods in Egypt's history. It was most likely during their reign that

Joshua began the conquest of Canaan. Their son in turn, became one of the most famous Pharaohs of history: Amenhotep IV, better known as Akhenaten. He and his wife, Nefertiti, tried to do away with Egypt's traditional polytheism and bring about the worship of only one god. Unfortunately, they weren't advocating worship of Jehovah, the very One who had brought Akhenaten's great-grandfather to his knees. Instead, they advocated the worship of Aten, the sun god.<sup>5</sup> How different might Egypt's history have been if they had only taken this opportunity to come to faith in the one true God!

—ROB SULLIVAN



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## ENDNOTES

- 1 <http://bit.ly/Amenhotep-II-History>
- 2 *ibid*
- 3 <http://bit.ly/10-Plagues-10-Gods> and <http://davelivingston.com/plagues.htm> (See also <http://www.egyptian-gods.org/> )
- 4 <http://bit.ly/Thutmose-IV>
- 5 <http://bit.ly/akhenaten-ancient-egypt>

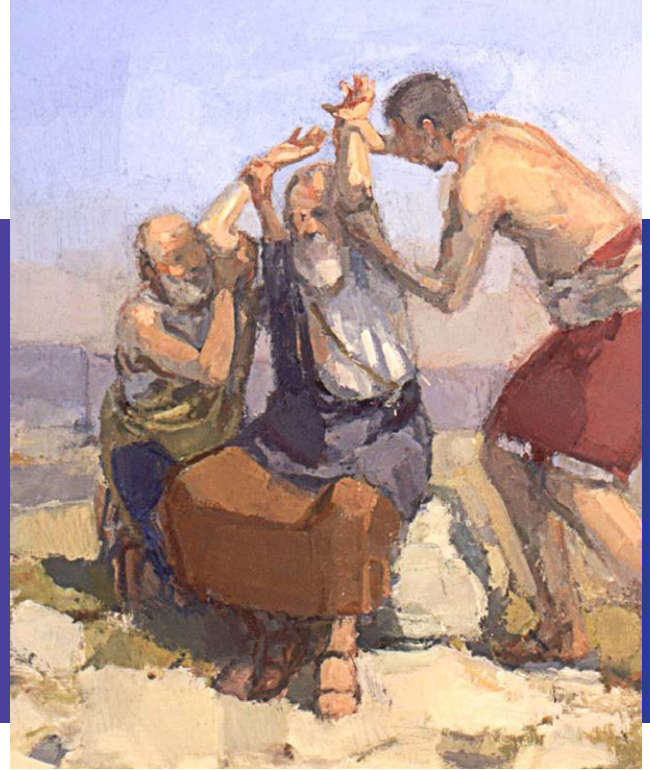
DEITY	MANIFESTATION/POWER	PLAGUE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Hapi	spirit protector of the Nile	Blood	
Heqt	fertility goddess with the head of a frog	Frogs	
Geb	deity over earth and dust	Gnats or Lice	Plague specifically brought about when God told Moses to strike the dust of the ground.
Scarab	dung beetle and lord of flies	Flies	
Hathor	cow-headed love goddess	Livestock	Ptah, Amon, and Mnevis were other cattle-related deities that Egypt worshipped.
Imhotep	god of healing	Boils	
Nut	sky goddess who protected the land	Hail	Nut was also related to the sun god, Rey.
Seth	protector of crops	Locusts	Isis was the goddess of life – this plague was directed toward her as well.
Rey	sun god (known as Ra)	Darkness	Other deities of light or the sun were Horus, Aten, Atum, and Khepri.
Osiris	giver of life	Firstborn	

(Information Source<sup>3</sup>)

Its a classic

# *The call to* **BATTLE**

by C.H. Mackintosh



**P**haraoh and Amalek represent two different influences: Pharaoh represents the hindrance to Israel's deliverance from Egypt; Amalek represents the hindrance to their walk with God through the wilderness. Pharaoh used the things of Egypt to keep Israel from serving the Lord; he, therefore, prefigures Satan, who uses "this present evil world" against the people of God. Amalek, on the other hand, stands before us as the type of the flesh. He was the grandson of Esau, who preferred a mess of pottage to the birthright (Gen. 36:12). He was the first who opposed Israel, after their baptism "in the cloud and in the sea." These facts serve to fix his character with great distinctness...Amalek is a type of the flesh.

Until they met Amalek, they had nothing to do. They did not break the power of Egypt nor snap asunder the chains of its thralldom. They did not divide the sea or submerge Pharaoh's hosts beneath its waves. They did not bring down bread from heaven, or draw forth water out of the flinty rock. They neither had done, nor could they do, any of these things. All the previous conflict had been between Jehovah and the enemy.

They had but to "stand still" and gaze upon the mighty triumphs of Jehovah's outstretched arm and enjoy the fruits of victory. The Lord had fought *for* them; but now He fights *in* or *by* them.

Thus is it also with the Church of God. The victories on which her eternal peace and blessedness are founded were gained, single-handed, by Christ for her. He was alone on the cross, alone in the tomb. The Church had to stand aside, for how could she be there? How could she vanquish Satan, endure the wrath of God, or rob death of its sting? Impossible. These things lay far beyond the reach of sinners, but not beyond the reach of Him who came to save them, and who alone was able to bear on His shoulder the ponderous weight of all their sins, and roll the burden away for ever, by His infinite sacrifice, so that God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from God the Father, in virtue of the perfect atonement of God the Son, can take up His abode in each member individually (as seen in the water from the rock, *ed.*).

Now it is when the Holy Ghost thus takes up His abode in us, consequent on

Christ's death and resurrection, that our conflict begins. Christ has fought for us; the Holy Ghost fights in us. The very fact of our enjoying this first rich spoil of victory puts us into direct conflict with the foe. But the comfort is that we are victors before we enter the field of conflict at all. The believer approaches the battle singing, "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

We do not, therefore, fight uncertainly as those that beat the air, while we seek to keep under the body and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:26, 27). "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37). The grace in which we stand renders the flesh utterly void of power to lord it over us (see Rom. 6). If the law is "the strength of sin," grace is the weakening of it. The former gives sin power over us; the latter gives us power over sin.

We have here two distinct things, namely, conflict and intercession. Christ is on high for us, while the Holy Ghost carries on the mighty struggle in us. The two things go together. It is as

*“Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand.” (Exodus 17:8-9)*

we enter, by faith, into the prevalency of Christ’s intercession on our behalf that we make headway against our evil nature.

Some seek to overlook the fact of the Christian’s conflict with the flesh. They look on regeneration as a total change or renewal of the old nature. On this principle it would necessarily follow that the believer has nothing to struggle with. If my nature is renewed, what have I to contend with? Nothing. There is nothing within, inasmuch as my old nature is made new; and nothing without can affect me, inasmuch as there is no response from within. The world has no charms for one whose flesh is entirely changed; and Satan has nothing by or on which to act.

All who maintain such a theory seem to forget the place which Amalek occupies in the history of the people of God. Had Israel conceived the idea that, when Pharaoh’s hosts were gone, their conflict was at an end, they would have been sadly put about when Amalek came upon them. The fact is, their conflict only then began. Thus it is with the believer, for “*all these things happened unto Israel for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition*” (1 Cor. 10:11). But there could be no “type,” no “ensample,” no “admonition” in “*these things*,” for one whose old nature is made new. Indeed, such an one can have but little need of any of those gracious provisions which God has made in His kingdom for those who are the subjects thereof.

We are distinctly taught in the Word that the believer carries about with him that which answers to Amalek, that is, “*the flesh*,” “*the old man*,” “*the carnal*

*mind*” (Rom. 6:6; Rom. 8:7; Gal. 5:17).

Now, if the Christian, on perceiving the stirrings of his evil nature, begins to doubt his being a Christian, he will not only render himself exceedingly unhappy, but also deprive himself of his vantage ground against the enemy. The flesh exists in the believer and will be there to the end of the chapter. The Holy Ghost fully recognises it as existing, as we may easily see, from various parts of the New Testament. In Romans 6 we read, “*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies.*” Such a precept would be entirely uncalled for if the flesh were not existing in the believer. It would be out of character to tell us not to let sin reign, if it were not actually dwelling in us. There is a great difference between dwelling and reigning. It *dwells* in a believer, but it *reigns* in an unbeliever.

However, though it dwells in us, we have, thank God, a principle of power over it. “*Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*” The grace which, by the blood of the cross, has put away sin, insures us the victory, and gives us present power over its indwelling principle.

We have died to sin, and hence it has no claim over us. “*He that has died is justified from sin.*” “*Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified together, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*” (Rom. 6:6). “*And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*” All was victory; and Jehovah’s banner floated over the triumphant host, bearing the sweet and heart-sustaining inscription, “*Jehovah-nissi*” (the Lord my banner). The assur-

ance of victory should be as complete as the sense of forgiveness, seeing both alike are founded on the great fact that Jesus died and rose again. It is in the power of this that the believer enjoys a purged conscience and subdues indwelling sin. The death of Christ having answered all the claims of God in reference to our sins, His resurrection becomes the spring of power in all the details of conflict afterwards. He died for us, and now He lives in us. The former gives us peace, the latter gives us power.

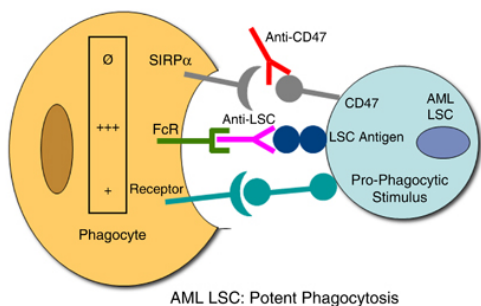
It is edifying to note the contrast between Moses on the hill and Christ on the throne. The hands of our great Intercessor can never hang down. His intercession never fluctuates. “*He ever lives to make intercession for us*” (Heb. 7). His intercession is never-ceasing and all-prevailing. Having taken His place on high, in the power of divine righteousness, He acts for us, according to what He is, and according to the infinite perfectness of what He has done. His hands can never hang down, nor can He need any one to hold them up....

We may further remark that Moses had the rod of God with him on the hill — the rod with which he had smitten the rock. This rod was the expression or symbol of the power of God, which is seen alike in atonement and intercession. When the work of atonement was accomplished, Christ took His seat in heaven, and sent down the Holy Ghost to take up His abode in the Church; so that there is an inseparable connection between the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit. There is the application of the power of God in each. ■

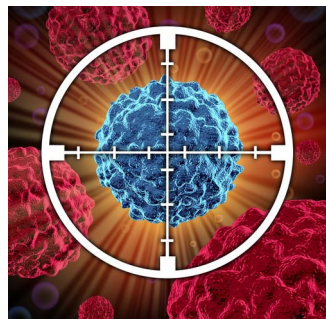
# Do This, Not That

**C**ontrol is important. Any complicated process must be controlled or it breaks down. Human biology provides many examples of control mechanisms which start, guide, and stop important physiologic functions. In essence, they say, “Do this, but not that.” For example, some blood clotting happens constantly in the body because our blood vessels leak. We don’t die from massive circulatory blockage because clotting is limited to small areas on the inside of blood vessels and is not allowed to spread.

Another example of control is found in cells of the immune system, called macrophages, which eat other cells. Macrophage cells must be able to tell the difference between damaged, dying, or abnormal cells that should be eaten, and normal, healthy cells which should not. Without the ability to control which cells macrophages eat, we would literally eat ourselves up from the inside.



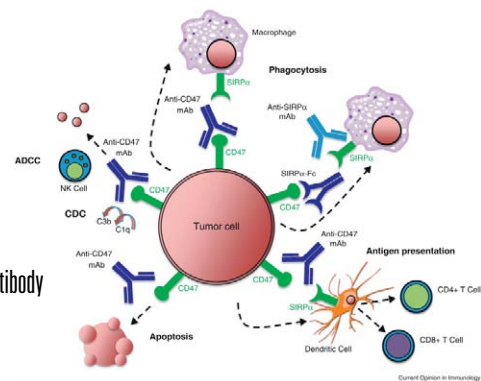
In the last decade, researchers have identified the signal on worn-out or damaged cells which tells the macrophage cell to “eat me.” And, as you might expect, there is also a “don’t eat me” signal on healthy cells to turn the macrophage off. Red blood cells carry the “don’t eat me” CD47



signal molecule on their surface, but as the cell ages and wears out over its lifespan of 120 days, the CD 47 molecule changes shape, eventually becoming an “eat me” signal. Every second, 2.5 million red blood cells are destroyed in organs such as the spleen because the “don’t eat me” signal has changed into an “eat me” signal.

Cancer cells, however, are not normal cells. They are genetically damaged (mutated) cells that should be recognized and eaten by macrophages. One way some cancer cells avoid being eaten by a macrophage is by having lots of “don’t eat me” CD47 molecules on their surface.

When macrophage cells invade a tumor they are stopped by the “don’t eat me” signal. But un-



like normal cells, cancer cells also have a separate “eat me” signal molecule called calreticulin.<sup>1</sup> If the “don’t eat me” signal on a cancer cell is blocked, and the “eat me” signal is not blocked, macrophages will recognize the cancer cells as abnormal and eat them. One way to block the “don’t eat me” signal is by giving a protein designed to stick specifically to CD47. This strategy has proven very successful in animal tests using human ovarian, breast, colon, bladder, brain, liver, and prostate cancer cells and could lead to an effective cancer treatment that does not depend on toxic chemotherapy drugs but allows the patient’s own immune cells (macrophages) to kill the cancerous cells.<sup>2</sup>

The more closely we look at how living systems are controlled, the more the details point to the hand of a loving, intelligent Creator who knows how to program responsive control mechanisms able to direct cells to do this, not that. And even when those mechanisms are damaged, as in cancer cells, it is our ability to understand how the original design should work that suggests new ways to correct what has gone wrong.

—MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, PH.D.

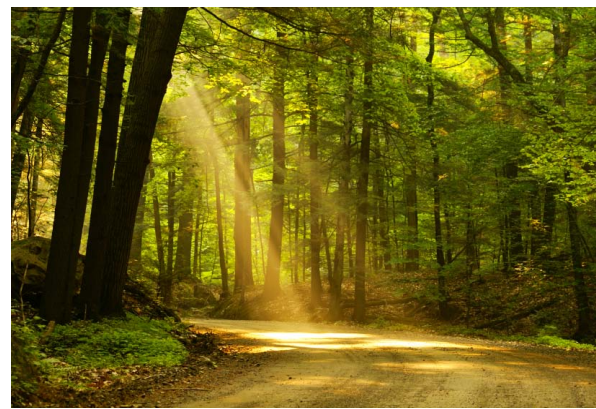
1 <http://med.stanford.edu/ism/2010/december/crt-signal.html>

2 <http://www.genengnews.com/gen-news-highlights/blocking-don-t-eat-me-signal-on-cancer-cells-lets-phagocytes-clean-up/81246548/>

# The Glory Road

*Could people look at us and think of God?*

*That's what it means to glorify Him.* Jabe Nicholson



**I**t is commonly stated that man's chief end is to glorify God. What does that mean? How do we do it? Would we not want to seek in every way to give Him *the most glory* from our lives?

To glorify (*doxazo*) God can mean "to magnify, extol, and praise" the Lord, acknowledging His attributes and acts. But when we read of Christ glorifying the Father (see Jn. 17:1, 4), He is revealing what the Father is like. Likewise the Spirit glorifies the Son, showing us the wonders of Christ (see Jn. 16:14).

Clearly God's people should "praise and extol and honor" our God. But the question is: May we also show, by our lives, something of God's character and wonders? Yes! This is part of the transformation of grace: "...whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

When I was a young believer, "glory" was an obscure idea, something that produced shiny faces. Then I discovered 2 Corinthians 3:18, "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." It was possible for me to reflect the likeness of the Lord as I cooperated with His Spirit by *learning Christ* in His holy Word!

So how do I glorify God in daily life? "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31; see also Eph. 3:21). That pretty well covers it, wouldn't you say? But let's get more specific:

1. SERIOUS STRATEGIC PRAYING: "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, so the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn. 14:13). Don't pray prayers so small *you* could answer them; pray God-sized prayers (see Col. 1:9-12) so that when He answers, it will be evidence that only God could have done it!

2. GOOD WORKS AND GOOD NEWS: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt. 5:16, see also 1 Pet. 2:12). "God...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Grace and truth, word and deed, open mouths and open hearts—what a combination to win people over to trust and love our God!

3. USE YOUR GIFT: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:11). The use of spiritual gifts (strongly hinting that we have nothing to do with it) points to the divine Enablers (1 Cor 12:4-6).

4. KEEP THE UNITY: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even

*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom. 15:5-6; see Jn. 17:22). A sharp word, a cold shoulder, careless innuendos, cliques—all are sure ways to damage the unity of the saints. Perhaps more slander against God results from Christians mistreating each other than for any other reason. "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (Jas. 5:16).

5. ABIDING & ABOUNDING: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples" (Jn. 15:8; see also Phil. 1:11). The fruit on the branch leads back to the Vine rooted in God. How much fruit Christ has borne! Our fruit-bearing proves discipleship.

6. TRIUMPHANT SUFFERING: "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tested with fire, might be found to praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7; see Rom. 8:18). Speaking well of God in our trials, Job-like, defeats the devil and causes men to trust in Him.

7. ENJOY & SHARE GOD'S BLESSINGS: "All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 4:15). Being frugal with ourselves allows us to be generous with others, sharing His goodness and stirring others to happy thoughts of God, resulting in thanks and glory to Him. ■

# UPLOOK!

Look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!



## GO

We are pleased to introduce you to the new OUTLOOK portion of UPLOOK magazine! We want to emphasize another perspective in the magazine (that's why in the printed version, this section is printed upside down and on the back cover.)

There are many times in life that looking up and waiting on the Lord is necessary, and if we are not faithful to do so, we are foolish and mis-

guided. There are also times when we have been given clear instructions from the Head, and to stand around *uplooking* without any resulting action would be shameful disobedience! I love it when the Lord looks at Moses and says, "*Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward*" (Ex. 14:15b). If I was to put that into my own words, I would say it this way, "I have already told you what to do; you don't have to wait on Me anymore. Just get busy doing it!"

We aren't suffering so much from a lack of knowing what to do, but from a lack of putting it into practice. My brothers and sisters, please let us continue the faithful *uplook* and, to add to it, the Christ-like *outlook*.

In the Lord's will, we hope to publish this OUTLOOK section as regularly as reports, prayer requests, and helpful evangelistic materials make it advisable. My fervent prayer is that

this will be one of the tools used by the Lord to bring biblical revival to the Church in North America, and perhaps beyond. I so earnestly want to be a part of a generation here in North America that obeys the Lord Jesus' instructions to "*Go in to all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mk. 16:15), and "*Go therefore and make disciples*" (Mt. 28:19a).

I also earnestly do not want to be part of a generation that wanders around in a wilderness of disobedience (with lives marked by materialism, selfishness, prayerlessness, worldliness, legalism, pride, etc.), waiting to die so perhaps the next generation will go and take the land.

My prayer is that the Lord will start a fire in this generation that will burn for years to come, that we will obey the Lord's command to go and reach North America, that Christ-loving, biblically-functioning local gatherings



## ← **OUTLOOK! Continued:**

of Christians will be left all across this land when we are gone. There are several men that I pray with who have been asking the Lord for 50 new assemblies in the Midwest and 500 new assemblies in North America in this generation. If Jesus Christ comes back today, I want to fall at His feet and cry out, “My Lord and my God!” If He does not come back today, I want to spend and be spent to see a generation that obeys and presses on, not a generation that pulls back and dishonors our Lord. I have wept this before the Lord many times: ***Lord, please move among us and make it so!***

I watched far too many movies growing up. One of those movies (one I don’t recommend) depicts the story of Oskar Schindler, a German businessman who used his own funds to save the lives of eleven hundred mostly Polish Jews during the Holocaust by employing them in his factories. Near the end of the film, he says:

*I could have got more out. I could have got more. I don’t know. If I’d just... I could have got more... If I’d made more money... I threw away so much money. You have no*

*Goeth would have bought this car. Why did I keep the car? Ten people right there. Ten people. Ten more people.” Then, removing his Nazi pin from his lapel, he opines, “This pin. Two people. This is gold. Two more people. He would have given me two for it, at least one. One more person... For this... I could have gotten one more person... and I didn’t! And I...I didn’t!”*

We have to get to the point where we think this way! We have to get to the point where the value of souls is so much a part of our thinking that we, like the Lord Jesus in Luke 19, weep over lost souls that are under the judgment of God!

Paul thought this way, “*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more*” (1 Cor. 9:19). The Lord Jesus lived this way. “*For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Lk. 19:10). If we recognize that we are not like Him, we must seek the Lord until we are so radically and biblically changed that we think, feel, and so act the way our Savior does. There are over

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George Barna (*Barna Research Group*) writes:

“With its 195 million unchurched people, America has become the new mission field. America has more unchurched people than the entire populations of all but 11 of the world’s 194 nations.”

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According to *Lost in America*, by Tom Clegg and Warren Bird, 2001:

“The unchurched population in the United States is so extensive that, were it a nation, it would be the fifth-largest on the planet... Researchers and analysts describe North America as the world’s third-largest mission field.”

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*idea. If I’d just... I didn’t do enough!” Looking at his car, Schindler continues: “This car.*

500 million people in North America to be reached with the gospel in the next generation.<sup>1</sup> The day that you are reading this, more than 10,000 of them will die and enter either eternal condemnation or eternal blessing.

My dear brother or sister, do you think and feel about this the way the Lord Jesus does? If not, I beg of you, on behalf of a worthy Savior, seek Him until He so changes you that, for the rest of your life, you love what He loves, hate what He hates, and weep over what He weeps over.

We have one chance to live this life for Him! The Scriptures are full of examples both of people who ran well, and of those who didn’t. I know many who are running well, and there are many who are not. Which will the Judgment Seat find us to be? Will we be fruitful for Him or will we bear the disgrace of suffering loss? I earnestly pray that ours will be a generation that will seek Him with all our hearts, and joyfully give Him all we are and have! May the Lord give us help and move among us for His name’s sake.

—**Scott DeGross**

<sup>1</sup> Covers the landmass north of the Panama-Colombia border, and the Caribbean islands.

# Crop FAILURE

Randy Hoffman



**T**hese words strike terror into the farmer who relies on the harvest so bills can be paid, shelter provided, and a family can be raised. Early in the season, a considerable investment has already been made. Sweat equity, some might call it. Others would undoubtedly consider the emotional equity involved. Not to mention the significant financial costs associated with tillage, seed, fertilizers, and weed control. The investment has been great.

Why would a farmer do such a thing? The answer is simple: because there is expectation that a plentiful harvest will more than compensate for the initial costs.

## ANTICIPATION OF THE VINTAGE

Isaiah 5 records the thoughts of a heart-broken vineyard keeper. Initially, the prospect for a plentiful harvest was good. The perfect composition of well-drained soil, choice root stock, the seasonal rains and sunshine, and of course, nearby lodging for those who would tend and protect the crop. Not one detail was overlooked. Even a winepress was at the ready! The keeper could already anticipate the sights, sounds, tastes and glad satisfaction associated with the flow of new wine.

There is nothing more joyful and vindicating for a year's labor than abundant

fruit! So verse 2 continues: *"He expected it to bring forth good grapes."* Of course he did; that's the usual progression!

❖ **POINT OF APPLICATION** | *The Lord expects my life to bear fruit.*

*"But it brought forth wild grapes."* In other words, according to Isaiah's metaphor, it was a total crop failure! What grew in place of the expected sweet and succulent fruit were "wild" grapes. This kind of harvest is worse than no harvest at all! The word used to describe this fruit of the vine (wild) is also used in reference to the decomposing fish in the rivers of Egypt (Ex. 7:18) and wormy manna (Ex. 16:20). Imagine a harvest that is stinky rather than sweet, disgusting to the Keeper!

❖ **POINT OF APPLICATION** | *It has to be His kind of fruit.*

We hear the Keeper asking a question—actually two. There seems to be a measure of heartbreak and strain in his voice as he calls out to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Judah: *"Judge, please, between me and my vineyard. What more could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done in it?"* What *more*? Is there

a possibility that the vineyard Keeper could have overlooked a detail? Was he stingy in the materials used? Was he hasty or negligent in the preparation? Did he not adequately provide all that was necessary?

When we look beyond the metaphor, we are reminded of a loving God who meticulously and tenderly provides for His beloved people. They were His vineyard and He joyfully provided the very best to ensure their bounty and blessing: land, covenants, providential care, etc. There was nothing more He possibly could have given them. Alas, as we return to the text, the tender-hearted Keeper asks: *"Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?"* It seems inconceivable that the people of God, who had every reason to live for His pleasure, enjoyment and profit, should have their lives and conduct characterized as that which would be a stench to His nostrils. A crop failure of the worst kind!

Could this brief Old Testament parable have application to the Church in our generation, our assemblies, our personal lives? Has the heart of the Divine Keeper of Vines changed from then until now? Isn't the expecta-



“Like those who glean vintage grapes; there is no cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires” (Micah 7:1).

tion of the True Vine in John 15 that we would be joined to Him in an abundant spiritual harvest? “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (v. 5). Borrowing the words of Isaiah 5:2, it would seem that our Lord fully “expected it [us] to bring forth good grapes.”

Are we willing to apply the parable even further? Do we dare to ask what kind or quality of fruit our lives are characterized by? Have we even considered the possibility that our lives could bear similarities to the wild grapes of Isaiah 5:2? The thought is sobering, to think that our busy lives could actually bring displeasure to the heart of our Savior!

Is there anything *more* He could have done? Is there additional provision that our blessed Savior could have made to better ensure a more satisfactory harvest? Recall Peter’s words as he begins his second epistle: “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (v. 3) We have been blessed “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3).

According to Romans 7:4, a life of fruitfulness for the Master should not be the

blessed exception, but rather the expected outcome of a life united to Christ: “Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.” Peter’s second epistle agrees: “For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:8). It seems that our great God has not changed His objective. An abundant harvest produced in and through our lives remains an important priority. No surprise when we recall that the first recorded words of the Creator to His created image-bearers were these: “Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28).

If a parable similar to Isaiah’s would be written today concerning the Bride of Christ in North America, how would it read? Would we hear the same heart-broken voice identifying yet another crop failure? It seems that genuine fruitfulness in our era of the Church is heralded as some type of anomaly. We’re content to watch years, decades, and generations come and go without asking the obvious question: “Where is the fruit?” Thank God for those wonderful exceptions where the vine is laden and the sweet smells of harvest permeate the air, but what about it? Where is the fruit in so many of our assemblies?

Perhaps equally as troubling as the lack of fruit is our lack of concern about the whole matter! We lack the expectancy that when the incorruptible seed of the

Word of God is sown into hearts and lives, it should bear fruit. Although we tend to be articulate in the intricacies of the fruit-bearing process and in describing the fruit, sadly few of us have been actual participants in a dynamic and fruitful assembly. Before we point our index finger at the “establishment” though, let’s remember that fruitlessness is fundamentally an individual matter.

Our generation of believers, particularly in North America, have some serious spiritual housekeeping to attend to! We have adopted a mindset more akin to the rich fool of Luke 12 than that of our lowly Savior whose burden for lost souls trumped the need for life’s comforts. We have allowed our godless society to set the benchmark of “middle-class” living, and then adopted it as our own. Meanwhile we scramble, wondering how we could possibly squeeze the radical demands of being a Christ-follower and active involvement in our assembly into the remaining moments of our day. Can anyone identify?

Brothers and sisters, let us not miss the sorrow expressed in the words of Isaiah 5:4. “What more could have been done... Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?” Anyone who has invested heavily into a crop only to experience a total or partial crop failure can identify with those soul-stirring sentiments. God forbid we ever become complacent with fruitlessness! We have an inconceivably glorious God, and a remarkably beautiful Savior who deserve the sweet and fragrant aroma of an abundant harvest! Let’s go, and by the grace of God, gather in the harvest for Him! ■



# Go Therefore...

Anonymous

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28:19).*

As my wife and I became teachers several years ago, we had to figure out what this verse looked like in our own lives. We knew we should obey; we just didn’t know what the Lord had in store for us.

## LETTING YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Growing up, I loved going to Bible camps. After one summer of staffing at camp, I knew it was something I never wanted to end. So as a college student, I asked myself what major would allow me to continue serving the Lord at camp in the summers. Teaching, I thought! I would teach during the school year as a way to do what I really wanted to do: work at camps in the summer. God quickly reminded us that a man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps (Prov. 16:9). As we would soon find out, camp work was not the way the Lord asked us to serve. The Lord asked us to be witnesses in our Jerusalem (Acts 1:8).

Teaching at a public school can be challenging. Practically it’s challenging figuring out the curriculum and even

more challenging figuring out classroom management. But it is also challenging on the emotions. There are so many hurting kids. Hurting kids from broken homes who have seen and experienced things quite the opposite of light, the opposite of love. Therefore, there are so many kids who crave love whether they admit it or not.

And this is when it hit me. I’m not going to teach so I can go away for the summer and serve. I’m going to teach so I can impact kids all year long. With my wife and I teaching at the same school, we have so many opportunities. By no means can we profess to acting in a loving way at all times, but we can sure try. We pray that the light of Jesus will shine through us in our words and actions. And by God’s grace, it does.

## BEING A NEIGHBOR

We’re familiar with the story of the Good Samaritan, how two upstanding men passed by a man in desperate need of help. It was the “enemy” who sacrificed time and money to save the man in need. Then Jesus asked which of these men acted as a neighbor (Lk. 10:30-37).

We know that we were in a similar situation—at enmity with God with no

way of saving ourselves. And how the God of all creation showed us mercy. He sent His Son to save us (Rom. 5:8-10). We know Jesus also says we are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mk. 12:31). So what does it mean to be a neighbor? While our neighbors may not be our enemies, there may be some sacrifice involved. And there should certainly be love. If there is love, don’t you think we should tell our neighbors about the greatest love of all? If there is love, we should care about their souls.

We looked to the Lord in prayer for the best way to reflect the love of Christ in our lives. One way to share the love of Christ was through a Neighborhood Bible Club. We went door-to-door passing fliers out through our neighborhood. We live in the same neighborhood as our school, so many of our neighbors are our students and other people we see somewhat regularly. With our names on the fliers, many of the recipients recognized who we were. Some asked their friends who knew we were teachers, and others simply brought their children over when we started. We brought in a speaker for the week-

## EVERY CLASSROOM HAS FOUR WALLS WITH ETERNITY INSIDE.



long Neighborhood Bible Club and basically ran it like a VBS at our house. All the activities were outside: message, games, crafts, and snacks. We were also blessed to have the help of a few dear believers in our community. About 40 young people came the first year and a few made professions of faith! We were excited by the fruit that we saw.

### MORE OUTREACH

In the spring, we invite our students to a barbecue at our house. About 65 students come annually. With this many young people at our house, many servants from our chapel volunteered to help run games and interact with our students. We took the opportunity to give them the gospel. A couple of times we have brought in a gifted brother who does the “three ropes trick” and other teaching illustrations that have some of the students begging to see more.

We play several games and eat hot dogs, chips, cookies, and pop. It is amazing that you can feed this many people for about \$100. The students are amazed that we are willing to pay for all of their food. A very small price when eternal souls are on the line. We also distribute fliers for Neighborhood Bible Club,

Vacation Bible School, and a day camp run by our chapel. If the students are interested, they can approach us at school or freely ask us at our house.

About 30 kids from our neighborhood were able to come to our chapel’s VBS, Kids Club, and day camp. The great thing about these opportunities is that word of mouth gets most of the kids to come. The students tell their siblings and friends, and they come the next week.

### THEN COMES DISCIPLESHIP

As we began to see some fruit, we realized that our ministry was almost entirely evangelism. We recognized that discipleship was essential for our work to develop. We talked to several students that had shown interest and began a Bible study about twice a month. About 15-17 students have attended these discipleship studies, but we have a core group of about 6-8 students.

Before we started, we let our students know that, although we would play games and have dinner, our purpose was to study the Bible. This was very well received as many of these believers are newborn babes (1 Pet. 2:2). Many students ask lots of questions as this type of study is new to them. Some have a good

amount of knowledge; while others have very little Bible knowledge. It is exciting to see the Lord work in different areas!

We welcomed them to invite friends, but we wanted them to clearly know our intentions were to study the Bible. We go before the Lord often, trying to decide what we should study. We are currently studying the Life of Christ series from Gospel Folio Press. Almost every time we meet, we have unbelievers present, so we do our best to make sure the gospel is in every lesson we study.

### PRAYER INVESTMENT NEEDED

1. Please pray that we will see souls saved for His glory and that we can take them aside and explain the way of God more accurately like Aquilla and Priscilla (Acts 18:26)

2. That the Lord will protect us as we have students into our home.

3. That we will follow His direction in planning the Bible studies and topics for the Bible studies.

4. That if the Lord wills, a new assembly will be planted in this neighborhood.

I have been challenged by 2 Corinthians 9:6 where Paul writes, *“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”* This is a very convicting verse for our everyday lives. We do not want to stop looking for ways to reach the lost and relax in what we are doing. We want to look for more opportunities for evangelism, and to obey when the Lord shows us an open door. May the Lord give us help to do so for His great pleasure and glory! ■

# God's Doing among Gentiles

**What's coming up that I can pray for, support, and participate in?**

**Please pray the Lord will encourage His servants to fill in this section with upcoming and current gospel efforts so we can pray, participate, and practically support as He leads.**

**WARNING  
Blank Space**

**P.S. This is one area where faith without works is dead. Remember we have a responsibility to “provoke one another to love and good works.” This is one way it can be done. EMAIL: [seedthoughts@uplook.org](mailto:seedthoughts@uplook.org)**

## **Give Me Children!** *by Donald L. Norbie*

**J**acob had two wives, Rachel and Leah. Rachel was the wife that he really loved, but she was barren, unable to conceive. She was fearfully frustrated and pleaded with Jacob, “*Give me children or else I die!*” (Gen. 30:1). Later, Rachel did conceive and bore Jacob two sons.

What impresses me is the intensity of her desire to have children. God has created all of life with the instinct to propagate life. He said, “*Be fruitful and multiply.*” But in this modern world with its contraception, many choose not to have children. A young woman was asked if she intended to have children. She replied, “Nope! I am not a breeder!” The population of Europe is declining

because so many elect not to have a family. People wish to live their selfish lives, unencumbered with children and the expenses associated with them.

The church, too, was told to have children—to go into all the world and make disciples, spiritual children (Mt. 28:18-20). It is literally true that unless we have “breeders” in our assemblies, we will ultimately die out. I visited one assembly where the youngest member was sixty-five. That assembly has since ceased to exist.

Teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42) are vital. But we need to remember that Chris-

tianity consists of more than just the church meeting; evangelism was also a driving concern of the early believers. If we lack this concern, we are not New Testament Christians.

Personal evangelism is exceptionally effective. Many will not go to a church building but can be reached personally. Give out tracts, share your testimony, pray. An older woman came up to me after a meeting and tearfully said, “I have never led anyone to the Lord!” I told her that it was not too late. You can have spiritual children in old age. Let us pray for spiritual children. Let us have the intense desire of Rachel as she cried, “*Give me children or else I die!*” ■