



UPLOOK

OCTOBER 1994

THE FRIENDLY HERESY
THE FELLOWSHIP OF TEARS
The Long Wait



THE LONG WAIT

FOR THE LAST nineteen centuries the cry, "Ad mosai?" ("Until when?") has risen from the hearts of expectant Jews everywhere. Since the Carpenter Yeshua from Nazareth was rejected by the nation of Israel, others have risen to claim the role. The most notable include Bar Kokhba who led the bloody Great Revolt against the Romans in 132-135 AD, and Shabbetai Zevi in the seventeenth century. Recently the Lubavitcher Rebbe Mendel Menachem Schneerson of Brooklyn, New York, has been heralded as *Moshiach*.

Born in Russia in 1902, Schneerson was immersed by his father in the Jewish religion. By *bar mitzvah* age, he was considered a Torah prodigy. After studying at the Sorbonne in Paris, he settled in the U.S. in 1941 and at age 48, assumed leadership of the Habad or Lubavitcher movement.

The Habad movement, with headquarters in Brooklyn, is active throughout the world. More than a quarter of a million children are taught in Lubavitcher (after a town in Bylorussia where the movement had its roots) schools. One of the fundamental tenets of this movement is the belief that in every generation there is a "potential Messiah." In this generation, they believed, the potential Messiah was Menachem Schneerson.

Although Schneerson gave halfhearted denials, he did little to discourage his followers from promoting his claims. "I'm not saying he is or isn't Moshiach," said Rabbi Chayim Bergstein in the *Detroit Jewish News* (Jan. 3/92), "but there is no one as learned, as pious, as caring, as courageous, as intellectual and as influential in this generation. These are all the traits Maimonides identified as belonging to Moshiach."

"Rabbi Schneerson is the Messiah. I don't have to think twice about it," said a Jewish woman interviewed by an *Associated Press* reporter. "We talk about it a lot and we are waiting for the big event."

In an expensive campaign to crown Menachem Schneerson as Messiah, more than 200 billboards were installed and full-page advertisements shouted: "Moshiach is coming and we must make final preparations." May of 1992 saw a "Moshiach Parade" down Fifth Avenue in Manhattan with tens of thousands

cheering. And this in spite of the fact that the rabbi had suffered a stroke the previous March and was now past ninety. In fact, as his health waned, it seemed the frenzy grew. As 1993 drew to a close, a *Jewish Telegraph Agency* release stated: "The Lubavitcher Rebbe's health has deteriorated to the point where he is almost completely blinded by cataracts, has lost physical mobility and is a virtual prisoner in his own room..."

Undeterred, his followers placed ads like this in the January 29/94 *Jerusalem Post*, reading, "The Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem M. Schneerson is the King Moshiach. Now is the time to accept his kingship!" Then Schneerson suffered another stroke. On Sunday, June 12, 1994, he died.

What happens when your Messiah dies? In Israel, some of his followers simply denied the reports of his death: "He's the Messiah. He's not dead." Others flew to New York, hoping "they could be present when Rabbi Schneerson would somehow proclaim his kingship before being buried." Hope dies a hard death.

What happens when your Messiah dies? Ask the two on the Emmaus road. The long wait of twenty centuries since the promise of the Seed of Abraham had been rewarded with a Man that not only *claimed* to be Moshiach but who *proved* it. Now He was dead. Or so they thought until "Jesus Himself drew near..."

Was Schneerson born in Bethlehem? Did Bar Kokhba avoid the curse on Jechoniah by being virgin-born? Did Shabbetai Zevi die the death prophesied in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53? Could any of them ask: "Which of you convinces me of sin?" Could they raise the dead—or for that matter, rise again themselves?

Don't get me wrong. The Jews are right in waiting for Messiah. He will come. The long wait of twenty centuries—since the Lamb that Abraham saw was crucified on Moriah—will be rewarded. However, Antimessiah will first present his credentials. Many will be deluded. But when there is no place left to turn, and Israel's little remnant at last looks up, He will come. "We knew it," they will say. "But...these wounds!"

Ah, He was wounded for our transgressions. The Lamb! God's Lamb! At last, it will all make sense.

Come, Moshiach!

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THE FRIENDLY HERESY

To many, the question of whether or not the Lord Jesus Christ was impeccable, that is, incapable of sinning, is a non-issue. "He did not sin," they say, "Why quibble over whether or not he could have?"

Others flatly state that Christ could have sinned. A recent runaway best-seller in Christian bookstores across North America asserted that not only was it possible for the Lord Jesus to sin, but without the help of the Holy Spirit He likely would have. It is hardly comforting to know that tens of thousands of ostensibly Bible-believing Christians apparently read such a statement without batting an eyelash.

Modern-day Christianity is not renowned for its doctrinal discernment. Shallowness and sentimentality rule the day. So perhaps it is not surprising that in the popular theology of the day, many evangelicals would nod approval to the notion that our Lord was capable of sinning.

But then, such a view of things does seem rather harmless, doesn't it? As long as we know that He did not sin, doesn't it give us a warm feeling to know that our Lord has struggled with temptation in the same way we have? Doesn't it help us to identify with Him as "really human"? As long as we are clear that He did not sin, surely we haven't lost anything fundamental by saying that He could have sinned.

Or have we? It seems harmless enough, perhaps. But a closer look reveals that this teaching is a seedbed in which innumerable pernicious doctrines lie waiting to sprout. It strikes, in principle at least, at nearly every fundamental doctrine of the Word of God.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that those who teach that Christ could have sinned are right, and then follow this teaching out to its logical consequences. I hesitate to even put on paper such thoughts as follow, but if by so doing we may show the true nature of this false teaching, then perhaps it will not be without profit.

To begin with, if Christ could have sinned, nearly all of His divine attributes fall by the wayside. He is not omnipotent if He might have been overpowered by temptation. He is not omniscient if He was capable of

being deceived by the tempter. He is not changeless, if He, the spotless Son of God, could have become a common sinner. And of course, His holiness would prove neither genuine nor divine.

Furthermore, His credentials as Saviour are called into serious question. Could one who, even for a split-second, is attracted by the thought of bowing in worship to Satan be the Saviour of sinners? Would not such a one need a saviour of his own? Yet this is the Christ we are offered by those who insist that our Lord "struggled" with temptation.

The fact is, every fiber of His holy being recoiled in utter horror at the very idea of bowing to Satan! Will any true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ deny this? And while this temptation was no doubt the most brazen appeal of the tempter, surely the least suggestion to stray ever so slightly from the path of perfect obedience was equally vile, and similarly abhorrent to His holy soul.

But let us go still further and ask those who assert the peccability of Christ: Since you say that Christ could have sinned, have you considered the consequences if He had? Again, it is awful to even think such thoughts, much less to record them. But since some are so insistent that Christ was capable of sinning, we find it expedient to ask, what if He had?

First, all the glorious promises and prophecies of the Old Testament immediately prove obsolete, false, and less than worthless. The truthfulness of God falls. The great plan of redemption collapses in dismal disarray, as the last Adam proves a greater failure than the first. The scriptural doctrine of the Triune God sinks into a hopeless shambles of confusion, and there is civil war in the Godhead, for the Son is now at enmity with the Father. God becomes the laughing stock of a rebel universe—for as long as the universe could thus endure.

Unthinkable, yes. Inconceivable, surely. But simply assert that Christ could have sinned, and you are asserting that it could have happened. Surely it is more than theological hair-splitting to insist on the impeccability of Christ.

Can we doubt, then, that this friendly little heresy is a favorite with the devil? For by it he is able to get a foot in the door with many who would never stand for

more obvious false doctrine. Many who would never stand for a direct assault on the deity of Christ, for instance, will embrace this seemingly harmless teaching that, in principle, denies it. The adversary, who delights above all in lowering men's estimation of Christ, must derive keen pleasure from seeing otherwise sound Christians embracing in seed form what they would hotly repudiate in full bloom.

But it is sometimes asked, could Christ be fully human if He could not sin? The answer, of course, is yes. Our Lord took on Himself a true humanity—body, soul, and spirit—and that human nature He will retain throughout eternity. But the humanity that He took was not a fallen humanity, like ours, nor even an innocent humanity, like Adam's, who was initially without sin but, as we well know, had the capability of sinning. Rather, our Lord took on Himself a holy humanity.

His humanity was "that holy thing" born of a virgin. There was no taint of sin on it, nor possibility of sin in it. Only so could it be inseparably joined to His divine nature in one glorious, spotless, unspeakably holy Person.

But then, it is objected, the temptations were not real if there was no possibility of Him sinning. Ah, think again.

If I am selling you a diamond that I know to be genuine, and we take it to the jeweler to have it inspected for your benefit, is there any possibility that it will fail the test? None. Is the test real? Of course. But what is the purpose of the test? Not to show whether or not the diamond is genuine—I already know that—but to demonstrate that it is genuine.

And this was so with the temptation of Christ. Was the test real? Certainly. But was there any possibility of Him failing it? None, for His pristine holiness shines a millionfold more brilliantly than earth's most flawless diamond. The test was real, but its purpose was not to see whether or not He would fail, but to show that, unlike the first Adam, He would not and could not fail.

Does it not do our hearts good, brethren, to think of it in this way? He is not called the "second Adam," but the "last Adam," for there would be no need of another. The eternal counsels of God hung by no thread of contingency, for the work of redemption was now in hands

that could not fail.

But how can Christ sympathize with us in our temptations if He were incapable of sinning? The truth is, though some may be sorry to hear it, He most assuredly does not sympathize with our sinful inclinations, if that is what we mean by temptations. A holy God can never sympathize with sin. The cross proved that. Rather, He "condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

Our Lord, as a great High Priest, sympathizes with our infirmities. He was a "man of sorrows." He knows what it is to be tired, and hungry, and rejected. He understands physical pain and the deeper pain of a grieved heart. He has felt the sting of bereavement and wept at a loved one's grave. Yes, He sympathizes with our infirmities and testings, but never, never with our inclinations to evil.

This is a vital point, for those who are eager to have

a Saviour whose experience in temptation precisely mirrors their own, fail to grasp that in order for this to be, Christ must have possessed a sinful nature. James 1:14 is crystal clear that, for us, temptation involves an appeal to the lusts of our sinful nature. Shall we stoop to the depths of claiming that our Lord knows by experience

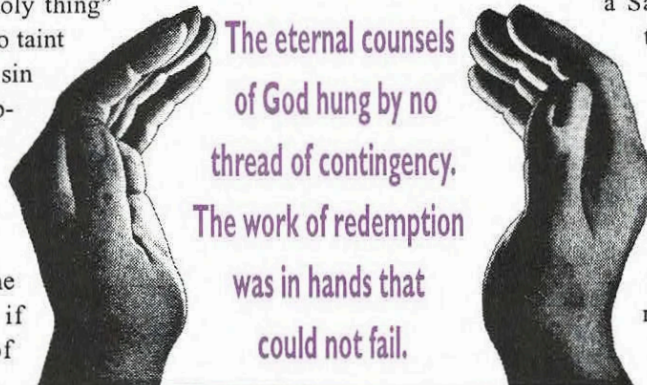
what that is like? Perish the thought!

Hebrews 4:15 tells us that the Lord Jesus was tempted, or tested, in all points like as we are, "yet without sin," or literally, "apart from sin." The phrase is the same one used in Hebrews 9:28, where Christ is spoken of as offered once to bear the sins of many, but soon to appear a second time "apart from sin." That is, at His second coming, unlike His first, sin will not be the matter in question.

Likewise, when we read that He was tempted in all points like as we are, "apart from sin," we know that in His tempting, or testing, sin was not in view. He endured all manner of testing, but there was never any question of inclinations to evil or the possibility of sin.

And how could there be? For He was, and is, and ever shall be holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, the One to whom the seraphim in Isaiah's day thrice ascribed absolute holiness, God manifest in flesh—our glorious, impeccable Saviour.

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FRONT LINES

YOUTH CONFERENCE

In the will of the Lord, on October 28-30, the Iowa Youth Conference will be held on the campus of Emmaus Bible College. The conference is sponsored by the Asbury Road Bible Chapel. Speaker expected is Dwight Knight.

Emmaus Bible College
2570 Asbury Road
Dubuque, IA

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DESERT

The Bible Chapel of Tucson, AZ, plans to hold a Missionary Conference, Lord willing, on November 4-6, 1994. The theme for this year's conference will be "*Opportunities as Iron Curtains Part.*" Ken Fleming (IA), Don Livingston (Japan), and Ogawa San (Japan) will be speaking. Accommodations are available. Contact:

Jim Yencarelli
2324 N. Norton Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85719
(602) 795-3194

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

The Ohio Bible Study Program has released their fall dates and topics of study. On September 24, J. B. Nicholson (MI) took up the subject *What Does the Bible Say About Angels?* In the will of the Lord, on October 22, Larry Batts (NC) will teach on the topic *Marriage and the Family*, and on November 12, Dave Hunt (OR) will take up the *Seduction of Christianity and Beyond*. More information may be obtained by contacting:

Believers Bible Chapel
12791 Painesville-Ravenna Road
Leroy, OH 44077
(216) 254-4601

CMML CONFERENCE

The Westland Bible Chapel (Duncanville, TX) will be hosting a regional CMML Conference on November 5. The theme will be "...*God, Thou art my God.*" Speakers will be Jim Cochrane (Dominican Republic), J. Philip Morgan (FL), and Ed Williams (NJ). For information, contact:

CMML
(908) 449-8880

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Florida Leadership Conference will be held November 5, 1994 at the Vero Beach Holiday Inn. The theme for this year's conference will be *Israel—Past, Present, and Future*.

Steve Herzig, Central States Director for Friends of Israel, will be the speaker. For information or directions, contact:

Robert Harper
229 Cherrywood Drive
Maitland, FL 32751

LIKE FATHER—LIKE SON

The 4th Annual Father/Son Retreat will be held November 11-13 at Camp Iroquoia. Speaker expected will be Alan Parks (MD). For registration information, contact:

Jim Weisbecker
Route 1
Hallstead, PA 18822
(717) 967-2577

PROSPECTING

The Prospect Bible Chapel (Hartford, CT) will be hosting the Northeast Leadership Conference on November 15, 1994. The conference will begin at 9:00 A.M. To register, contact:

Don Dunkerton
112 Cranford Avenue
Cranford, NJ 07016
(908) 709-1373

SINGLES' CONFERENCE

If you are single and would like to get away for the purpose of seriously studying the Word of God then make plans to attend the Singles' Retreat on November 18-21. This year's retreat will again be held at Seabrook Island (Charleston, SC). J. B. Nicholson (MI) will be the speaker. For reservations contact:

Skip Elliot
(803) 873-7083

GIVING THANKS

The Carrollwood Bible Chapel (Tampa, FL) announces their Thansgiving Conference in the will of the Lord on November 18-19. Doug Kazen (WA) and Roy Hill (UK) will be speaking. Contact:

Carrollwood Bible Chapel
15316 Casey Road
Tampa, FL 33624

"OPEN" HOUSE

The Guelph Bible Conference Center will celebrate its 60th Anniversary with an Open House Reunion and Celebration on November 26, 1994. You can expect a time

of reminiscing over the past 60 years of God's faithfulness with the early founders. There will also be a collection of memorabilia spanning 6 decades. Registration is required for overnight accommodations. Contact:

Bob Agnew
485 Waterloo Avenue
Guelph, ON N1H 3K4
(519) 824-2571

WITH THE LORD

On August 1, 1994, Gertrude Marjory Mackay, 89, passed into the presence of her Lord at the Pittsboro Christian Villiage (NC). She



Harold & Gertrude Mackay

was preceded in death by her husband, Harold G. Mackay. In the 1930's they started serving together in pioneer ministry work throughout much of Virginia, West Virginia, and the Piedmont of North Carolina. Please pray for the family.

Much of the Mackay's life story can be read in *Morning In My Heart*, which was written before Harold Mackay's death. Copies available from Gospel Folio Press.

FERVENT PRAYER

Please remember to pray for Cyril Shontoff (QE). Cyril works with Franchophones in Quebec and holds open-air gospel meetings on



Cyril & Marjorie Shontoff

the beaches of South Florida during the winter months. On May 31, a CT Scan showed a tumor on the left side of his brain. A neurosurgeon, on June 3 thought Cyril should be admitted and have immediate brain surgery. While trying to secure a second opinion, it was noticed that Cyril's condition was deteriorating. Cyril was operated on June 23, however the prognosis was not good. Doctors told the family that with six weeks of radio therapy, going in every day, there was the possibility that he could live an average of 11 months. One week later, it was decided that Cyril could return home, and the family decided against following through with the radio therapy since his prognosis was not encouraging. Since that time they have been in contact with the Gerson Institute and have followed their prescribed therapy. The family would like to thank those who have phoned and sent "get-well" cards, especially those who have remembered Cyril before the throne of grace. Keep praying!

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE

The Myrtlefield Trust is a partnership of believers in the U.K. who desire to give the Word of God to the people of Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In the past year there has been much to encourage them in the work. In the

Spring of 1993, 300,000 copies of *Windows on Paradise* (by Dr. David Gooding) were delivered to the Trust. At present only 4,000 copies remain in inventory. Some 500,000 copies of *Christianity: Opium or Truth?* have been printed, many of which have been widely distributed in Russia and Eastern Europe. There is still an enormous demand for Bibles, New Testaments, and Gospels.

In the will of the Lord, the Trust hopes to publish Dr. Gooding's *Hebrews* in Polish, Russian and Bulgarian; *The Definition of Christianity* and *True to the Faith (Acts)* in Russian, *The Bible and Ethical Education for Schools* in Russian; and *According to Luke* in Russian. It has recently been released in Czech.

During the month of May, Channel One TV in Russia aired two programs by a Russian scientist, Dr. Lev Nikolaev, whose program explores scientific themes and has a potential audience of tens of millions. Dr. John Lennox was invited to share how it was possible for a mathematician to be a committed Christian. At the end of the program, viewers were invited to write to Moscow for a copy of the book, *Windows on Paradise*, and for a transcript of the program.

The September 15 edition of *Argumentum i facti*, with an estimated readership of more than 20 million, contained a major half-page article explaining the gospel and offering a free New Testament to anyone who requests it.

Please pray for this outreach to Eastern Europe and particularly for Dr. David Gooding as he writes books of Bible exposition and for Dr. John Lennox.

Additional information is avail-

FRONT LINES

able by contacting:

Myrtlefield Trust
180 Mountsandel Road
Coleraine BT52 1TB
Northern Ireland
Fax: 011-44-265-55851

(Fellowship for this ministry may be channeled through CMML.)

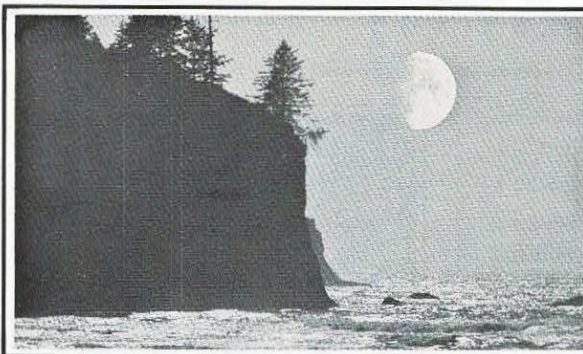
CALLING ALL ASSEMBLIES

Joe Reece (ON) reports that since last June, a new assembly was begun in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. The Queen Street Bible Chapel is meeting in a storefront location, and has the support and encouragement of the area assemblies. Approximately 25 people are in fellowship and the Sunday School is full with three classes meeting each week. The saints are currently using *The Believer's Hymn Book*, but since it is out of print they have not been able to obtain a sizeable quantity. If you or your assembly has these hymn books or if you know where they might be purchased, contact:

Joe Reece
Queen Street Bible Chapel
762 Queen Street, East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2B1
(705) 946-0289

GOSPEL BROCHURES

Life's Questions Gospel Letters are tri-fold brochures suitable for door-to-door work or sending in the mail. Each design addresses one common gospel question and has two blank panels on which the users local information can be imprinted. Some of the issues covered are: *Is there a God?*, *What's wrong with our world?*, *The Bible—Can you believe it?*, *What if Jesus really is alive?*, and *Can you be free from guilt?* To obtain samples, more information, or to order:



worker, Steve Melzer, has produced a music tape of traditional hymns done in the a capella quartet style.

Steve is the former lead singer of The King's Messengers, and travels now as a Bible teacher, camp speaker, chil-

dren's worker (DVBS, etc.), and sacred concert soloist.

If you would like a copy of *Acapella Hymns*, contact:
Steve Melzer
105 Island Lake Drive
Hamilton, OH 45013
(513) 895-8344

MORE TAPES

E. L. Nelson (Colorado Springs, CO) is seeking to procure and copy tapes of messages by William MacDonald for the purpose of distributing to young men in California and elsewhere. If you know of any, or have any you would be willing to share, contact:

Westside Christians
c/o E. L. Nelson
Box 8302
Colorado Springs, CO 80933

(They would be happy to pay for tapes and/or postage.)

FELLOWSHIP OF STATES

Believers in Kentucky and Indiana gathered together October 1 for the Kentuckiana Christian Fellowship Day. Warren Dunham (IN), who formerly served the Lord in Korea, was the speaker. The saints were greatly encouraged by this time of fellowship.

In Canada:

Don Gratton
P.O. Box 605
Grand Bend, ON N0M 1T0
(519) 238-2820

In the U.S.:

John Dennison
1950 Norma
Westland, MI 48185
(313) 729-7284

HE IS FAITHFUL

Marlene Allyn and her family have spent this summer at Camp Aush-Bik-Koong (ON). Serving in this capacity has been very encouraging, and she writes, "...the memories of Tim are still very strong in the area of camp. At times I catch myself thinking he'll pop up somewhere. Personally, I have struggled with that, but the Lord is giving daily strength. I really appreciate all who have been faithful in praying for the children and myself." Continue to pray for the Allyn's and the souls that have been saved at the many camps this past season.

A CAPELLA

The believers at Ross Bible Chapel (Hamilton, OH) would like others to know that commended

TRAVEL PLANS

Harold and Vena Preston (KY) are anticipating, in the will of the Lord, a return to the Philippines for a visit. This will not be the first time they have visited the Philippines. The Prestons labored there from 1958-1966. Pray that the Lord might use them as an encouragement to the brethren, and that He might prepare the way before them.

ELDERLY UPDATE

Having read last month's issue of *Uplook* on retirement homes, brother Charles Grob (Westbrook, ME) notified us of a resource for nursing home ministries. Sonshine Society has published a handbook on how to begin a nursing home ministry, along with a large print hymnal, large print tracts and the Gospel of John. Sonshine Society is interested in helping to establish nursing home ministries in secular nursing homes. For more information, contact:

Sonshine Society
P.O. Box 327
Lynnwood, WA 98046-0327

Also, Twilight Publications has available a number of large-print devotional booklets, including:

Booklets by G. V. Wigram: *Psalm One, with an Introduction to the Asherite Psalms* (\$0.60); *Psalm 119: Affliction's Lessons* (\$0.25); *Jude: The Corruption of Christianity & the Antidote to Existing Evils* (\$0.60).

Booklets by Hamilton Smith *Psalm 16: The Loveliness of Christ* (\$0.60); *Psalm 23: The Lord is My Shepherd* (\$0.60); *Psalm 121: The Lord Thy Keeper* (\$0.60); *The Garden of the Lord* (\$0.60); *Habakkuk* (\$0.60); *Haggai* (\$0.60).



Booklets by J. G. Bellett: *Amos* (\$0.15); *Jonah: Practical Lessons for our Admonition from the History of Jonah the Prophet* (\$0.60); *Malachi* (\$0.60); *Revelation* (\$0.60).

The Head of Every Man and a Woman's Veil (\$1.20) by M. R. Davis.

These publications may be obtained by contacting:

Twilight Publications
P. O. Box 651
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-1732
Fax: (908) 852-9554

FUTURE EVENTS

Miss Penny DeFouw, missionary to Ireland, informs us of a recent publication from Bible Studies Institute in Dublin. *Future Events* is a lightly edited collection of lectures given by Mr. Rowan Jennings covering such topics as The Transfiguration, The Consequences of Salvation by Faith, The Judgment Seat of Christ, The Days Immediately After the Rapture, Between the Rapture and the Revelation, The Tribulation, the Great One, and The Millennial Glory of Our Lord Jesus.

This book is available at a cost of £4.95+ p&p through:

Bible Studies Institute
Lower Glenageary Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Republic of Ireland

HEAD COVERINGS

Mrs. Susan Crowe has offered to make ladies' lace head coverings available in a variety of colors and styles. The prices range from \$3.00 to \$10.00 (US). If you are interested in receiving further information or placing an order, contact:

Mrs. Susan Crowe
196 Uxbridge Pickering
Townline
R. R. #3, Stouffville, ON
L4A 4X7
Phone: (905) 640-4218

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Gospel Folio Press has some new books available!

Unless You Repent is a reprint of one of H. A. Ironside's most forceful writings. He deals with the subject of Repentance as defined in the Scriptures, and defends the necessity of it in our gospel preaching (\$8.95).

In his book, *Saved to Serve*, John M. Martin recounts his experiences of God's faithfulness as he labors for the Lord in southwestern Ontario. Very encouraging (\$4.95).

I Am My Beloved's and *My Beloved Is Mine* are the titles of this new two-volume series by John Bramhall. Each book is a series of collected devotions and scriptural meditations gleaned over Mr. Bramhall's many years of walking with the Lord (\$7.95 each or \$13.95 for the set). For more information, see inside back cover.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

IMMOBILIZED

The Orthodox Church and the communists have pressured Operation Mobilization to cancel its August 3 port of call at Varna, Bulgaria. The evangelical minority in Bulgaria faces continuing attacks of propaganda and other forms of persecution.

NO WAY IN ZIMBABWE

Recently, John and Eleanor Sims were in Grand Rapids, MI, and gave an excellent report on the work of the Lord in Zimbabwe—however, the government is no longer issuing visas for missionaries. A worker can still come into the country with specialized skills, such as relief work, doctors, and experts in economic development. Continue to pray for the Sims and all those who labor for the Lord in Zimbabwe.

HITTING THE BEACH

So far this year, more than 6,000 Cubans have fled to the U.S., and the Clinton Administration is trying to avoid another Mariel boat-lift. Fidel Castro has got to be worrying about his future after an unprece-

dent riot in Havana in August. One economist estimates that productivity has plummeted to 45% since 1990. Many believers in Cuba have been encouraged by Mariano Gonzalez' radio broadcasts, *Think On These Things*. Some who have never heard the gospel message have accepted Christ as their Saviour. Continue to pray for the people of Cuba. Only when they accept Christ as their Saviour will they experience true freedom from oppression.

TEETERING ON THE BRINK

Rwanda's neighbor, Burundi, is teetering on the brink of violence similar to that seen in Rwanda. Some 2,000 people have died in recent ethnic clashes. A United Nations official told the *New York Times*, "We have a very small window of opportunity here—maybe only weeks. After that, we could have another Rwanda on our hands."

RECOVERING LOST GROUND

In the last half century, the earth has lost 11 percent of its vegetated land due to human-induced soil erosion from pollution, poor irrigation, and development. In the same period, world population has doubled. Soil experts report progress through simple techniques such as planting trees, terracing hillsides, and composting.

FUNERAL PROCESSIONS

The funeral industry is one of the few thriving businesses in Russia.

Last year 360,000 more Russians died than in 1992. This year's first quarter saw a 12% rise over last year's figures.

The four fastest growing causes of death in Russia are: Alcohol poisoning (20% increase), infectious diseases (17.9% increase), cardiovascular disease (15% increase), and respiratory diseases (12.8% increase).

THE BEAST WITHIN

Ethiopia is ready to execute justice on 1,200 men and a few women, whom the government charges with participating in the "Red Terror" of Marxist strongman Mengistu in the late 1970's. An estimated 40,000 to 100,000 people perished during the uprising. One Ethiopian said the purpose was to "exorcize the beast within us."

FAMILY WOES

With a slow economy, China's families have been trying to overcome the inevitable. With an estimated 200,000 homeless kids in Hunan, Anhui, and Guangdong provinces, and a floating migrant population of approximately 70-100 million which cannot find work—the Chinese family is confronted with some serious social and economic problems which could explain why so many dysfunctional families exist.

As Asian societies move increasingly towards a free market system, the negative effects of Western culture are becoming more and more evident. Many elderly Asians, who



were revered by the youth, are being left alone to fend for themselves as the younger generation follows the "brass ring."

WITH THE LORD

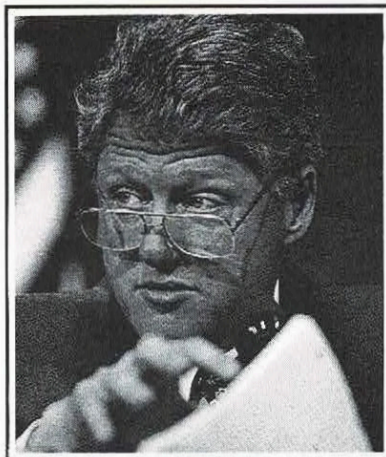
Mrs. Marion Wildish, wife of evangelist Harold Wildish, passed into the presence of the Lord on July 15 of this year. Mr. and Mrs. Wildish were married in 1929 and by 1930 had returned to Georgetown, Guyana, for two years of service. Forced to leave due to Harold's poor health, they relocated in Jamaica in 1932. They enjoyed a fruitful ministry based out of Jamaica for the next 50 years until Harold's homecall in 1981. In recent years she had proven herself to be an encouragement of the believers, and was sought out for her godly advice on many matters. She will be missed!

On July 20, Mrs. J. (Nettie) Ruddock was promoted to glory after a life that was spent for the Master at home and abroad. She and her husband John sailed to Guatemala in 1926, commended by the assemblies in California. They served in Guatemala for 4 years and moved on to Honduras until their retirement in 1978.

We extend our sympathies to the families of these dear sisters in the Lord. May their testimonies encourage us to lay our all on the altar.

POPULATION EXPLOSION

Life spans in industrialized countries average 74 years; in developing countries, it is 63. Today, there are 125 cities with populations over one-million. By the year 2000 there is expected to be 300 cities with that figure. The total of the



Earth's population today is 5,600,000,000 and is projected to be 8,500,000,000 by the year 2030. These and other facts were presented at the recent United Nations International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, Egypt. A platform spearheaded by the Clinton administration (made up mostly of "pro-choice" activists) cited these facts as reason to adopt their population control strategy which includes: providing primary education for girls, making family planning widely available, and offer broader "health services" (sound familiar?) including abortion. Many of the controversial American positions in the program were set forth in a fog of euphemisms. The Vatican challenged these linguistic terms and by week's end had abortion removed from the family planning section of the document, and had the Clinton administration retreating, like a bunch of cock roaches when you flick on the light. The American public had better sit up and take notice of what this government is trying to impose on the world and many underprivileged countries. Some third-world countries leaders commented that if they did not go

along with the proposal they would lose millions of dollars in foreign aid.

WHAT THEY LEARN AT COLLEGE

South Korea is seeing an erosion of traditional family values in a nation that once had the highest standards among the nations of the world. The reason—according to social scientists and commentators, students who leave for American colleges often come back with a new set of values. What left as the "boys next door" have returned as the Menendez brothers. They cite the recent high-profile murder case of California-educated Park Han Sang, who is charged with the murder of his parents for a \$12.5 million inheritance, as proof.

WAKING UP!

Since restrictions were ended five years ago, thousands of church buildings have begun construction in Russia. A Siberian businessman financing the building of a temple in Sharypovo said, "Without a spiritual revival, we won't be able to come to grips with our crime problem, official corruption, and other moral blights."

TRANSLATING CHRIST

Craig and Margaret Sutherland have been serving the Lord by making regular visits to the Philippines. This past March-April, Craig began work on the Palawan translation of the Scriptures. Having returned to the States to help at New Life Bible Camp for the summer, he returned to the Philippines in September to continue on this project. Please pray that the Lord will give help and blessing in this work.



GOSPEL INTENTIONS

**Are the useful
days of tent
meetings over?**

**This Iowa
assembly
doesn't
think so.**

In the first chapter of Philippians, Paul writes, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your *fellowship in the gospel* from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:3-5). Every remembrance Paul had of these saints brought with it the thought of their *fellowship in the gospel*. What a beautiful report for any assembly!

Fellowship implied partnership. It was cooperation, being of one heart, one mind, and one spirit in the work of the Lord. These days, many of the

pened unto me have fallen out rather unto the *furtherance of the gospel*, so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places" (vv. 12-13). Besides losing our outlook for those around us who are perishing, we have also become shortsighted of the opportunities which God has given us to minister in the gospel. Paul reminds us that the circumstances of this life are another opportunity for us to invest in the bank of eternal returns. Have you ever found yourself thinking, while going through a particular trial, "How can *this* further the gospel of the Lord Jesus?" We need a heavenly perspective of our lives and a grasp on the purpose for which we have been called "out of darkness and into His marvelous light."

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the *faith of the gospel*" (v. 27). What is needed today? We need to pay heed to these words, "striving together." The Greek word means to "strive together at the same time." We are in a spiritual tug-of-war with the enemy for the souls of men. Only with the help of the Spirit of God can we stand with our feet firmly planted in the Word of God, being like-minded with Christ and with each other, and show that we care whether they go to heaven or hell. We need to be more committed to the gospel, and seek out opportunities to share it with those in our communities that are hurting and perishing because of sin.



**Scott Tucker is
managing editor
for UPGEEK
Magazine.**

Lord's people have little or no share in the gospel. There seems to be a growing trend among believers where little emphasis is placed in our assembly testimony on the preaching of the gospel of God's grace to the perishing. We seem to be content with being saved and attending a few meetings; but sad to say, many of us have lost the joy of His salvation in our lives.

"But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which hap-

These same truths were evident in the lives of the Christians in Cedar Falls, IA. From September 10-18, 1994, after much prayer and exercise of heart, they held a series of gospel meetings in a tent. Gospel tent meetings are not new to this area. In the 1930's, an extensive campaign took place in northeastern Iowa, mainly through the preaching of Oliver Smith and his co-laborers, as they held meetings in some two hundred different places. Back then, souls were saved and assemblies were established.

It is with this keen awareness of how God works that the elders at the Cedar Falls Bible Fellowship energized their assembly into action. With a group of approximately 40 people, every neighborhood was prayed

this time, J. B. Nicholson (MI) ministered from the book of Ephesians. After lunch, they would hit the streets one last time before the evening meeting.

The gospel tent could accommodate 250 people and the first two nights the tent was filled. Numbers ran at 120-150 during the week, but it was noticed that more unsaved came out on these days. Jim Upton (MN) led the singing each night and J. B. Nicholson (MI) and J.



Boyd Nicholson (ON) ministered the gospel. More than 50 unsaved people attended throughout the campaign. One wonders how long it would take to reach that many through our regular gospel meetings.

It was a thrill to see the entire assembly moving through their community, reaching

out with the gospel. The believers worked hard and the Lord graciously encouraged them with at least two professing to know the Lord as personal Saviour. Many other contacts were made and follow-up continues.

Please pray for Ivan. He comes from a Spanish Roman Catholic background and was having a hard time accepting what he had been taught by the church. He felt that the gospel "makes so much more sense."

Also, pray for the ex-mayor of the city. Due to a breakdown in his marriage, he has been depressed and questioning as of late. One of the elders and Boyd Nicholson met him for breakfast one morning. He may be "not far from the kingdom."

Whether they use a tent or not, may many more assemblies follow the example of the believers at Cedar Falls and get busy "striving together for the faith of the gospel." Souls hang in the balance!

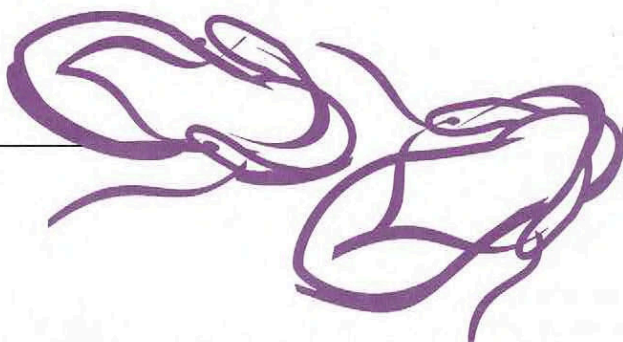
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for around the clock, gospel literature was handed out, and an invitation to the gospel meetings presented. Area assemblies also got involved by attending nightly and helping with hearty singing and speaking to others about the Lord Jesus after each meeting. Christians, eager to help, came from Colorado, Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and across Iowa.

Each morning, the believers at CFBF would begin by canvassing the neighborhoods, using a street map from the city to plan their strategy. On the first Saturday, 43 Emmaus students arrived in the afternoon and visited approximately 4,000 homes in the area, making sure everyone was invited to hear of God's grace to man.

In the afternoon, they would meet again at the assembly and have a sit-down lunch. This offered a more relaxed atmosphere for them to invite those whom they had contacted in their jobs, neighborhoods, etc. During

God With Us



The virgin's Son was called Emmanuel. This name, "God with us," in a sense summarizes the entire plan of redemption.

It would seem that Adam and Eve walked with God before their rebellion (Gen. 3:8). Enoch, the seventh from Adam, walked with God for three centuries before his translation (Gen. 5:22). Noah walked with God before the flood, and Abraham took advantage of God's offer and walked before Him when he was 99 years old (Gen. 6:9; 17:1; 24:40). Isaac walked with the Lord (Gen. 48:15). God walked among the people of Israel (Lev. 26:12); before them (Deut. 1:30; Isa. 52:12); with them (Deut. 20:4; 31:6); and in their camp (Deut. 23:14). David also walked before God (1 Ki. 8:25; Ps. 56:13), and the people at times (2 Chron. 6:14; Mal. 3:14).

Can two walk together except they be agreed? This word *agreed* is used for betrothed (Ex. 21:8-9); and for a time appointed (Job 9:19). In Exodus, it is beautiful when used of the Lord meeting with His people, at the altar, the testimony, and the mercy seat.

It was God's great yearning to be the God of Israel and to have them as His people. Jehovah promised Israel after they built the tabernacle that He would bless them lavishly if they obeyed (Lev. 26:3-11). The apex was that He would walk among them, He would be their God and they would be His people (v. 12). There were spasmodic efforts to walk with God, but this mutual relationship—their God, His people—was not mentioned again until the days of Hosea. Then the Lord reiterated His promise, to be fulfilled when Israel shall be restored (Hos. 2:23).

The captivity prophets repeated the assurance: Jeremiah seven times; Ezekiel six times. Zechariah also added two more references, making 17 times in all, in the Old Testament. This was God's transcendent desire, a mutual relation with redeemed sinners. He would be their God; they would be His people.

The apostle Paul quoted from Hosea (Rom. 9:26) in connection with the restoration of Israel. He went back to Leviticus to show the blessing for believers today who walk in separation from this world (2 Cor. 6:16): their God, His people. The writer of Hebrews quoted

from Jeremiah, to show the bounties of the new covenant (Heb. 8:10).

But John saw the new heaven and earth, and the new Jerusalem like a bride adorned for her husband. He heard a great voice proclaiming: "The tabernacle of God is with men; God will dwell with them; they shall be His people; God Himself shall be with them, and be their God!"

Then Alpha and Omega promised that the overcomer would inherit all things. "I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (Rev. 21:7).

But these words, "their God, my people," are a claim as much as a promise. Clearly God wants men to be His people. He wants our fellowship, admiration, and adoration. What did He do to win so much? Better ask, What did He leave undone?

God the Son became a Man, by the unsearchable mystery of the Incarnation. God became the God-Man! He was identical with men, except He had no sinful nature. Yet He is not ashamed to call us brethren. The Word dwelt among men. He promised for those who keep His words that He and His Father would make their abode with them (Jn. 14:23).

God "created" and "made" man and woman, and "formed" man, (Gen. 1 & 2), but He "built" woman, (Gen. 2:22, *Heb.*). So the Son said that He would build His Church, literally, build a home. The Spirit described the Church of the redeemed as a building (same word), a habitation of God, His home (Eph. 2:21-22).

More intimately, Christ loved the Church as a man loves his bride. Christ gave Himself for His Bride, His life for our love. He is purifying her until the moment He will present her to Himself, without spot or blemish. A man cleaves to his wife, and the two are one flesh. So the Son yearns for this proximity, partly portrayed in the human realm. The Lord nourishes and cherishes the Church as His own body.

Still more intimately, we *are* His Body. At least a

dozen times the Spirit uses this word—in Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Colossians, but especially Ephesians. Many members become one Body by the indwelling of God the Spirit.

But the most thrilling statement is in Ephesians 1:22-23. He is the Head, and the Church is His Body. Is that not enough? But the Spirit calls us the fullness of Him who fills all things. Was there something lacking in the plenitude of God? The Son created all things, sustains all things, fills all things. Yet His love for the Church is such that He is not complete without His Bride, His Body!...Language fails.

How can we respond? If God the Father and God the Son want our company, fellowship, appreciation, love, we can do nothing less than give Them our hearts. Prime time with the Father and the Son!

Our fellowship is with the Father and the Son (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Jn. 1:3). This truth is not only positional and for the æons, it is practical, here and now. The Lord's aspiration for togetherness applies to our service. We have spoken of our walk with God. Think of our work: "Take My yoke upon you" (this requires nearness). We are workers together with God and depend on His promise: "Lo, I am with you always."

It also applies to our warfare: "When thou goest out to battle...the Lord thy God is with thee." Our battle is not literal, but real just the same. When arraigned before governors and kings, the Spirit of our Father will speak in us. When Paul was a prisoner, the Lord stood by him. When three Hebrew young men were in the fiery furnace, the Son of God was with them.

The Father seeks those who worship in Spirit and in truth. As sons, pure-washed priests, we can enter His presence at any time. This is His longing desire. The throne-room of the cosmos is only a prayer's width away. It brings joy to that great Heart of Love when His beloved ones just lift up a word of true appreciation for what He is in Himself. This is more than prayer, and even more than praise. It is worship, because He is worthy, a thousand times worthy.

The primary time for joint worship and communion is when we meet to remember Him. The Lord promised to be with us, even with two or three. How then can some think that they have an option, to be present or not? He wants my presence. Say it is not a command. It is certainly the constraint of immeasurable love, far more coercive than Sinai.

God with us! In eternity, and every day.

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Who is He?

Well named "A Man of Sorrow,"
For so indeed He was;
"No sorrow like His sorrow,"
Hated, without a cause.
The Source of untold goodness,
Come down from heaven above,
Yields to our scorn and rudeness
In condescending love.

They named Him "Friend of Sinners,"
This thrills my soul to praise;
All heavenward path beginners,
Their hallelujahs raise.
Only the sick and weakly
Need the physician's care;
The Friend of Sinners, meekly
Submits their sins to bear.

Misnamed a malefactor!
No evil did He do;
He was a benefactor!
And died for me and you.
In grace to bring us blessing,
He took our load of guilt:
Met God, our sins confessing,
For us, His blood was spilt.

Paul names Him Mediator;
Job's Daysman now is found.
A Man, though our Creator,
Upon God's Throne sits crowned.
As God, God's rights maintaining
From that bright throne on high,
As man, our new place gaining,
Blest with Himself, so nigh.

His sorrows now are over,
But Friend of Sinners still,
His thoughts of kindness hover
Round those who served Him ill.
And still His meditation
Can free you from the thrall
Of Satan's devastation.
He gave Himself for all.

—William J. Barnes

THE FELLOWSHIP OF TEARS

Jesus wept." More wonderful words than these are nowhere to be found in Scripture.

The verb translated "wept" is unique in its employment here. It is not found elsewhere. Literally it is, "Jesus shed tears." These were tears of sympathy with the bereaved—Heaven's gem's sparkling on the cheeks of Emmanuel, God with us, revealing to mankind the very heart of the Eternal.

The Lord stood by the tomb where a loved and only brother had been laid, and where two brokenhearted sisters mourned him. Could He not have prevented this sorrow? Yes. Could He have not come earlier and robbed death of its triumph? Yes.

But this sorrow was permitted for the glory of God. How true the words of the sisters: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died!" Death cannot abide His presence. Here, then, we find it clearly taught that God permits death and sorrow to come upon His loved ones that He may be glorified thereby. This is a fact worthy of deep pondering.

Had Lazarus not died these words would never have been written, "Jesus shed tears." Had Lazarus not died these silent witnesses to the anguish that tore His heart in view of human loss and sorrow would never have flowed. Had Lazarus not died this special revelation of the heart of God would have never been granted to men to support them in the hour of anguish and sorrow. The death of Lazarus has enriched the race with a vision of God, the glory of which can only be discerned through tear-dimmed eyes.

These sisters had seen Him often. They had ministered to His wants. They had listened to His words. They loved to welcome Him to their home and to gaze upon His face. He brought the sunshine of Heaven with Him, and diffused its peace around. They rejoiced with Him, and He rejoiced with them.

He touched them in their joy; can He touch them

also in their sorrow? They had seen that face radiant with holy joy; they must see it likewise clouded with anguish and behold the teardrops coursing down. Thus would He teach them, and us, how to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15).

We reach a common bond in the brotherhood of tears. I weep with my brother at morn; he weeps with me ere night. May the tears of the Son of God at the tomb of Lazarus not appeal to our hearts in vain! He has placed a holy dignity upon tears.

The tears of the Lord at this time are all the more wonderful as we contemplate the fact that He knew He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead and restore him to these sisters and thrill their hearts with an unexpected joy. Not for them alone, therefore, were these tears shed. They were shed to assure our hearts that He sees and understands.

Of nothing are we better assured from Scripture than that the Lord is still able to enter into the sorrows of His people, as He did during the days of His flesh, to sympathize with them in bereavement, and to send them divine succor from on high. To this very end did He suffer when here below. It behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest.

The words of the angels to the disciples after His ascension were: "This same Jesus" (Acts 1:11). He sits upon the throne of God, having been absent in person from our world for nearly two thousand years, but these words prove that He is still unchanged, that He abides the "same Jesus."

True it is that He now is where tears can never flow. But the compassion that caused Him to shed tears in the days of His flesh remains unchanged, and by the Spirit He draws near to assure our hearts of His divine sympathy.



THE WORTHY ONE

The Man who once had no place to lay His head now sits at the right hand of God! The Word brings much to our attention regarding His present exalted situation—He is seated in glory.

The teaching regarding Christ sitting in heaven has much more to do with His place than with His posture. We speak, for example, of supreme court justices sitting, as a "sitting court." We do not mean that they never stand. Rather, we mean that they now demonstrably occupy a place of established authority. So with Christ seated in glory; He occupies a place of established supremacy.

It was to a high priest of Israel that Jesus said, "Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power" (Mk. 14:62). A functioning high priest of Israel could never sit; yet, here was One whom he despised claiming that He would one day sit amidst the glory and power of heaven. To Caiaphas, this was blasphemy, and marked the claimant as "worthy of death" (Mt. 26:57-66).

But Mark tells us that the truth of Jesus' claim was not long in being fulfilled (Mk. 16:19). He arose. He ascended. And, in the riches of His eternal and victorious glory, He sat down at the right hand of God. There He wields eternal and unlimited authority, above all principality and power and might and dominion. All things are under His feet. He is the Head over all things to the Church (Eph. 1:21-23). In that realm where He assured Caiaphas He would sit, angels and authorities and powers are subject to Him (1 Pet. 3:22). A fallen priesthood, cursed by a broken law, could not accept Christ's coming glory. And, by its rejection, that priesthood died; while by passing through death's dark portals our Saviour triumphed gloriously, and now sits in heaven bearing a Name above every name.

Hebrews gives us three insights into Christ sitting, expanding on the glories that now are His:

He, by Himself purged our sins, [and] sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high (Heb. 1:3). Here we note the *purpose* of His finished work. It was to

purge our sins. Had they not been purged, had we not been cleansed by His precious blood, He could never sit down like this. Sin and the curse have bowed before the sacrifice He made. He sits in triumph and abiding authority over that which once enslaved us.

This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God (Heb. 10:12). Here we learn that our Lord sits in glory because of the *perfection* of His finished work. Sin can

never rise again to reclaim its captive. One sacrifice, in its unalterable perfection, makes perfect forever those that are sanctified.

And in the glory of that perfect work once done, He now sits exalted at the right hand of the Most High.

Christ is the One who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12:2). Here is the *perspective* of His finished work. The horrors of Calvary were real beyond our ability to even slightly comprehend. The battle had to be fought. He had to pass through the dark hour, and cross the dread valley.

But the issue was never in doubt! The joy that was set before Him made the cross endurable and the shame of His death to be bearable. For there and then He became the Author and Perfecter of our faith; and in the triumph of that conquest that transcends all others, He sat down. There He shall rejoice eternally in the presence of His bride whom He rescued from so great a death.

And still He sits! John saw Him there (Rev. 4). A throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. To Him who sits on the throne the anthems of heaven swell. The hosts of glory shall for endless ages proclaim His untarnished worthiness. The throne shall ever be; but, blessed be God, the One who sits eternally upon it is not ashamed to call us His brethren!

The One whom Caiaphas declared to be "worthy of death" is now worthy of all honor and worship and majesty; the Worthy One for all eternity.

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THE
THRONE SHALL
EVER BE; BUT, BLESSED
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SITS ETERNALLY UPON IT
IS NOT ASHAMED TO
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BRETHREN!

WHICH JESUS DO YOU KNOW?

When Israel saw that the king did not hearken to them, the people answered the king, What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse" (1 Ki. 12:16).

What a tragedy it is when our commitment to follow the Lord Jesus Christ is only as deep as the extent to which He will listen to our requests or desires. This type of relationship is not the one Scripture teaches should characterize His own, nor is it the example He Himself left us to follow: "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done" (Lk. 22:42).

The "Jesus" I've seen proclaimed in Christendom is not the Lord Jesus Christ I came to know in a Nassau prison in September of 1984. This other "Jesus" is very similar to the perversion of God's true Christ whom the multitude of John 6 created in their unbelieving hearts (vv. 26, 36). "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves...but I said to you that you have seen Me and do not believe."

Then as now, the search is on for God without repentance, for God without the cross, for God without cost, for God without the necessity to face and acknowledge personal accountability nor the consequence of sin and past life-style. And finally, much like the prodigal, there are many who wanted the inheritance but not the father, fwho want God without the Lordship of Jesus the Messiah.

I've heard much of miracles, healings, tongues, mighty deliverances from prison, and great "spiritual" experiences with God. Yet there is rarely a mention of sin and nothing of the infinitely transcending holiness of our just God whose Word declares that He will not be mocked, "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I rarely hear of God's true and ongoing miracle that He would send His Son to die for humans like me and then raise Him to live for me, with a promise never to leave me nor forsake me. So that in all my circumstances, no matter how bad my feelings or appearances might be, I can know assuredly that He directs and controls every detail every day for my ultimate good (Rom. 5:6-11). And a wonderful truth of this miracle is

that we don't need the so-called testimonies of individuals who draw so much attention to self through their claims and boastings, because this true miracle is continually at work in the life of every believer. Remember, God is as much at work in, and brings as much glory and blessing from, the Christian delivered from martyrdom at the stake as from the one killed for his faith at the stake!

This other "Jesus" then, is the delight of the flesh. It remains its own master and can survive in its enmity Godward, while enjoying "miraculous" deliverances



from all possible suffering or consequences of sin. It claims a euphoric state of "joy" by means of fleshly and emotional encounters with God's Holy Spirit without manifesting the true work of the Spirit in transformed lives bearing the likeness of God's Holy Son.

How applicable to this counterfeit are the words of Jude, "Beloved, being very eager to write to you of our common salvation, I found it necessary to write, appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

But how unlike the "Jesus" of the flesh is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. He focuses primarily on our "inner man" and not on the outer man that perishes (Eph. 1:3-14; 3:14-16). How beautiful is the Spirit's work in the inner man: "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not at the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:16-18). How lovely the way Paul trusted Him in circumstances so unpleasing to the flesh but deemed necessary by the Master to develop his inner man.

Let us, then, recognize Him as Deity, obey Him and honor Him as Lord by surrendering our cares, needs, and lives to His perfect will. As beloved children of God, we confidently ask of our Father who always does what's best for us (Jer. 29:11). But in our extremely limited knowledge and vision, we honor Him as faithful, omnipotent, and omniscient Lord when we add, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Anything less insults His fatherly love and care for His children and presumptuously distorts the proper God-creature relationship. "As you do not know how the Spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything" (Eccl. 11:5).

Counterfeit prayer tells Him how and what to do in the name of "believing" prayer when it is actually will-

ful, defiant, and faithless prayer. The true prayer of faith leaves it with God and believes His choice cannot be bettered. Because I know if I ask for what's best for me (His will), then no matter how humanly impossible it might be, He'll do it or give it (1 Jn. 5:14-15).

Certainly many times it is trying and painful to follow the genuine and only Lord Jesus Christ. I believe John 6:66-69 shows that Peter, like some of us, considered alternatives. But his answer reveals that there really is none: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe, *and have come to know*, that Thou art the Holy One of God." I find a trace of the same thought when John Baptist sent from horrible circumstances to inquire if the real Lord Jesus Christ would allow him such suffering. To his inquiry, the Lord said, "And blessed is he who takes no offense at me (or, at the way I choose to do things)" (Mt. 11:6).

When Israel rejected the king in 1 Kings 12, they in effect shunned his lordship and of necessity chose an alternative. Their alternative eventually took them into horrible depths of apostasy (1 Kings 12:20, 25-30) as they rejected their "inheritance in the son of Jesse." In other words, this attitude of rebellion made them rejecters of Jesse's greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us take heed lest the quality of our trust in God's true King take us to an alternative which has no inheritance in the Son of Jesse.

Remember: "This God—His way is perfect; the promise of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him. For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God?" (2 Sam. 22:31-32). So let us make Him our confidence always.



Henry & Lisa Sardinia make their home in Union, Missouri. Henry is involved in itinerant evangelism.

LETTER TO A FRIEND

The following article is the substance of a letter written by brother Jim Upton, an elder at the assembly in metropolitan Minneapolis, MN. It was written as a solemn but loving appeal to a fellow workmate as Jim was taking his retirement from the company.

Joe,

We have worked together now for quite a few years and on many different projects. You have taught me many things and I think we have had some fun working and learning—at least I have. Somehow, our thinking and ideas have often meshed together and sometimes even been identical! And we've laughed about it, along with others who've noticed it. Seriously, I have felt honored whenever that has happened—honored since your insights and knowledge are so exceptional and trusted. That's a fact, known throughout the company and beyond. For me to be linked with you in these technical things has been very special to me.

Further, I feel that our working together has been more than just on a business/technical basis; it's been personal and I've really appreciated that. Since I'm retiring now (though not planning to leave the company completely), I felt this might be a good time to say "Thanks much, Joe—thanks so very much."

But there's another reason for sending you this note, and that is regarding something much more important than technology, medical devices—even hunting—and really, everything else people do. And that is, one's personal relationship with God. I know we talked about this once and you became uncomfortable, so I stopped. I've thought about you regarding these matters hundreds of times, but respected your feelings on this topic and kept quiet, though silence on this issue so crucial to my friend, Joe, was difficult for me each time. Perhaps, through this personal note I can again speak without causing you too much discomfort.

Joe, when I look around, I see the marks of an intelligent Designer everywhere. When we discuss the things of mechanics, metallurgy, or whatever, we look for reasons why it works that way, and so often you suggest probable or possible answers—citing theory

and/or test findings. These logical scenarios you propose, most often when tested out, prove to be right on target. The company, all of us on the project, and most importantly, our patients have benefitted many, many times. However, numerous things have remained beyond our full understanding. We accept that without embarrassment because we know that we really understand only very little in the whole scheme of things.

When we tackle a new, significant problem, we demand of ourselves that we evaluate it in a logical, systematic way, using valid science; a guess is not good enough—too risky. But we know that there is a logical, sensible solution and that if we had all the facts we could probably find the solution. That's because the material world is dependable. It conforms to consistent, reliable principles. Could this occur without an active, intelligent designer—or may I say—Designer?

Joe, I don't believe so; to conclude otherwise is to think in a way that we don't allow ourselves to do in our daily work—at least you haven't let me get by with it in the past!

I'm convinced that there must be a Designer. Ideas to the contrary just don't make sense and defy true science in spite of all the "intellectual" persuasions advanced these days—presented with more heat than light.

To a Designer that has given us such a magnificent universe, operating on physical laws and principles which are consistent and dependable throughout its measureless extent down to the core of its tiniest feature, we struggle little in applying the word "infinite." Kepler, amazed at his conclusions from astronomical observations (later to become Kepler's laws), said: "O God, to think that I'm having Thy thoughts after Thee."

Joe, as I (as we?) think of some of the metallurgical and physical things we have studied over the years at the company, we may, I believe, easily come to a similar sense of awe in the Designer as Kepler did. From this, it is really such a small step to sensing that this Infinite One has more in mind and more to offer than just a material creation, even with all its fascination. Yes, even more than just the marvelous human body we each possess—and which we in our research have spe-

cial opportunities to ponder. Beyond the material side of man there is his ability to think, to reason, to postulate, to sense, to have capabilities of emotion and abstract thinking—and much more. Only by including in our thinking a perfect (i.e., holy) God as the Infinite Designer, can we come close to explaining the existence of a human being in all his aspects.

Can you or I or any other human, no matter how intelligent and talented, through laboratory tests, skillful calculations and deductions, or surveys of society's thinking ever truly know anything more than just the very surface of this Infinite God? We can't. We need more...we desperately need more.

Where does that leave us? With God being discernable but unknowable? With His plans for man and for His purpose and destiny forever shrouded, kept from man in a dark mystery? If so, then we might well question His infinite perfection in limiting Himself to placing man in a world, setting him going, and doing nothing more with him—letting him dangle in nothingness interminably.

Is there another option to Him remaining unknowable by man's investigations? Yes: self-revelation. God reserves the right to show Himself only to those who are serious seekers.

The Bible is that self-revelation. Often people, knowing little of the Bible, don't like the God they see. But as we learn a little more of what's in the Bible, we begin to see a little more of who God really is and what His attributes are. The more we know of the Bible, the more we understand God.

Not only does the Bible reveal God, it tells about man and his nature. It articulates God's plan for man's best, both for now and for eternity. That's why it's so important—not only to me but to many, many others and, really, everyone. That's why we have sent out invitations

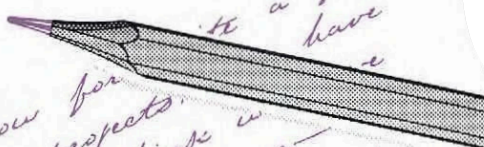
to the immediate neighborhood around our church building (in Coon Rapids) for some special meetings; we have also included a little booklet ("THE BIBLE") in these mailings. We deeply want people to know the good news about God; about the Lord Jesus Christ and His death on the cross which has given the opportunity for "whosoever" to have the life God gives and have their sins put away to God's satisfaction.

I'm sure you know that my interest in you is deeper than just being a friend and a long-time co-worker. For that reason I'm sending you the same information that we've mailed out—I believe that you live outside our mailing area. I would like to see you come to the meetings; no obligation, of course. No change in our friendship if you don't either! Perhaps you and your wife could both come.

If you come or not, I'd like the opportunity to talk to you on these vital things, Joe. Is that possible? I'll buy lunch—or is that unfair persuasion?!

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Jim



Joe,
 We have worked together now for years and on many different projects. I think I have taught me many things and I think I have some fun working and learning—ideas I have. Somehow, our thinking and sometimes even meshed together. And we've laughed even been identical! And others who've noticed it, along with me, I have felt honored whenever that has happened—honor your

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS

People say that Jesus Christ came to teach us to be good. He never did! All the teaching in the world about a man having a pure heart won't make it pure. Our Lord's teaching has no power in it unless I possess His nature.

—Oswald Chambers

He was the Son of God, thinking out to man. He was the heart of God, throbbing out to man. He was the voice of God, calling out to man. He was the hand of God, strong and tender, reaching out to man. He was the person of God, wearing human attire and living in a humble carpenter shop. All this that He might find man and take him back to God. —Arthur Moore

For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. (Hebrews 7:26)

Christ is the great central fact of the world's history. All lines of history converge upon Him. All the great purposes of God culminate in Him.

—Charles Spurgeon

Jesus was more than a great moral Teacher; he was more than a Pattern for us to follow. He was the eternal Son of God, incarnated in human flesh. This is the distinctive doctrine of the Christian religion.

Once, it is said, a Scottish preacher of the modern school closed a sermon with these words, "Virtue is so attractive that, if she were to become incarnate, and walk the world in human form, men would fall down and worship her." The pulpit of that church was occupied the same evening by a different type of preacher, a humble evangelical man, who loved the gospel of a crucified Redeemer. He preached Christ crucified, and at the close of his discourse reminded the congregation of the statement made in the morning by the senior preacher, and then added, "I am sorry to say that Virtue did once walk the world in human form, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and men, instead of falling down and worshipping Him, crucified and nailed Him to a tree."

—Heart and Life Magazine

I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel.

—Napoleon Bonaparte

The life of Christ, the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, has lifted with its pierced hands empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages. —J. Paul Richter

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

The doctrine of the Incarnation is no unrelated speculation. It is the truth by which we find God, and are found by God, both in the common times and in times of crises. It says to us that the glory of God can be revealed in the little place and in the everyday event, as it was in the earthly life of Jesus; and it makes us trust that the divine redeeming purpose cannot be killed by the evil which may crucify it, and that in the love of Christ the power of God stands by us even when the world is dark. —W. Russell Bowie

So Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Hebrews 9:28)

Without Christ our past would be unpardonable, our present would be intolerable, and our future would be impenetrable.

IN THE MIDST

He is in the midst! No child of God needs to be told who that One is. He was foreshadowed by the tree of life in the *midst* of the garden (Gen. 2:9)—He who is the Life.

Moses saw Him in the burning bush, and He called to him "out of the *midst* of the bush," the blessed assurance that He is in the midst with His suffering people.

He dwelt among His people Israel, in the midst of the cloud, the visible sign of His presence.

And when the eternal and glorious One, the Life and the Light, came to earth as the Lamb of God to die for the ungodly, we see Him in the midst: "There they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left" (Lk. 23:32-33). Who can picture that scene—the Holy One in the midst of wicked men, hanging on the cross, shedding His blood!

They took His body from the place in the midst. They laid Him in the tomb. On the third day, the grave was emptied, and on the same day we see Him in the midst again: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the *midst*, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you" (Jn. 20:19).

We remember His blessed promise, recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, in anticipation of His death and resurrection, and the church He would have: "Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the *midst* of them." On the glorious day of His mighty victory, He fulfilled that promise. They were gathered together. Suddenly he was in their midst, to greet them with the message of peace, to show them His hands and His side.

And He is still in the midst. Wherever two or three gather together in His Name, having believed on Him, and owning no other name than His, gathered to Him, there He is still in the midst. "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren; in the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto Thee" (Heb. 11:12).

Now as the Firstborn among many brethren He leads in the praises, and we, redeemed by His blood, accepted in Him, one with Him, sing the song of redemption and praises in His Name. Such is true worship, gathered unto His Name, worshipping Him, singing that song, which He first sang—"He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto our God."

And John saw Him in the midst. "I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle" (Rev. 1:13).

And we shall see Him before long in the midst as it is so blessedly foretold: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain." Oh! the glory that awaits us to see Him "in the midst."

On earth, too, He will have the place in the midst. He will be in the midst of His people Israel and in the midst of Jerusalem. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo, I come to dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord" (Zech. 2:11-12).

Around that glorious center will be grouped the nations, who have turned their swords to plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, saying: "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:1-4).

The One in the midst will be the object of worship and of praise. He shall be King over all the earth. "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. 72:11).

And this glorious Lord is our Lord, our Friend, our all! Well may faith shout for joy and look forward in happy anticipation to the day when we shall be with Him, who is "in the midst."

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U

HIMSELF

I have been greatly delighted in contemplating the blessedness of being engrossed with the Lord Jesus. And one effect that the many questions, strifes about words, vain janglings and contentions which beset one on every side, have had is to drive me closer to Him.

I desire to recall the scattered and bewildered minds of saints from everything else, and to present before them an object that is worthy—oh, how worthy!—of their entire, constant, continued attention, adoration, and praise.

It is exceedingly blessed to observe the prominence which that one word, "Himself," has all through the Word.

If the Holy Ghost would direct the thoughts to the Cross, that great judgment of sin, the scene of that complete payment of all our debt, it is by presenting "Himself." Hence, it is in 1 Peter 2:24, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." Oh, blessed particularity! How sweet to the heart it is!

The same thing is to be observed in Isaiah 53, where it is all "Him," "He," "His"—the Holy Spirit would fix the undivided, undistracted gaze of my soul on Jesus Himself as my perfect Sacrifice.

He has finished the work, He has endured the Cross, and sin—that mighty barrier standing in the road of the sinner's return to God—is taken out of the way. The mountains of my guilt having been covered by the blood of Jesus, the Saviour rises from the dead. The grave could not detain Him. He rises, He bursts the bonds of death, for it was "not possible that He should be holden of it."

He presents Himself to His disciples, who, with blighted hopes and scattered prospects, are terrified and afraid. How does He reassure their hearts? What is the plan He adopts to restore their confidence and peace? He presents Himself, saying, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself" (Lk. 24:39).

Still it is "Himself." It is not even a clear announce-

ment of the proofs of what He was. It is not a recalling to their minds that He had taught them these things. No, precious as this would have been from His lips, there was something yet more touching, more melting, more convincing, and that was presenting "Himself." How blessed is all this!

And now that He has come and gone away, and that we, His poor weak ones, are left in a world that disowns and rejects Him, what has He left us to cheer our hearts, to occupy our souls, to feed our hopes? "Himself."

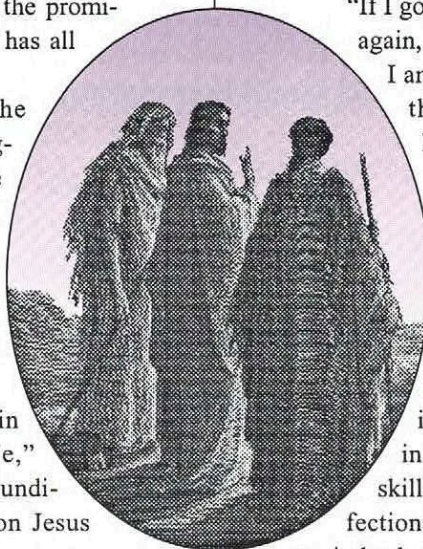
"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn. 14:3). "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (1 Thess. 4:16).

If our past is Himself, if our present is Himself, our future is also Himself, and "so shall we ever be with the Lord." Oh, the exceeding preciousness of this! It is truly "Jesus only."

May the Lord deliver us from every object that would seek to intrude itself into the place He Himself ought to have in our hearts! The devil is not wanting in skill and stratagem to draw the minds and affections of the saints to various points which are indeed connected with Jesus, but which are not "Himself," and to make these (right and proper in their place) the all-absorbing subjects for the mind.

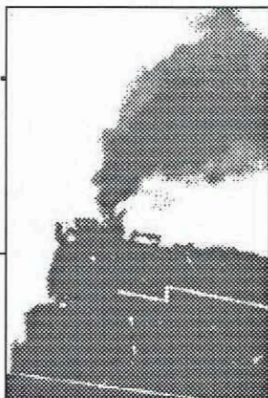
And when he succeeds, what is the result? A manifest chill among the saints of God, a coldness which must ever be the consequence of having any object but "Himself" next to the heart. May the Lord Jesus Himself give us all the grace to abide in that happy place, of which we sometimes sing:

*Oh, that I may, like favored John,
Recline my wearied head upon
The dear Redeemer's breast.
From care, and sin, and sorrow free,
Give me, O Lord, to find in Thee
My everlasting rest.*



WHICH ONE IS

THE HEATHEN?



In the Franco-Prussian War, there was then a great International Hospital in the town of Sedan, at the head of which was a distinguished doctor from St. Bartholomew's Hospital. He died there from confluent smallpox caught from a patient and was so much beloved that he was given a military funeral which was followed by the troops of both armies and headed by the Mayor of Sedan.

This distinguished physician was Dr. C. J. Davis, generally known as "the good black doctor." He came from Barbados; his father was a European, his mother a Barbadian. He himself was as black as ebony, a tall and distinguished-looking man. A few days before his death, he sent to Mr. Hy Pickering the following account of his last journey, one week before he succumbed to this fatal disease.

He had been staying with friends in Yorkshire, and came up to London to cross over by the tidal express from Folkestone Harbor, there being then no pier. At Charing Cross, he walked slowly along the platform looking for a seat, for the train was very full. At last he found one next to the platform and facing the engine in a first class carriage. Opposite to him sat a little old lady with very bright eyes, busily engaged in knitting. Next to her was her somewhat stolid and burly husband. In the far corner, a gentleman sat reading *The Times* while at Dr. Davis' side were two elderly and prim ladies.

The doctor, being tired with his long journey from the North, put his hat on the rack, and donned a dark velvet smoking cap, whose blue tassel and gold embroidery gave him a striking appearance. He leaned back in the seat, and with closed eyes, heard the following conversation, for the train had hardly cleared the platform when the little lady opposite began. She turned to her husband:

"What a handsome man, John!"

"Hush, my dear, he may hear what you say."

"And what if he does?" retorted the lady, "He can't understand a single word."

"Don't be too sure of that."

"Oh, John, you are so foolish. Can't you see who he is?"

"Well, no, my dear; I can't say that I do."

"Why, he's one of those African princes you read about that have come over to see the Queen. He's as black as coal."

"You can't be sure, my dear, who he is," said John feebly.

"I tell you he's an African prince," said his little wife with decision. "Isn't it awful, John, to think that that poor heathen is now leaving this country, and probably doesn't even know he's got a soul? I call it disgraceful."

Just then the train was passing the Crystal Palace on the right. Its panes of glass were shining like diamonds in the rays of the afternoon sun.

The lady remarked, "These huge palaces of amusement do a lot of harm. Boys and girls do pretty much as they like now; while as for morality, the less said the better."

Dr. Davis saw his opportunity, and in the purest English, said, as he slowly opened his eyes and leaned forward, "Morality, ma'am?"

The little lady nearly had a fit. She sprang right off her seat, and as she came down again, said faintly, "Oh, sir, I'm so sorry. I'd no idea you understood our language. I don't know what you must think of me!"

"I think you said 'morality,' ma'am?" repeated Dr. Davis.

"Yes, sir, I did."

"And what is morality, ma'am?"

"Morality, sir, is a very good thing. We couldn't do without it, could we, John?"

"Well, no, my dear, I don't think we could. At any rate, sir, we are not going to try."

"Morality, sir, is a very good thing for both worlds," added his wife.

"For both worlds?" he inquired.

"For both worlds, sir. There is another besides ours. Indeed, there are two; one is called heaven, and the other is called hell."

"And what are they like, ma'am?"

"Heaven, sir," replied the woman, delighted that she

WHICH ONE IS THE HEATHEN?

had actually got into conversation with "the African Prince," "is where the angels go, and all the good people go—all gold and glass, and harps and happiness; and hell, sir, is where the Devil is, and is a dreadful place, where all the bad and wicked people are—all flames and horrid darkness; and we must go to one or another when we die."

The "African Prince" leaned forward, full of interest. "And how can we get to heaven, ma'am?"

"Well, sir," said the little lady, with a triumphant look at John, "it's quite easy. Of course you must be good, and kind to all, and forgive every one their offenses. And you must be baptized and sorry for your sins, and go to Church and take the sacrament, and love your enemies, and help the poor, and do as you would be done by, and—and that's the way to heaven, isn't it, John?"

"Quite right, my dear," and then in a low voice, "but if you go on with this conversation you're sure to get into a mess." And then to Dr. Davis, who was still politely listening: "I might say, sir, if you wish any further information on these matters, we have a most excellent clergyman at Folkestone, who will tell you all you wish to know. I can give you his address."

"Sir," replied the black doctor, "we are travelling at fifty miles an hour, and I should like to be sure now of the way to heaven."

"Well, sir," interposed the little lady, rather piqued, "haven't I just told you word for word, just as it's written in the Bible?"

"The Bible, ma'am?"

"The Bible, sir. The Bible is God's Book, written to tell us the way to heaven. You'll find it all there exactly as I've said, and of course, as my husband told you, if you would like to see our clergyman, you will find he knows all about it as well."

"Oh, ma'am," said the doctor, "I should much like to see it in the Bible."

"And so you shall, sir," replied the little lady, who proceeded to hunt in her bag. After she had rummaged in it for some time without success, she turned to the unsympathetic John, "Have you got a Bible anywhere?"

"No, my dear, I haven't; and you had much better leave the gentleman alone."

Nothing, however, could daunt the lady's missionary zeal. "Excuse me, sir," addressing the gentleman in the corner, "Have you a Bible?"

"No, I have not, ma'am; and I consider these religious conversations in railway cars most improper."

"Have you a Bible?" pursued the little lady, nothing daunted, turning to the two spinster ladies in turn.

"No," replied each one in succession, "I'm afraid we have not."

"Dear me," said the lady, "I fear, sir, we haven't a Bible in the carriage. I'm so sorry. But I have told you word for word the way to heaven; and as John, my husband, says, our vicar will be most pleased to see you at Folkestone."

"I wish I could see the passage now," said Dr. Davis with a sigh, as he leaned back again and closed his eyes.

The little lady gazed earnestly for a time at her hearer, and then she gave a little sigh, as she took up her knitting once more, and retired from the mission field. There was a silence again in the carriage as the train roared through the dusk of the evening.

After a while, Dr. Davis slowly felt in his coat pocket, and drew out a small book. Leaning forward once more, and holding it out, he said to the lady, "Was that what you were looking for?"

"Oh, dear, yes, sir. Why, that's the Testament—the very book."

"The Testament, ma'am?"

"Yes, sir. The Bible has two Testaments; there is the Old Testament and the New."

"And which is this, ma'am?"

"This, sir, is the New."

"And which tells us the way to heaven?"

"Why, the New, sir; that's the very book."

"Would you kindly show me the passage you spoke of, ma'am?"

"With pleasure, sir," said the lady, bright again with missionary zeal, taking the book in her hands.

She rapidly turned its pages, first one way and then the other. Then, after casting her gaze on the ceiling for inspiration, she turned them over again, the doctor's eyes being fixed on her all the time.

After fumbling in vain for some minutes, and getting very red, she turned to her husband, "John!"

"Yes, my dear."

"Do you know where that passage is that tells us the way to heaven?"

"No, I don't, Maria; and you see what a mess you've got into. I haven't the least idea where it is."

In despair, the lady rapidly turned over the pages

once more, but all in vain. "I'm afraid, sir, I can't lay my hands on the exact passage. I know it's just about here. My poor head is not so young as it once was, and I can't think of the verse. But it's all there, sir, exactly as I told you, for I know it by heart."

"Would you allow me, ma'am?" said Dr. Davis very politely, gently taking the Testament out of her hands, and turning the leaves over to the Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 16, which he indicated with his finger. "Was that the passage?"

"Oh, dear, yes, sir; why, they are the very words. Just as I said. Now, sir, you can read it for yourself, and see it's all true," and she lay back triumphantly.

"Would you allow me to read this passage aloud, ma'am?"

"Certainly, sir, do."

So Dr. Davis read: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"There, sir," said the lady, in high spirits and evidently without any suspicion of the storm about to burst, "the very words I told you. I'm so glad you've found it. I knew it was there."

"One moment, ma'am. I should first like to say a word to the gentleman in the corner. Sir, I don't know who you are, or what you call yourself, but of one thing I am sure. The man that says that a British railway carriage is not a place where a supposed heathen (which I thank God I am not) may learn the way to heaven is unworthy of the name of Englishman!"

The little lady quietly applauded.

"But as for you, ma'am," he continued, "are you not ten times worse? I came into this carriage and you believed me to be a heathen Prince, and seemed anxious to tell me the way to heaven; so I asked you, and you told me I had to do this, and that, and the other, and you

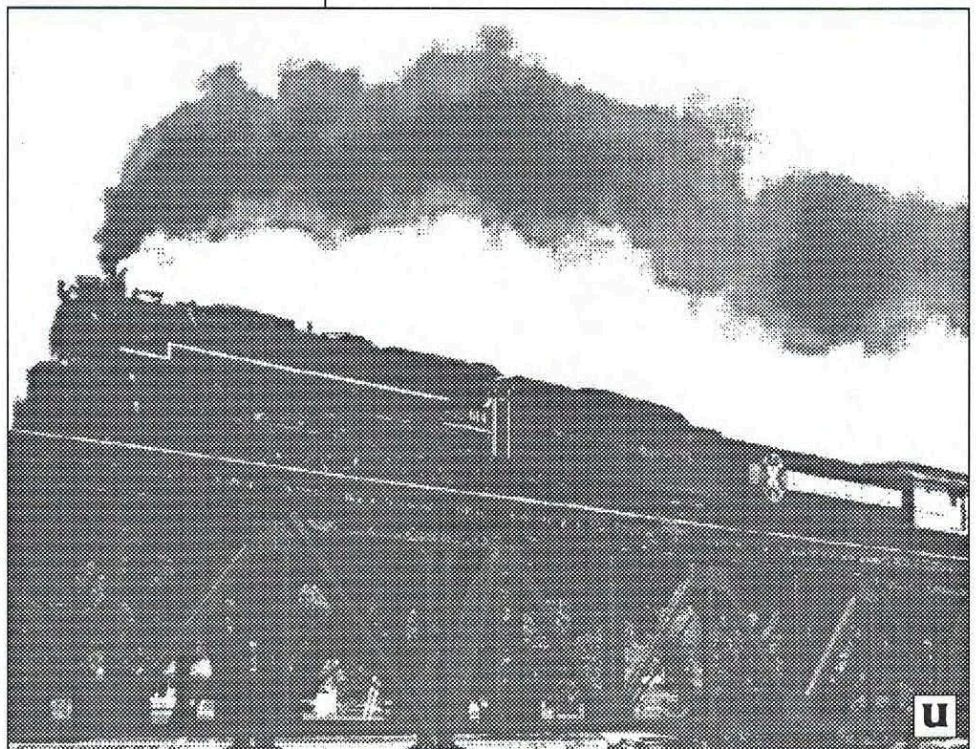
have never opened your mouth to tell me one word of what Christ has done for me. Not one syllable of all you told me is to be found in this glorious text; and no word that it contains has passed your lips. You have utterly misled me. Your religion is two letters short. It is 'D-O,' do; and mine is 'D-O-N-E,' done; and this makes all the difference."

The poor missionary collapsed, while the supposed heathen proclaimed the glorious gospel of the Cross to a now attentive audience, until the train drew up at Folkestone Harbor Station.

On his way to the boat, Dr. Davis felt a slight tug at his overcoat. Turning round, he found the two spinster ladies at his heels. "Oh, sir," said the one who had given the pull, "you will excuse us, but we could not let you go without thanking you for the blessing your words have been to us. We always thought we had to do our best to get to heaven, and never understood that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had done all the work of atonement for us, and that we can now *know* that we are saved."

"Sir," she continued, her eyes full of tears, "we shall have to thank God to all eternity for this afternoon."

In a week, Dr. Davis himself had passed away to his eternal rest. The journey had been an arduous one, but the destination had long since been assured.





KEEPING THE KNOT TIED

A union embodying such an ideal (the ideal of Ephesians 5) is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Such is one statement in the marriage ceremony that I use as two much-in-love people stand in front of me on their wedding day. That ideal is very high, and one that is not being met very often these days—even among Christians. In general, marriage and the family have fallen on hard times, and in a majority of non-Christian homes the whole concept of one mate for life is not even deemed possible any more.

Among Christians, however, the standard for marriage must still be the Bible, but with the pressures of life and the culture in which we live, that standard is being gradually lowered, until in some Christian's minds it is seen as unattainable. That is a real tragedy and one that needs to be reversed.

As the statement at the beginning reads, this union is not to be entered into unadvisedly. This I believe is one of the problems we need to face today. To have a good talk with older believers who not only have a solid biblical understanding of marriage, but have weathered the storms of life together and have a marriage to model, and will share their understanding and experience with the uninitiated—this is a must. Just because young people come from good Christian homes does not mean they will be able to automatically have a good marriage. Good marriages don't just happen!

There are three books I would like to suggest as must reading for any couple contemplating marriage, by any couple contemplating helping young people in the marriage relationship, and by any couple whose marriage relationship is not all that it should be.

First is *God's Blueprint For Marriage* by Dan Smith. Dan has dealt with many young people contemplating marriage. This is written as an Emmaus Correspondence course and in that format has questions to answer which is very helpful for couples to work through. Biblically based, covering all aspects of

marriage, such as has its foundation in creation, the roles of husband and wife, relationships outside of the home, parenting, and other aspects of home life are all handled well and biblically in this book. He handles the subject of divorce and reminds us that God hates divorce—a clarion call that needs to be sounded today.

The second book is by a marriage counselor, Gary Smalley. The book is *Hidden Keys to a Loving, Lasting Marriage*. Many marriage counselors come from the direction of psychology. But Gary's book is solidly biblical. While drawing some things from his background, these don't detract from what the Bible teaches about marriage. This book emphasizes relationships

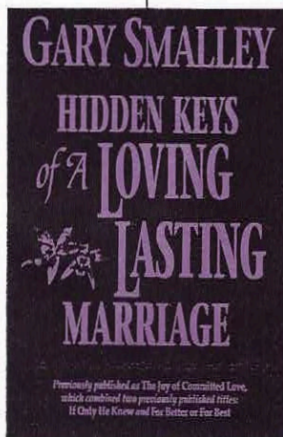
and what builds good ones. Attitudes such as honor, appreciation, and understanding are the key elements of both husband and wife working together toward a good marriage. Well written and well worth reading.

The third book is one of the most honest, open books I have ever read. Bill Hybels, whose well-known church on the outskirts of Chicago has stirred much controversy, had a problem marriage. The book is entitled *Fit to Be Tied*. This book is about his marriage, not his church.

The first two chapters are worth the price of the book. The first chapter explodes the myth that marriage will be the answer to all of life's problems. Being single is not the worst thing that can happen in life—a wrong marriage may be. In the second chapter, he advises that spiritual compatibility is necessary; that means more that both parties in the marriage are saved. His workaholic life-style (in the Lord's work), and many other factors openly and honestly shared, make this book well worth reading. Most marriages could be helped by putting the principles discussed in this book in practice.

Fifty percent of the marriages in the US end in divorce. The great tragedy is that statistics for "churched people" are almost the same as unchurched. Most families are touched by it. It is high time we began to expend some energy in reversing this trend wherever our influence can be felt.

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THE GIFT: GRACE OR FAITH?

For by *grace* are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves: it is the gift God, not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

These two verses, quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians in the New Testament, speak of one of the greatest blessings given to humanity. But some ask the question: Is the gift grace or faith?

Some see in this passage that *faith* is the *gift*. Because of a simple rule of grammar, we believe this is error. Let us analyze these two verses in Ephesians and see how the rule works. Not only do verses 8 and 9 show that *grace* is the *gift*, one only needs only to read in verse 5 of the same chapter where the Scripture is very clear as to how we are saved, "By *grace* ye are saved," period.

Now for the grammatical analysis of verses 8 and 9 of Ephesians 2.

Grammar dictates that an antecedent have a relative pronoun. In these two verses, the word *that* is a relative pronoun which relates to the antecedent—which is *grace*. The rule of grammar states that the antecedent must be the subject of the clause, which means that *grace* (just as in verse 5) is the subject of the clause.

Faith is not the subject of the clause but the indirect object, and thus cannot be the "gift of God."

In Ephesians 3:7-8, the Apostle speaks of grace as being a gift. Verse 7 refers to "the gift of the grace of God given to men," and in verse 8, "grace is given."

When writing to the saints at Corinth, Paul again states, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:4).

The Apostle James also mentions that grace is a gift. In 4:6, "But He giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Peter also writes, "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5:5).

Faith, on the other hand, is never mentioned in the Bible as a gift. Rather, it is acquired. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Faith is man's responsibility—not God's!

When the Lord Jesus healed the Centurion's servant, He marveled at his faith. He said to His followers, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Lk. 7:9). If the Lord Jesus had given the Centurion his faith, certainly He would not have been amazed by it. To illustrate, if I were to give you a hat as a gift, and I later saw you wearing the hat, I would not be amazed and marvel that you had such a fine hat.

Paul points out in 2 Thessalonians 3:2, that all do not have faith. If faith was a gift of God, these people to whom Paul refers could claim an excuse for not believing, their excuse being that God had not given them the faith needful for salvation. But their mouths will be stopped, and they will stand guilty before God because they rejected God's Word as proclaimed in the gospel message. This gospel was preached unto Abraham (Gal. 3:8). It is written that Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Rom. 4:3).

God spoke to Cain, telling what had to be done to be accepted by God. But Cain turned his back on God and refused to follow His will. He rejected God and His word.

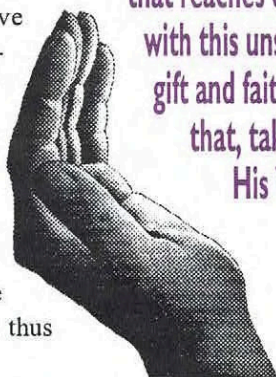
To all the Christ-rejecters, God speaks through the Apostle Jude in verse 11, "Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah." God's grace is available to all, but many reject it for lack of "the obedience of faith (believing God). See Romans 16:26.

The Scriptures themselves are the best commentary on the Bible. It should be clear that the gift that is spoken of in Ephesians 2:8-9 is grace and not faith.

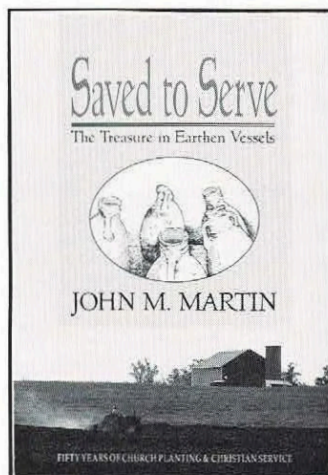
George Varner makes his home in Waco, Texas.

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Is not
grace the hand
that reaches down to us
with this unspeakable
gift and faith the hand
that, taking God at
His Word, simply
receives it?



HOT OFF THE PRESS!



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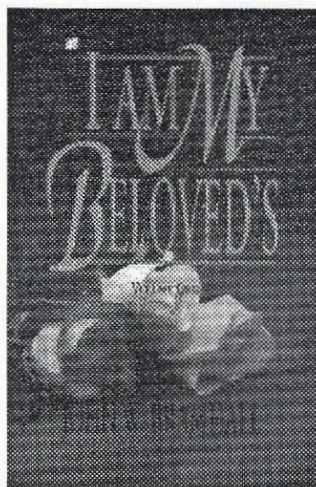
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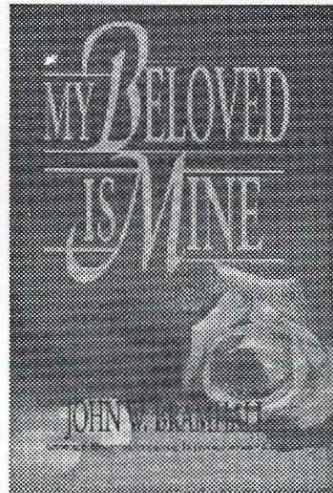
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NO FAULT WITH HIM!

Two fellow travelers were seated together in a railway compartment engaged in earnest conversation of a religious nature. One of them, a sceptic, was evidently trying to excuse his unbelief by expatiating on the various evils which afflict Christendom, detailing with pleasure the hypocrisy and the craft, and the covetousness and divisions, found in the professing Church, and then he pointed to some of the leaders as the most markedly corrupt of all.

In front of them sat a Christian who was compelled to hear all this. He knew the accusations to be true—too true to be concealed from the most charitable mind, so all he could do was to bow his head and bear the deserved reproach. Soon, however, the accuser, anxious to extend the circle of his audience, addressed this fellow passenger in front of him.

"I see you are quick to detect evil," said the Christian, "and you read character pretty well. You have been uncovering here the abominable things that have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. You have spared none, but given all a good measure. Now, I am a Christian and love the Lord Jesus and His people. Not a word shall I offer in defense, but I solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself."

The skeptic was surprised. He seemed almost frightened and sheepishly replied—"Well, no! I couldn't find fault with Him. He was perfect."

"Just so!" said the Christian, "and therefore was my heart attracted to Him, and the more I looked, the more I found I wasn't like Him at all, but only a poor, guilty, sinful man. All the evil which professed followers of His may do cannot turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what He has done, and not on what they are doing."

—Horatius Bonar