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CORNERSTONE

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2020 Vision

Leaving Our First Love

Where Is Our Focus?

A Root of Bitterness

...and more

TO YOU WHO **BELIEVE**, THIS **STONE IS PRECIOUS** · 1 PETER 2:7

“O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”
2 Chron. 20:12, NKJV

When Jehoshaphat received the distressing news that a number of enemy nations were coming against him, he instantly did what every humble believer walking with the Lord would do – he reached for the best weapon he had – prayer. We read that he proclaimed a fast, gathered together others to ask help from the Lord, and then began to pray the promises of God. However, it was not always that way however with Jehoshaphat. Previously, he had made an unwise military alliance with wicked King Ahab (2 Chron. 18-19). Surrounded by the enemy on the battlefield, he barely made it back alive. Had he not cried out to the Lord the ending of the story could have been much different. Soundly rebuked upon his return by the prophet Jehu (19:2), he humbly received the divinely-inspired reprimand and made a full recovery spiritually. He had learned some hard lessons, but his life was turned around to where he had been before, walking in the strength of the Lord (2 Chron. 17). His restoration is a lot like those who upon yielding to the discipline of God, experience His abundant mercy and grace.

But on this occasion, events transpired much differently. Now the enemies were three times as many. The events this time did not come because of a foolish choice but rather it seemed to be a random unfolding of events that mounted against him. Trials sometimes happen that way. Jehoshaphat’s response is telling: *“... for we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us, nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You”*. He had a right perspective on the matter and knew Who to look to for help.

A Clear Perspective

Jehoshaphat’s words in all of this demonstrate what could be called spiritual 2020 vision. In the world of optometry, when someone possesses 2020 vision, they are said to have normal visual acuity measured at a distance of 20 feet. It is considered normal vision because it is neither blurry, nor dyslexic, but clear. But when eyesight is not what it should be, action needs to be taken to correct it. In our spiritual lives, how important it is to have the same clear vision when going through any trying circumstance. Rather than looking elsewhere as Jehoshaphat did on a previous occasion, instead we are to keep our focus on the Lord, fastened

on Him like the crowd in the synagogue at Capernaum. When Peter looked at circumstances around him, he began to sink (Mt. 14:30) and cried out for fear. Instead of succumbing to our surroundings, we are to be like the Psalmist who declared: *“I will lift up my eyes unto the hills – from whence comes my help?”* (incidentally, a question). The statement follows – *“My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth”* (Psa. 121:1). It was not the hills that will bring us the help we need, but instead the One who is beyond those hills, the Lord, much higher and much greater. That’s having the proper eyesight!

How’s Your Eyesight?

So, how is your eyesight? Do you turn to the Lord when your circumstances are greater than we can bear? When the servant of Elisha was fearful of the onslaught of the enemy, Elisha prayed that he would see *“that there was more with us than there are with them”* (2 Kg. 6:16). When he did, the Lord opened the eyes of the servant so that he saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire all around (2 Kg. 6:17). That’s 2020 vision – seeing the army of Him who is invisible.

As we head into a new year – 2020, when so many of us are pressed on every side (2 Cor. 4:8), and when the enemy seems to be coming in like a flood, know that the Lord will indeed raise up a standard against him (Isa. 59:19). Let’s do what it takes to get our “vision” corrected. Let us not forget that there are more with us than there are with them, the same view that Elisha’s servant had in battle and the same clear vision that Jehoshaphat had before he went in and conquered in the Lord. •



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by Mark Kolchin

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TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS • 1 PETER 2:7



Leaving Our First Love

We read in Revelation 2:4-5, “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

Though the Lord commended the church at Ephesus for their stand, their work for Him, and their care regarding the teachers they heeded, He also warned about dire consequences if they did not return to their first love. Revelation 1:20 reveals that the lampstands are the seven churches and the Lord was threatening to remove the Ephesian church if they did not repent. Even the church at Laodicea, as weak it was, was not similarly threatened.

Being encouraged to love one another is appropriate and many scriptures support this important teaching. However, the Lord was not rebuking the Ephesians for a lack of love to each other. Instead He rebuked them for leaving their *first* love. The Greek word translated “*first*” could be translated foremost, chief, or first of all. Many Christians remember their first zeal for the Lord. Their heart was overwhelmed with gratitude and love to God for His great salvation. They recall being evangelistic, sharing the good news with all those around them. Now they honestly admit that their lives are not what they used to be. But is this the first love?

Jesus' words in Mark 12:29-31 suggests an answer. *"And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."*

Notice His use of the words first and second. The first command is to love God with all of our being and ability, and the second is to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Would it be stretching Jesus' words too much to suggest that the first love, the love of God, is the one He means in Revelation 2? According to 1 John 5:2, the evidence that we love our fellow believers is that we love God and keep His commandments.

In Joshua 22:5 Joshua reminded the Israelites, *"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."* Note the separation between loving God and keeping His commandments. Firstly, they were to love Him, and then to walk in His ways, keep His commandments, and serve Him.

*Could it be that the church
in Ephesus was so taken
up with its works that
they had forgotten Who
it was that they served?
Had they left their love
for the LORD in pursuit of
love for other things, even
service for Him?*

Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisees in Luke 11:42 brings a charge that is similar to the one against Ephesus, *"But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."* They were good about tithing and such matters but Jesus pointed out their lack of love for God.

Could it be that the church in Ephesus was so taken up with its works that they had forgotten Who it was that they served? Had they left their love for the Lord in pursuit of love for other things, even service for Him?

Though loving their neighbors, did the believers in Ephesus set aside their love of God and the keeping of His Word? Love for God is the first love that Jesus commanded in Mark 12, and it is the love the Ephesians left. Is the modern church becoming so focused on love for their neighbor that it is setting aside their first love? Is the second commandment being pushed ahead of the first? Some churches have set aside teaching from God's Word that might be unpopular so that they can be more appealing to their neighbors in the world. But our first love must be for God, His Word, and His ways. The Lord Jesus said that it would put us at odds with the world. But when they hate us, remember that they hated Him, too. We must never set aside God's Word to accommodate the world. How can He use or bless a church that does not love Him and keep His Word? This is something for which the Lord may remove a local church. The promise to remove the Ephesian church apparently came to pass since there is not even a city of Ephesus anymore.

Is it possible for Christians to turn away from their love of God, the One Who is gracious and loving to us? We can become so enamored of work for Him that we miss Him altogether. Recently, a man preaching on this passage told the listeners to set aside theological correctness and to be working. If we do not cling to God's Word, we have nothing to guide us. If work for God is our focus, and not Him, we miss out; we leave our first love. Let us pray that our Lord would show us if we have left our love for Him.

*O what an evil heart have I,
So cold, and hard, and blind,
With sin so ready to comply,
And cast my God behind!*

*So apt His mercy to forget,
So soon dissolved in ease,
So false, so full of all deceit,
And desperate wickedness!*

*What shall I do, my God to love,
My loving God to praise!
The length, and breadth, and height to prove
And depth of sovereign grace! •*

Endnotes:

1. Charles Wesley, *O What An Evil Heart Have I*



Herm and his wife, Ruth, attend Fellowship Bible Chapel in Fort Myers, Florida where he is involved in ministry of God's Word through speaking and Bible Study. Herm retired from the nuclear power industry in 2016, where he worked in training and engineering. Herm and Ruth have five children, five grandchildren (one with the LORD), and five "adopted" grandchildren.

**by Herman
Klingenger**

Where Is Our

Focus?



The ancient Greek maxim “*Know thyself*” is elevated to unprecedented heights in this narcissistic age. Numerous social media platforms aid fallen human beings’ self-absorption by advertising their vain self-worth. Sin turns them inward, exalting them to heights reminiscent of Satan’s ploy to become like gods (Gen. 3:5; Isa. 14:12-23). Sadly, this man-centered spirit also infects the church, as seen in man-centered preaching and music asserting human greatness. We must regularly ensure that we are looking to the Lord – our obedience to His commands demonstrating our love for Him (Jn. 14:15). Yet self-examination requires caution: it must be balanced by the believers’ position in Christ, while not degenerating into obsessive introspection. In contrast, careful self-scrutiny will produce humility and greater dependence on the Lord.

Gazing On The Lord In Glory

The Scottish preacher, Robert Murray M’Cheyne wisely advised: “*Learn much of the Lord Jesus. For every look at*

yourself, take ten looks at Christ. He is altogether lovely.”¹ John Newton of “Amazing Grace” fame agreed, writing: “*One glance of Jesus will convey more effectual assistance than poring upon our own heart for a month.*”² They understood that “*our life is hidden with Christ in God*” (Col. 3:1-4); accordingly, they knew that maintaining a balanced view of themselves required a looking unto the glorified Lord Jesus. Another historic writer counselled:

*“Cultivate the habit of fixing your eye more simply on Jesus Christ, and try to know more of the fulness there is laid up in Him for every one of His believing people. Do not be always poring down over the imperfections of your own heart, and dissecting your own besetting sins. Look up. Look more to your risen Head in heaven, and try to realize more than you do that the Lord Jesus not only died for you, but that He also rose again, and that He is ever living at God’s right hand as your Priest, your Advocate, and your Almighty Friend.”*³

God is well-aware of our fallen condition. Psalm 139 affirms His omniscience, while at the same time, resting in the fact that He accepts believers because of His gracious work in Christ. Consequently, David calls on His Maker to search, cleanse, and guide him, saying: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps. 139:23–24). His saving work through Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension assures that believers are received by God; in fact, positionally He considers them already seated in heaven (Eph. 2:4-7).

Christian Focus

The saints’ attention must be on Christ, who justified them, thereby giving them a righteous standing before God (Rom. 3:23-26). Romans intentionally teaches justification first, followed by sanctification, for our position empowers our practice (3:19-5:11; 6-8). Those who are born again through faith in Christ are new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17) and are perpetually viewed as “accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6). God’s love, therefore, never wavers towards His people. He sees us “in Christ” (1 Pet. 5:14; Gal. 3:26-28) and we are encircled by His perfect love. As a classic hymn avers:

*“So near, so very near to God,
I cannot nearer be;
Yet in the person of His Son
I am as near as He.*

*So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;
The love where with He loves the Son:
Such is His love to me!”⁴*

Living in this “circle of God’s favor, circle of the Father’s love,”⁵ frees us from slavish fear. We are not serving in order to justify ourselves; instead, our new life flows out of our standing in Christ.

Proper Self-Examination

The Bible teaches self-examination, but one must do it biblically. Some principles will help safeguard our spiritual scrutiny:

Self-examination in View of the Lord’s Supper

The injunction to examine oneself is most clearly expressed in connection with the Lord’s supper (1 Cor. 11:28). Believers must approach the breaking of bread knowing that Jesus is their Lord and they are coming in obedience to Him. They are remembering Him in His person and work, while also proclaiming His death. He purchased them by shedding His blood to be His people and serve Him forever. Meanwhile, they also declare their submission to His ongoing work to write His commands on their hearts and minds. He is God and they are His forgiven people (compare Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; and Heb. 8:8-13). As David Gooding once said: “We must be free in mind, undistracted by any extraneous thing, so that we can have business with the Lord and say, ‘Yes, Lord, even as

you died to forgive me, and rose to empower me, as I take this cup, I stand with you. Please carry on and write your laws on my heart, Lord, and write your laws on my mind.’ We can’t afford to be distracted by all sorts of irrelevances in those sacred moments, because that would be to go counter to the very basis, and the whole point of, the gospel.”⁶ The Christian life is God-centered, not human-focused.

Self-examination in View of Christ’s Continuing Work

We remember that we approach God through the only Mediator, His Son (1 Tim. 2:5). When we discover sins that we have committed we flee to our Advocate, who cleanses our consciences – what Christ pictured in the feet-washing of John 13 – and restores unimpeded fellowship with God (1 Jn. 2:1-2). Our prayers, praises, and worship are offered through Christ as the High Priest (Heb. 4-7). Approaching the Almighty is entirely dependent on His person and ongoing heavenly work. Looking at ourselves apart from Him is a recipe for alternating depression and self-deceiving pride (Rom. 12:16).

Self-examination in View of Christ’s Work in Me

As we discover sin and failure in ourselves, we repentantly seek the Lord’s restorative help (1 Jn. 1:5-10). We realize that without Him we are - and can do - nothing (Jn. 15:5). We walk in His Spirit as we read the Word, pray, and let Him work on us through the gifts and fellowship of the local church.

Proper self-examination produces humility, because we discover that we have not yet arrived at perfection; rather we are completely dependent on the Lord’s grace (Prov. 26:12; Phil. 3:12-16). It also changes our attitudes toward others, impelling us to selfless service like our Savior (Phil. 2). By looking at ourselves in Christ we will be free to enjoy and serve the Almighty in ways that please Him. May God help readers to examine themselves before the Lord, so that they might enjoy His work in them more and more. •

Endnotes

1. R. M. M’Cheyne, Works, Vol. 1. (New York: Robert Carter, 1848), 220.
- 2 John Newton, Works, Vol. 1. (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1824), 696.
- 3 J. C. Ryle, The Upper Room. (London: William Hunt and Company, 1888), 229–230.
- 4 Horatius Bonar, “A mind at perfect peace with God.”
- 5 J. Denham Smith, “Rise, my soul, behold ‘tis Jesus.”
- 6 David Gooding, Major Themes in 1 Corinthians. (Belfast, NI, UK: Myrtlefield House, 2019), 6; electronic version: <https://www.myrtlefieldhouse.com/cmsfiles/transcripts/Major-Themes-in-1-Corinthians.pdf>



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by Keith Keyser



GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS *Lamentations 3:23*

Psalms 37:23 reads, *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delighteth in his way.”* My father grew up in East St. Louis, but moved to Michigan during the early 1900s. Through the faithful witness of someone in the local Baptist church, he trusted Christ as Savior. Aspiring to become a preacher, he left his work at Dodge Motor Company in Detroit, and enrolled in an eastern Pennsylvania seminary. Though there were many fine believers there, there were others that said that the blood of Christ had no atoning value. Therefore, he left and moved to Tennessee to attend college in Jefferson City. It was there he met Mary Emma Sharp, the daughter of a Baptist preacher whom he eventually married.

Dad was greatly impacted by the imminent return of Christ, which in turn influenced me. Through his own study, he saw the truth of the weekly Lord’s Supper, the priesthood of all believers, and other NT church truths, long before he had any contact with those who practiced these principles. One Sunday afternoon, when I was just nine years old, my father spoke to me about the urgency of trusting Christ as my Savior. Convicted of my spiritual need and the urgency to respond before the Lord returned, I also trusted the Lord

and was later baptized. The biblical passage God used in my life at that time was I Thessalonians 4:13-17.

At the close of World War II, we moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee where Dad was offered a principal’s position in a rural school. Little did I realize, that this would lay the foundation for my future work in education. Through all these events, we could trace the hand of God at work in our lives.

In 1952, I graduated from high school and began college at Middle Tennessee State. I took biology and English classes and was soon offered a lab assistant position. Around that time, we heard of special tent meetings conducted by T.B. Gilbert, an itinerant Bible teacher. The gospel was powerfully presented each night as well as solid bible teaching about God’s pattern for the local church. Notable people were present at these gatherings including a state congressman in the U. S. House of Representatives and

others who had come to know the Lord. It made quite an impression on me of the gospel's power to save and the importance of observing NT principles.

I was in ROTC during my college years and upon graduation in 1956, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant, serving in the army Medical Service Corps for more than two years, first in Japan, then in Korea. While in Japan, the battalion commander assigned me to the position of Company Commander of an ambulance company. This was a major period of testing since I could not find any fellowship with believers but God faithfully preserved me.

"I find it as difficult to understand a scientist who does not acknowledge the presence of a superior rationality behind the existence of the universe as it is to comprehend a theologian who would deny the advances of science... there are those who argue that the universe evolved out of a random process, but what random process could produce the brain of a man or the system of the human eye? To be forced to believe only one conclusion --- that everything in the universe happened by chance --- would violate the very objectivity of science itself." - Dr. Werner Von Braun

When I returned home from being overseas, I taught a seventh-grade class for four years in the Murfreesboro school system, followed by four years as principal of Mitchell Neilson Elementary School, a position I held until 1966. It was during that tenure, that one of my associates who was teaching an aerospace course, told me that Dr. Werner Von Braun, an eminent German scientist, was coming to the college as a guest lecturer. He had come to the States with other scientists after the war, having worked for Hitler in developing Germany's V1 and V2 rocket program. It was quite an experience for me to meet a person with such lofty credentials in the scientific community, as well as to hear later of his testimony of a personal Creator. God does not leave Himself without a witness (Acts 14:17).

Two big events occurred in my life during my time as principal at Mitchell Neilson. I married Cora Jean Blair in December, 1960, whom I had known for some time. The other was when a work associate challenged me to pursue doctoral studies. Because the GI bill had come through at that time, as well as an assistantship at the University of Alabama, we could afford to pursue this endeavor. My wife Jean was offered a teaching position and the Lord provided us a nice home at a very reasonable expense. Again, we could see the hand of the Lord ordering our steps - first by being challenged to go further in my professional work and then in directing our way, providing for our needs to be met. At that time, I committed to make it a regular practice to wake early each morning and spend an extended time in

prayer and Bible reading. Without question, this exercise is the key to spiritual growth in the Christian life.

After completing my studies, I taught at the University of Alabama - Birmingham. My focus was science education (teaching elementary teachers how to teach science), first as an associate professor and then as an assistant professor. While at UAB, I chaired a team of fellow associates to further develop the science teaching capabilities of teachers throughout the State of Alabama. School systems that initiated this program saw science scores improve significantly. We give all the glory to the Lord for the abilities He gives His people. To be a further witness in the academic environment, it was my regular practice with all my classes,



Dr. Werner Von Braun (grey)

even on the graduate level, to insist that there was no bad language or suggestive jokes in the classroom. The words of Philippians 1:21 have always been a guiding verse in our testimony for the Lord, "For me to live is Christ..."

The Lord opened many other doors for Jean and I to serve Him. For many years, both in Tuscaloosa and then in Birmingham, we held a home Bible study for young adults. Both of them paved the way for the Lord to establish a New Testament assembly. Today many of these people have gone on for the Lord and are in fellowship in various meetings in Alabama. We enjoyed happy fellowship in Alabama, before relocating in 2005 to Chambersburg, PA to be near family.

The Lord has taught us many lessons in life: be available to serve Him at any time; go deeper in our walk with Christ; and always give Him the glory. We are thankful for the reassuring words that we are "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13-14). We are also thankful for the simplicity of the Gospel, "He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn. 5:12). •



Editor's Note: In 2004 Dr. Underwood, received the Crown Circle Award as the 106th member from the National Congress of Aviation and Space Education for evidence of extraordinary accomplishment in a leadership role in Aerospace education. Stephen and his wife Jean are in fellowship at Chambersburg Gospel Chapel in Chambersburg, PA.

by **Steven Underwood**

Everywhere I look across the church landscape, I see Christians seething with bitterness. It seems to be an epidemic, especially among the younger generations. These hurting souls are nursing wrongs, sometimes old, sometimes new, sometimes real, sometimes perceived. Frequently, these wounded believers are not looking for an apology. They have already received one, or two, or three, and that was not good enough for them. They are seeking to exact some kind of penance or worse, vengeance.

that I was seeking the wrong person's honor. I was seeking my own, not the Lord's. I was not seeking what He wanted in the painful circumstances, but what I wanted.

I decided to let go and let God. I focused on the improvement of my own character and let God worry about dealing with those who had wronged me. I decided that since their sins in the matter were not gross iniquity but petty human failures, I would just overlook them and wait for our differences to be resolved with perfect wisdom at the judgment seat

A Root of Bitterness



Now I can empathize with those who are struggling with bitterness. I had my own titanic struggle with this beast. It robbed me of sleep. It undermined my productivity. It hurt my relationships. It consumed me with the fires of anger and bitterness. The indignation I felt seemed justified. I had a right to be angry. Most of the charges leveled against me were completely false, based on misguided understanding. And those that were true were both hypocritical and exaggerated and blown out of proportion. Those that accused me were guilty of the same or similar things, often in worse degree.

But after several years of seeking my own vindication, seeking to see things resolved to my satisfaction, I had zero tangible gains to show despite my passion and efforts. There was no noteworthy change in any involved party. I began to sense the spiritual emptiness of my course. Soon I realized

of Christ. At that time every point of contention will be resolved in absolute righteousness. I will be corrected where I was wrong—with God's gracious correction. They will be corrected where they were wrong—with God's gracious correction. Absolute righteousness will be upheld, and all parties will be satisfied.

Eventually, God wrought wonderful healing and restoration with all parties involved. Some of them came to me and confessed their wrongs. Some of them never did. Looking back with twenty-twenty hindsight, I think some of these people never had a conscience that they had wronged me. They were merely standing for what they believed, at the time, was right, and they did so beset by the same common weaknesses that beset all believers everywhere. If I held them accountable for their weaknesses, God would hold me accountable for the same weaknesses manifested in my own life.

This brings us to the only resolution for bitterness that God honors: walking in love and forgiveness. We are obligated to forgive as Christ forgave us (Eph. 4:32). Christ loves us and receives us with all of our weaknesses and failures. We have an obligation to love and receive our fellow believers despite their weaknesses and failures. He doesn't hold our shortcomings against us. We should not hold believers' shortcomings against them. The discretion of a man defers his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression (Prov. 19:11). Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8). Forgive your brother seventy times seven times (Mt. 18:22).

How do we know that we are walking in love? We manifest longsuffering in difficult relationships and continue to walk in kindness. We do not seek what we want in painful situations but what God wants. We are not provoked by people despite their provocative actions. We do not impute evil to others, even when things look sketchy. We bear with every hard-to-bear situation. We believe the best

in every difficult situation rather than the worst. We hope the best in every difficult situation rather than hoping for retribution. We endure every difficult person and their difficult ways (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

Why must we try to walk this way? Because this is how Jesus operates. This is who Jesus is. And He wants us to be conformed to His amazing character. When Jesus' disciples forsook Him at the cross, He did not hold their feet over the fire for their failures and betrayal, requiring some form of evangelical penance. He knew that pain and shame were already beating them to death. (Such is the case for all who are truly godly.) He merely encouraged them in their gift and call. "If you love me, feed my sheep." While there is a place to employ strong reproofs and strong measures with the rebelliously wicked, we must not give their medicine to the weak. The weak need encouragement and understanding. The Lord's gracious actions with His wayward disciples was not winking at sin and wrongdoing. It was dealing with sin in such a spirit and manner as is most likely to make a positive difference.

Make no mistake. Bitterness is dangerous. The Bible regards it as a spiritual problem that is as dangerous in the spiritual realm as gangrene is in the medical realm. If the part of the body that is infected is not quickly and summarily dealt with, it spreads destruction to the body around it. Likewise, not only does bitterness defile the person who is nurturing

it in the garden of their heart, but it spreads bitterness and anger to many folks around them (Heb. 12:15).

If we are struggling with bitterness, we must surrender the matter immediately and entirely to the Lord. We must allow ourselves to be washed with His love and His forgiveness through the working of His Word and His Spirit. If we will not let God work love and forgiveness in our heart, then we are rejecting the deep cleansing grace of Christ. If we refuse to forgive our brethren, we cannot be forgiven ourselves. This is the clear meaning of the parable of the servant who refused to forgive one hundred pence though he had been forgiven of a thousand talents (Mt. 18:23-35). We are setting ourselves up for a spiritual train wreck.

Let Jesus turn your bitterness to sweetness. •



Lee W. Brainard was born again in 1978 and discovered NT principles from reading the Bible on his own. He was introduced to NT assemblies in 1983 and currently fellowships at Harvey Gospel Chapel in Harvey, North Dakota. He is commended to the work of the Lord and has authored several books on prophetic themes. Lee and his wife Nita have four children, two of whom are missionaries. He also maintains www.soothkeep.info

by **Lee Brainard**

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FOUNDATIONS

of the faith

THE IMPECCABILITY OF CHRIST: WAS CHRIST ABLE TO SIN?



Orthodox theologians have universally agreed that Jesus Christ never committed any sin. He was sinless, blameless, and holy. The sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ is an absolute necessity for the efficacy of His penal, substitutionary death and is a decisive proof of His deity. Any moral failure on the part of Christ would compromise His deity and nullify His finished work on the cross. While few evangelical Bible teachers doubt His sinlessness, some have questioned whether Christ was *able* to sin?

Those who argue that Christ was able to sin assert that He could only have been truly human if He were able to sin. If He were unable to sin, then He was also unable to be tempted. Therefore, His humanity would not be the kind of humanity that would be able to truly sympathize with man.

What is Peccability and Impeccability?

Bible scholars use the terms “*peccability*” and “*impeccability*” when speaking of Christ’s ability or His inability to sin. But there is more to the debate than the ability to sin; there is also the question of the nature of the temptations which Christ experienced. Scripture teaches that Christ did not sin and that He did not possess a sin nature. Therefore, whatever temptations came to Him would be from without and not from within. The Bible insists that Christ can intimately sympathize with us in our trials, for Christ Himself was truly tempted. We read, “*For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*” (Heb. 4:15).

Although Christ was tempted in His (holy) human nature, we must never forget that it was impossible for the Lord Jesus Christ to sin as a divine Person. Since the incarnate Son of God was impeccable, every attack of the evil one would be completely turned back. Although Christ was tempted in all points as we are, His triumph over each temptation fully demonstrated and proved that He was both Lord and Christ.

Was the Temptation of Christ Genuine?

While Christ in His humanity was subject to temptations from without, His divine nature was fully sufficient to resist each of those temptations. This has led some to suggest that the temptations of Christ were not real. This notion must be completely rejected. Clearly, the temptations that Christ experienced were real! The wilderness temptations of Christ, after fasting for forty days, describe temptations which none other has ever endured. Moreover, the temptations to which Christ was subjected were of a stronger nature to Christ because He had a much greater sensitivity to sin than other men.

The final test of the reality of His temptations is found in the example of His struggle in Gethsemane and His death on the cross. The cross was undoubtedly His greatest trial, for we hear Him in prayer saying, “*Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done’...and being in agony, He prayed more earnestly...*” (Luke 22:42,44). There is a divine mystery in these things which the human mind struggles to fully understand. The Scottish expositor Alexander MacLaren (1826-1910) writes:

*“His will never wavered but remained supreme over the natural recoil of His human nature from pain and death. If He had not felt the cross to be a dread, it had been no sacrifice. If He allowed the dread to penetrate His will, He would have been no Savior.”*¹

Though uniquely human and fully divine, the Lord Jesus Christ, without divesting Himself of any of His divine attributes, was sorely tested and “*became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*” (Phil. 2:8).

The Purpose of Temptation

The Holy Spirit led the Lord Jesus Christ into the wilderness to be tested. He was not tempted so that the Father could learn anything about the Son. Christ’s temptation was for others. Jesus was tested so that every creature in heaven and on earth, whether angel or demon, might see that Jesus Christ is Lord and Victor. The temptation would expose Satan, the “*god of this age,*” as a defeated and dethroned foe. Christ was not tempted by Satan to see if He could sin, but to demonstrate and to prove that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, the Savior of the world. The Lord Jesus Christ met every test and every temptation of Satan with divine power and authority, thus declaring that He is Lord of all.

Impeccability and the Omnipotence of Christ

The hypostatic union of the divine and the human in one Person is a mystery beyond the full comprehension of the

finite human mind. We bow in wonder before a God whose “*ways are higher than our ways and whose thoughts higher than our thoughts*” (Isa. 55:9). Although Christ is one divine Person who possessed both human and divine natures, nevertheless, in Scripture these natures are distinguished. In His earthly ministry, sometimes Christ spoke from out of His human nature, and so we hear Him say, “*I thirst;*” or in the Garden of Gethsemane “*not My will but Thy will be done.*” Yet at other times, we discern the divine aspect of Christ. We hear Him cry out in a loud voice upon the cross, “*It is finished.*” We must never mix nor confound the two natures of Christ. Moreover, and most importantly, in the person of Christ the human nature always yielded to the divine nature. The human nature never acted on its own. Thus, the divine and more powerful nature functioned in such a way as to make it impossible for Christ to be able to sin. Respected theologian Dr. John Walvoord writes:

*“In the person of Christ, however, the human will was always subservient to the divine will and could never act independently... The omnipotence of Christ makes it impossible for Him to sin. Peccability always implies weakness on the part of the one tempted; he is weak to the extent that he can sin. On the part of Christ, this is out of the question.”*²

Conclusion

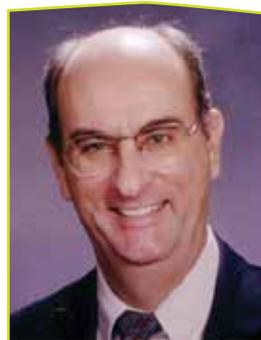
When Christians look deeply into the person of Christ, they recognize immediately, like Moses, that they are on holy ground. We bow reverently at the grandeur and greatness of the eternal Son of God. Yet at the same time, our love for Christ compels us to seek the most biblical and Christ honoring view of these holy things. We have tried to show that any explanation of the moral character of Christ apart from His deity falls short of the truth of Scripture and opens the door to a host of unprofitable questions. May we ever uphold the sinlessness, the impeccability, and the omnipotence of Christ, for the doctrines of the Person of Christ and His finished work depend upon it. •

Endnotes

1. Alexander MacLaren, *Expositions Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), p. 249
2. John Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1989), p. 150, 151

Further Reading—

John Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1969)



David Dunlap is president of Cornerstone Magazine. He has been a full-time worker for over thirty years. He is in fellowship at Land O’ Lakes Bible Chapel, in Lutz, FL. He and his wife Faith live in Land O’ Lakes, FL.

by David Dunlap

The Emancipation Proclamation

“For he that is dead is freed from sin.” (Rom. 6:7)

The Emancipation Proclamation, issued on January 1, 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln, declared all slaves in the Southern Confederacy to be free.¹ However it was dependent upon the North winning the on-going Civil War. In Romans 6:7 we have the believer’s Emancipation Proclamation grounded upon our identification with Christ’s victorious death and resurrection.

Possessing an indwelling sin nature² is the common human condition, resulting from Adam’s fall. Just as a child of a slave was a slave, so we are born slaves of sin because our parents were as well. David, a man after God’s own heart said, *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me”* (Ps. 51:5).³ The flesh is the cruel task master of humanity, treating all as common slaves.

But all things have become new for the believer (2 Cor. 5:17). Our old man, whose identity was in Adam, was a slave of indwelling sin. However, this old man was crucified with Christ. Romans 6:6 reads, *“knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”* Through our identification with Christ’s death, sin has been dethroned and we have been set free.

Now indwelt by the risen Christ, believers have a new identity in Him (Gal. 2:20). Our old identity in Adam was under the tyranny of sin. Our new one in Christ has been liberated. Though we still have a sinful nature, it is no longer our master. We have been redeemed from its power, entering into a new relationship of adversary.

Amalek is an Old Testament type of the flesh. He was the grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:12), who sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a pot of lentil stew (Gen. 25:34). Giving in to fleshly desires, Esau symbolized those who prioritize temporary physical rewards over eternal, spiritual ones. A few hundred years later, shortly after their redemption from Egypt, Israel arrived in Rephidim where there was no water. Hearing the people’s complaints, the Lord instructed Moses to strike the rock in Horeb once, bringing water for the people. This rock represents Christ dying once for our sins (1 Cor 10:4; Heb. 9:28), so that He could be the author of eternal salvation to all who believe (Heb. 5:9). The water typifies the Holy Spirit given by Christ at Pentecost and to every believer since at their conversion (Jn. 7:37-39; Acts 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Jn. 2:27).

“Then came Amalek” (Ex. 17:8, KJV). Surprising them from the rear. Preying on the stragglers, the weak, the tired (Deut. 25:17-19). When did Amalek attack? Then! After the striking of the rock and the provision of water. Soon after their salvation some Christians are surprised when they are suddenly confronted with an attack by the flesh. They ask *“How can this happen? I’m a believer now.”* Some begin to doubt whether they were ever saved. On the contrary, war has been declared because they are saved. Not appreciating its dethronement, the flesh fights with the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). It is our enemy within.

Israel won the battle that day with Joshua leading the fight below with the sword, a symbol of God’s Word, while Moses stood interceding on the top of the hill, his hands outstretched to heaven in prayer with the rod of God, a symbol of God’s power (Ex. 17:9-13). Similarly, it is gazing upon Christ through His Word and prayer (2 Cor. 3:18) that we gain increasing victories in our battle with sin, becoming more conformed to Christ’s image. When Moses’ hands were tired, Amalek prevailed but when Moses kept his hands up, Israel prevailed. Similarly, we must depend upon Christ’s resurrection power for victory, stretching our hearts upwards to heaven to the glorified Christ at the right hand of God.

But it was just one battle! Amalek would be back because the war was not over. In Exodus 17:16 we read, *“Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”* Israel had continual battles with Amalek over their history (Num. 14:45; Jdg. 3:13; 6:3). It culminated with Haman’s - a descendent of the Amalekite kings (Est. 3:1) - attempt to kill all the Jews. Similarly, each daily victory over sin is just one battle. The war will not cease in this life. Our Amalek is an ever-present foe until either death or the rapture.

The Lord told King Saul to attack Amalek and spare nothing. However, in disobedience Saul allowed their king to live and spared the spoils. After telling Saul it would cost him his kingdom, Samuel hacked King Agag to pieces (1 Sam. 15). Similarly, we are not to make provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. Instead we are to feed our inner man, our new nature that desires Christ (Rom 13:14). There is nothing redeemable about our flesh. Instead as we submit to

the Spirit, He mortifies (puts to death) or subdues the evil desires of the flesh.

In Exodus 17:14 we read, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." The Lord promised Moses and Joshua that someday He would remove Amalek from the face of the earth forever. Similarly, our sin nature is condemned. Under the sentence of death. After describing his struggle with sin (Rom. 7), Paul victoriously shouts, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Our sin nature is under condemnation. We are not. Our new life in Christ has set us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). "Denny explains, 'It is subjection to the law of sin and death which involves condemnation, emancipation from it leaves no places for condemnation'."⁴

In Romans 8:3 we read, "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh." God sent His Son on account of or in connection to sin. The holy Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh (man with no indwelling sin) to die for the sins of those under the dominion of sin. God condemned sin through His Son's death. He gave sin a death sentence, serving notice that its days are numbered, while cancelling its power over us, setting us free.

*He breaks the power of canceled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood availed for me.⁵*

The story is told of a Native American who came to Christ. He said, "There are now two dogs in me." He was asked, "which one wins?" He replied, "the one I feed." Having been set free, deliverance from the power of sin has been provided. Daily experiencing our freedom in Christ comes as we are guided by His Spirit (Rom. 8:4). Furthermore, final victory will be ours in that future day when we are finally free from the presence of sin. The death of sin. Glory to God!

*Glorious freedom, wonderful freedom,
No more in chains of sin I repine!
Jesus the glorious Emancipator,
Now and forever He shall be mine.⁶ •*

Endnotes:

1. <https://guides.loc.gov/emancipation-proclamation>
2. Also referred to as the flesh or sin
3. All references are in the NKJV unless otherwise indicated
4. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995)
5. O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing, Charles Wesley
6. Glorious Freedom, Haldor Lillenas

by **George Ferrier**

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Report: Bathed in Prayer & Centered on the Word: How God Led Us to Begin a Community Bible Study

Recently retired with our five children scattered over many states, my wife Kathy and I wanted to be used for God's glory in whatever time He gives us. To live in Florida was always our dream but after a few years of praying for the Lord's leading, He opened the doors for us to return to South Jersey, where we were originally from and had lived for many years. As doors continually opened for our return there, my skepticism and reluctance to go back to a colder climate gradually diminished. The house we found was in a fifty-five and older development and was well over our price range. But after much prayer, we met a few believers at a diner, prayed about the property, and called the realtor with our offer. It was considerably less than the asking price, but it was the limit of what we could afford. The realtor sounded stunned at the offer, so I quickly followed up with, "We are not trying to beat the sellers down but this is the most we can afford. We have prayed about it and know if it is the Lord's will, it will be accepted; if not, that's ok, we'll find the place He wants us to find."

Later, When the realtor showed us the property, we had the opportunity to sit in the living room of our potential home and share the saving gospel of Jesus Christ to our agent for more than fifteen minutes. When I mentioned the Lord as we made the offer, she knew clearly where we were coming from. Without hearing any further word from her, we flew back to Florida. The following day while attending meeting, I received a text message to call our agent. She sounded astonished and said, "The sellers have accepted your offer exactly as presented." "Praise the Lord," I said! Reality was now sinking in that we would be leaving our Florida dream. But we remained steadfast in our desire to serve the Lord wherever and however He wanted.

Once we were settled in our new home, we met a few neighbors and asked if they would be interested in a home Bible study. Amazingly, a third of them responded positively. Our first meeting was intended to only be a planning meeting. However, since I truly believe the Lord's coming is close, I felt the need to cover the gospel as clearly as possible and assure the group that the final authority was God's Word, not mine. Not knowing where those in attendance stood spiritually, the meeting was very interesting to say the least. With about 6 to 8 people willing to start, we were feeling additional confirmation that this move was certainly the Lord's will.

The group selected "Salvation and Eternal Security," and due to the depth and importance of the topic, (with many "rabbit holes" along the way), it continued for about ten weeks. With each Monday night, the numbers increased. By the end of the first study topic, we had registered over thirty-

two attendees. The group is quite a diverse group including saved, unsaved, Jewish, Catholic, and even a neighbor living in one of the "socially accepted," alternative lifestyles. Again, more confirmation from the Lord that He was leading us in this pursuit.

One night, after prayer but before I started the study, someone in the group began asking questions which opened the flood gates to a night of questions. The night was extremely beneficial; far more than I realized. Over the week, I was told by one in the group that one of the ladies had accepted the Lord. I was thrilled. During the next study, I announced the great news to the group. The new believer grabbed her Bible, open it and said, "August 5, 2019, at 7:05pm, I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior!" It was at that moment, I realized she was saved during our 6:30-7:30pm, Monday night study!

Looking back, I was concerned that we never got to our planned study that night, but remembered that, "interruptions can be divine appointments," as was the case this night. After this profession of faith in Jesus Christ, we have clearly seen God's hand in moving us here. We also see clearly that the harvest is ripe, and that Day is fast approaching. May we all say with the prophet Isaiah, "here I am; send me" (Isa. 6:8b).

Back in 1980, when my wife and I were saved, we listened to a gospel singer by the name of Keith Green. Keith is now with the Lord but many of his songs were cries (perhaps, more accurately pleas), for the Body of Christ to do more. The words from one of his songs have always spoken to me over the years and convicted me. From the song "Asleep in the Light," one of the lines says "The church just can fight, 'cause it's asleep in the light! How can you be so dead, when you've been so well fed? Jesus rose from the grave, and you! You can't even get out of bed. Jesus rose from the grave, and you! You can't even get out of bed!"

May these words never apply to us as the Lord continues to draw all men to His Son. •



Jim and Kathy Dougherty were both saved by the grace of God on January 12, 1980. They are in fellowship at Linwood Gospel Chapel and prior to their move back to NJ, were in fellowship at Central Bible Chapel in Tampa, Florida. Jim and Kathy have 5 children and 11 grandchildren.

by James Dougherty

ISSUES *and* ANSWERS

"Search The Scriptures..." John 5:39

Question: When did the Church begin?

Isaiah prophesied that the coming Messiah would be a "light to the Gentiles" and bring "salvation to the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6). In the New Testament, Simeon having been promised by the Spirit that he would see the Messiah before his death, recognized that the Child Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy (Lk. 2:26-32). Though both Isaiah and Simeon understood that the Messiah would bring salvation to both Jews and Gentiles, they knew nothing of the Church. The Bible classifies the Church as a mystery (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:9). In Colossians 1:26 we read that it is "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints."¹ Though always part of God's eternal purposes, a mystery was a truth concealed in the Old Testament but **now** made known by revelation after Christ's resurrection. The Church, a previously hidden truth began after His resurrection and ascension. The Greek word *ekklēsia* means an assembly, those called out to a gathering. The Church has been called out to gather together around the Lord Jesus Christ, the ascended glorified Son.

In its first mention, Christ prophesied in Matthew 16:18, "I **will** build My church," speaking of it in the future tense. Though hearing the Lord's words, the disciples would not understand the significance of this statement until after Christ's ascension to heaven. The Lord would later tell them in the upper room that He was going back to His Father and would send them another Comforter (Jn. 16:7). Then just before His ascension, He affirmed that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days (Acts 1:5).

The baptism of the Spirit spiritually unites believers to other members of Christ's body (the Church) as well as uniting them to Christ our Head. Both the universal Church and individual believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). The Lord told His disciples, "the Spirit of truth... you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (Jn. 14:17). Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit dwelt with them, with the birth of the Church He would now indwell them. In the interim, they were to wait in Jerusalem because it was only after the Spirit's baptism with His accompanying power and spiritual gifts that they could effectively serve Christ (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8).

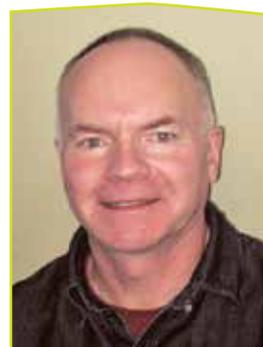
Ten days later, the Holy Spirit came at the Feast of Pentecost, indwelling Christ's disciples and baptizing them into the body of Christ. Those that believed that day received the baptism of the Spirit as well, initiating the Church with Jewish believers from all over the known world (Acts 2:1-41). Soon, there were Samaritans who believed (Acts 8); then Gentiles like Cornelius and his household were saved as well (Acts 10-11). As Peter says in Acts 11:15-16, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them (Gentiles), as upon us (Jews) at the beginning (Pentecost)." Since then, everyone who places their faith in Christ is immediately indwelt by the Spirit who baptizes them permanently into the body of Christ.

The mystery of the Church is not that Gentiles would be saved through the Messiah – that was revealed to Isaiah in the Old Testament. Rather the mystery was that the Church is an organism, one new man comprised of Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14-15). It is a distinct body, separate from Israel and the nations. Christ has broken down the previous barriers. Gentile and Jewish believers are now united together through, and in Christ. The completion of the Church or what is referred to as the "fullness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25) will commence the rapture when the Lord comes for His bride to take her home to heaven. •

Endnotes:

1. All references are in the NKJV

If you have a question for this column please submit it to gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org



George Ferrier is a commended full-time worker who fellowships at Bridlewood Bible Chapel in Ottawa, ON. In addition to itinerant preaching and teaching in North America and overseas, he is a regular contributor to Choice Cleanings Calendar. He is on the board of Cornerstone Magazine Inc. and also serves as assistant editor.

by George Ferrier

News & Notices



Northeast 26 Below

January 17 - 19, 2020
Camp-Of-The-Woods,
106 Downey Rd, Speculator, NY

Christian Ramirez is the invited speaker with the theme: *Break the Mold*. For more info see CMML.us/ne26below2020 or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

Jersey Shore Inter-Assembly Conference

January 25, 2020

Bethany Bible Chapel, Toms River, NJ

Chris Schroeder (MI) will be the speaker. He will be speaking on "Reach Your World". It will held at Bethany Bible Chapel in the Silvertown section of Toms River and will run from 2 - 5pm. It is sponsored by three assemblies: Bethany, Bethel, (Red Bank) and Fifth Ave Chapel in Belmar. For more information, go to the Bethany Bible Chapel app or their website at bethanybiblechapel.us or email them at bethanybiblechapelNJ@gmail.com.

Reaching Higher

February 7 - 9, 2020

CMML Guest Home,

2751 18th Ave, Wall Township, NJ

Steve Price is the invited speaker with the theme: *The Church in the 21st Century*. For more information see CMML.us/reachinghigher2020 or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

69th Annual SouthEastern Workers Conference

February 20 - 22, 2020

Preston Gospel Chapel

2931 Preston Road, Maxton, NC

The speakers are Bob Brown, Steve Price, and Ali Farhardi. The topic is "Reaching the Lost and Protecting the Saints in Today's Culture." For information and registration contact Matt Bowman at mattbowman3@yahoo.com or visit SEWC@info.com.

Midwest 26 Below

February 21 - 23, 2020

Hidden Acres Christian Center,

3837 Union Ave., Dayton, IA

Jerry Mattix is the invited speaker with the theme: *Be a Disciple. Make a Disciple*. For more information see CMML.us/mw26below2020 or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

Israel Tour

February 24 - March 9, 2020

We have tentatively set aside dates for our next Israel trip which is a teaching tour of the Biblical sites that we come across in our travels. We will also visit the Assembly in Nazareth and share the Breaking of Bread together. Final pricing is being determined as well as the port of departure. Look for more information in the months ahead. For more information contact Steve Allan at turkeysteve@yahoo.com or 636.744.5723.

NEW! Southeast 26 Below

March 13 - 15, 2020

Look Up Lodge,

100 Look Up Lodge Rd., Traveler's Rest, SC

Nate Bramsen is the invited speaker with the theme: *Moving Beyond Defeat*. For more information see CMML.us/se26below2020 or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

Israel/Jordan Study Tour

March 19 - April 2, 2020

Get excited about studying God's Word through a Study Tour tentatively planned in Israel and Jordan (Petra). They will be studying the Scriptures, and breaking bread with the saints at the Assembly in Nazareth. The cost is tentatively set at \$3850.00 and includes meals, airfare, entry into Jordan, and site entrance tickets. This price is based on a San Francisco departure. Any additional expenses will be borne by the traveler. This tour is open to all including those who do not know the Bible but are interested in learning. For more detailed information and registration, please contact Abraham Chacko at mamukoya@hotmail.com or 408-439-9212.

Know the Word Men's Conference

March 21, 2020

Kenilworth Gospel Chapel, Kenilworth, NJ

Know the Word Ministries will be sponsoring an area-wide Men's Conference on Sat. March 21, 2020 from 9:30am - 3pm. The scheduled speakers are Keith Keyser (PA) and Steve Price (MO) who will be addressing the topic: "The Man of God: In the Home and In the House of God". Lunch will be provided - please register. For more information, go to the Know the Word app or visit knowtheword.com. Questions: email knowtheword@gmail.com.

Israel Study Tour

April 28 - May 14, 2020

Roger & Myriam Liebi (Switzerland assembly), who have led previous trips in German and French, are organizing an English language trip to Israel. They will lead you through the land of Israel from the south to the north of the country. Participants will study the Word of God, and consider the Biblical, historical, archaeological, prophetic, and practical relevance of all the numerous discoveries they make in the Land of Promise. The cost is \$2995 (does not include airfare). A previous reading of Roger's book "The Messiah in the Temple" (www.ariel.org/books/the-messiah-in-the-temple) would be a good preparation for the trip. For more info contact them at info@rogerliebi.ch.

What's Next?

May 2, 2020

**CMML Guest Home, 2751 18th Ave,
Wall Township, NJ**

Jose Cabrera is the invited speaker. For more information see CMML.us/whatsnext2020 or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

20th Annual Iron Sharpens Iron 2020

May 21 - 14, 2020

Emmaus Bible College, IA

The theme for this year's conference is: "Letters from Christ: What the Spirit Says to the Church Today" from Revelation 2-3. Speakers include Alex Strauch, Mark Stevenson, Bruce Henning, and David MacLeod. Visit isi.emmaus.edu for more info.

Missionary Orientation Program

May 29 - June 5, 2020

**Greenwood Hills Camp & Conference Center,
7062 Lincoln Way E, Fayetteville, PA**

The Missionary Orientation Program will be held on May 29 - June 5, 2020. For more information see CMML.us/mop or contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us or 732-449-8880 ext 106.

The Writings of Jack Maxted

Many of the Lord's people in Ontario knew the late John M. Maxted (Jack to many). He left a legacy of published books on various biblical subjects such as Song of Solomon, Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, An Overview of the New Testament, as well as several other titles. All titles are available at no charge and those interested may contact G. Steven Maxted at gsm.tacoma@gmail.com or (253) 756-7310 or (253) 906-4092.

Digging Deep into Revelation

Inspired by Revelation 1:3, DIGGING DEEP INTO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST" by Mike Cople, is a 234 page reference for anyone striving to understand the book of Revelation. A compilation of commentary notes provided by many solid brothers, this study guide contains the scripture (NKJV), commentary, verse cross references, and reference commentary in 4 columns side by side. Copies are available from Mike's website www.michaelcople.com (check out the bulk order discounts for study groups), or online from WestBow Press, Amazon, or Barnes & Noble..

Commendation of Clive and Elisa Berry

The saints at Palms Bible Fellowship in Phoenix, Arizona have commended Clay and Elisa Berry to the grace of God for the work to which the Lord has called them. Clay has been faithfully engaged for many years in speaking at local churches, camps, and conferences in the southwest, as well as being involved in counselling and discipleship. They would value your prayers for Clay and Elisa as they continue to labor for the Lord.

Help Wanted: Voices for Christ

Voices for Christ (voicesforchrist.org) is a ministry to make Christ-centred messages available to a wider audience. They have a large list of audio messages available that can be downloaded or listened to online. They are looking for volunteers to help in this important ministry. If you are interested please contact Doug Engle at dougengle76@gmail.com or 620.200.2045.

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Give Me A Sight, O Savior

Give me a sight, O Savior,
Of Thy wondrous love to me,
Of the love that brought Thee down to earth,
To die on Calvary.

Oh, make me understand it,
Help me to take it in,
What it meant to Thee, the Holy One,
To bear away my sin.

Was it the nails, O Savior,
That bound Thee to the tree?
Nay, 'twas Thine everlasting love,
Thy love for me, for me.

Oh, wonder of all wonders,
That through Thy death for me,
My open sins, my secret sins,
Can all forgiven be.

Then melt my heart, O Savior,
Bend me, yea, break me down,
Until I own Thee Conqueror,
And Lord and Sov'reign crown.

Lyrics & Music:
K. A. M. Kelly (1869-1942)

