

EXALTING **CHRIST** • EQUIPPING **BELIEVERS** • EVANGELIZING **THE WORLD**

# CORNERSTONE

JULY - AUG 2021

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

## **The Wisdom of God**

**The Silent Salute of the Sisters • Part 1**

**Things That Become Sound Doctrine**

**...and more**

**...JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE • EPHESIANS 2:20**

Rare it is to look at a group photo and not look to see ourselves. Even more, it seems most people have an innate desire to be “front and center.” For more noble reasons and to our benefit, the Lord wants to be front and center in our lives in everything we do.

Before Israel entered Canaan, God promised them a future leader when he said: *“The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto Me; unto Him ye shall hearken...”* (Deut. 18:15). From then on, Israel looked for this great Prophet that would eventually come—the Messiah—Someone like Moses raised up to deliver the nation. Details of this Person were specific: 1) God would raise Him up; 2) His ministry would be like that of Moses as a Deliverer, and 3) He would come from “from the midst” of Israel. They were assured of this because His ministry would be conspicuous and central to the nation. So imbedded was this in the national mindset, that centuries later when people witnessed the ministry of John the Baptist, they asked him directly *“Are you the Prophet?”* (John 1:21). The Lord Jesus was indeed that Prophet who ministered in their midst so there would be no mistake as to who He was.

#### To Israel


The first instance of Jesus’ ministry “in the midst” of Israel can be found in Luke 2. In verses 41-52, we read about the Lord traveling to Jerusalem with His parents at twelve years of age to participate in the feast of the Passover. After the feast days were completed, the large caravan of family and acquaintances began the journey back to Nazareth. But after a day of travel, it was discovered by His parents that He was not in the crowd, so they immediately returned to locate Him. After an extensive search, the anxious couple found Him in the Temple *“sitting in the midst of the teachers both listening to them and asking them questions”* (v. 46). The Lord’s question to Mary and Joseph *“Why did you seek Me?”* was not one of insolence, but a mild rebuke to those who should have known better than to spend the better portion of the day searching for Him in places other than the Temple. His comment, *“Know ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”* (v. 49), revealed His mission even as a youth. The Lord sitting in the midst of this erudite company, portrays Him as central to their conversation. He was indeed “front and center.” This is exactly how God wanted it then and how He wants it today, the center of everyone’s conversation—especially ours!

In Acts 2, we see an instance of the Lord working “in the midst.” One of the key components of Peter’s address to Israel on the day of Pentecost was the indisputable evidence of Christ’s works done in their presence. *“... a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”* (Acts 2:22). Everything He did validated His credentials as Messiah with power and glory and there was no excuse for anyone not to believe on Him. He is also at work today—all around us—and that work should be clearly acknowledged.

#### To the World

He is also at work “in the midst” of an unbelieving world. In John 19, the scene at Calvary is vividly described in verses 17 and 18: *“And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.”* What a scene! The Lord, the Son of God, the Creator of the Universe lifted between two thieves! On one side was an unrepentant, unregenerate criminal, being executed for His crimes. On the other, was someone with a completely different destiny because he was reconciled to God. This thief admitted his sin, acknowledged the sinless character of Christ, and demonstrated saving faith as he called upon the Lord. As it was then so it is today that the Savior divides mankind into two camps—the saved and the lost. There is no middle ground in salvation. If anything, He is the “middle ground,” and people are either on one side of Him or the other. What shall you do with this the Christ? This thief’s salvation is proof that there is no one beyond the scope of His forgiveness (Isa. 59:1) and that it is never too late to trust in Him.

#### To the Church

Christ is also at work in the midst of His Church—to help, strengthen, guide, and chasten. After the Lord’s resurrection, when the disciples were huddled behind closed doors for fear of the Jews, He *“stood in the midst”* bringing words of peace in the midst of fear (John 20:19), peace in the midst of service (John 19:21), and with Thomas peace in the midst of doubt (John 19:26). This example of the shepherd work of the Lord Jesus can be a great help and encouragement to His people—especially in times of crisis and confusion. When we are going through similar situations, do not forget that He is there... standing in the midst! Do not forget also that He is in the midst as we work through our difficulties and differences (Matt. 18:20); in the midst as He draws out our hearts in worship to Him (Heb. 2:12); and walking in the midst among the lampstands in Rev. 1, evaluating every local assembly’s testimony in the light of His Person and Work. The Lord has been in the midst, is in the midst and always shall be reigning in the midst, as depicted in Revelation 5. Let us keep these things in mind, that He is always “in the midst,” and adjust our conduct in the light of this great truth. 



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by Mark Kolchin

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## Table of Contents

- 2 The Wisdom of God  
*Bill Yuille*
- 4 The Silent Salute of the Sisters  
Part 1  
*Warren Henderson*
- 6 Things That Become Sound  
Doctrine  
*Alexander Kurian*
- 8 Report: Listowel Bible Chapel:  
Waiting on the Lord
- 10 Foundations of the Faith: The  
Christian and the Mosaic Law  
*George Ferrier*
- 12 The Power of Sacrificial Love  
*David Dunlap*
- 15 Issues & Answers  
*George Ferrier*
- 17 News & Notices

# The Wisdom of GOD

Scripture affirms that not only is God wise but He alone is wise: “to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.” (Rom. 16:27; see also 1 Tim. 1:17; Jude 25). It is this wisdom which enables Him to attain right ends in a way that most glorifies Himself and brings blessing to others. It has been expressed in various ways.

## **In Creation**

*“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!...For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”* (Rom. 11:33-36).

Ignoring the context for a moment, we might apply these words to the wisdom of God in creation. Where did everything originate? “Of Him” are all things. How did everything come to be and continue to be? “Through Him” are all things. Why was everything created and where is everything headed? “To Him” are all things. “The Lord by

*wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens”* (Prov. 3:19).

## **In the Gospel**

But the verses in Romans 11 are the climax to what has gone on before in the first eleven chapters of the book. Paul has written about justification: we are sinners exposed to the wrath of God, but God in His grace gave His Son as a propitiation, with the result that by faith we are declared righteous before God. Moreover, he has written about sanctification: we are united with Christ in His death and resurrection, dead to sin and dead to the law, and as a result we no longer walk according to the dictates of our sinful nature but walk according to the Spirit. And he has written too about glorification: God foreknew us, predestined us to be like His Son, called us, justified us, and glorified us (although it is yet future!). And in all this God extends mercy not only to Jews but to Gentiles also. This explanation of the gospel gives way to adoration: “O the depth of the riches both

of the wisdom and knowledge of God!...Who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" No one first gave to Him because there is nothing anyone can contribute. The gospel is "of Him" as an expression of His righteousness and grace. And it is "through Him", the death of Christ on our account and the working of the Holy Spirit in bringing us to faith. And it is "to Him", that He might be glorified.

First Corinthians 1 tells us that this wisdom of God in the gospel is foolishness to man. Human wisdom rejects the revelation of God and substitutes a philosophy of naturalism which allows for nothing outside the material universe. But human wisdom, with its intellectual speculation and rationalism, is seen to be empty and futile. It leaves us floundering in total darkness with no truth, no moral compass, no meaningful purpose, and no hope. "But we preach Christ crucified." To the Jews this was a stumbling block because they had expectations with respect to the Messiah which certainly did not include His dying on a cross. To the Greeks it was foolishness because it was inconceivable to them that God would become like one of His creatures and even more so that He should suffer at their hands and put to death. "But to those who are called, both Jew and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24).

### **In the Church**

The purpose of the ages is that "in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Eph. 1:10). To that end the Lord Jesus was the Lamb of God foreordained before the foundation of the world. When our first parents sinned, God informed the serpent that the seed of the woman would bruise his head. Throughout history God confirmed this message about a coming Deliverer in His covenants with His people and through the words of the prophets. And God's eternal purpose is accomplished in Christ "to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers (various orders of angelic beings) in the heavenly places" (Eph. 3:10). The angels knew something about the workings of God with men and women throughout the ages, the arrival on the scene of the Lord Jesus, His life of poverty and rejection, His brutal crucifixion, His victorious resurrection, and ascension to sit at God's right hand. And now they appreciate the wisdom of God in all this in that countless individuals are being incorporated into the church of Christ which includes Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, men and women, educated and illiterate, all one in Christ Jesus, experiencing the same blessings, having the same hope, and possessing the same life.

*View the vast building, see it rise,  
The work how great, the plan how wise,  
O wondrous fabric, power unknown,  
That rest upon the living Stone.<sup>1</sup>*

### **In Christ**

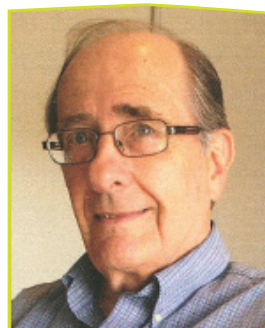
We are told that in the person of Christ are "hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). Something of that was seen in His actions, always doing the right thing; and in His words, always saying the right thing. "The Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom" (Luke 2:40). At twelve years of age, His parents took Him up to Jerusalem where He spent time with the teachers, listening and asking questions, and "all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers" (Luke 2:47). And on different occasions during His public ministry they were amazed at Him and asked, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?" (Matt. 13:54).

### **In the Christian**

The book of Proverbs encourages us, "Get wisdom! Get understanding!...Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom. And in all your getting get understanding." (Prov. 4:5, 7). "How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver" (Prov. 16:16). Paul exhorts us, "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise" (Eph. 5:15). And he prays for us, "that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9). And how do we get this wisdom? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Prov. 9:10). In a normal family, there is no need for a boy to be afraid of his father because he knows that his father loves him and has his best interests at heart. Nevertheless, there should be a healthy respect and fear that recognizes his authority and seeks to comply with what his father desires. The fear of the Lord is an appreciation of the character and the ways of God such that we reverence Him, seek to avoid what would displease or dishonor Him and earnestly desire to do what pleases Him. So, it is, that as we discover more and more of the character and nature of the Father, we gain a deeper appreciation of Him which results in greater understanding and an improved ability to choose wisely. 📖

### **Endnotes**

1. *On Christ Salvation Rests Secure*, Words by Samuel Medley




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**by Bill Yuille**

# The Silent Salute of the Sisters

## Honoring God's Headship *Part 1*



What does God desire from the Church during her earthly sojourn? The answer is to reveal “*the manifold wisdom of God...to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places*” ... “*to the praise of His glory*” (Eph. 1:13, 3:10). We are to glorify God by magnifying Christ in every situation (Phil. 1:20). As directed by God, selfless ministry and willful refrain from defilement accomplishes this high honor. Consequently, we must realize that much of God’s order for the Church is for the purpose of revealing something about Himself. For example, God instituted masculine plural leadership in the Church (first Apostles, then church elders) to reveal that He is a masculine entity with plural personage. Although, believers may ignorantly view some of God’s designs for the Church as unnecessary, we must understand that some commands are right (because they agree with our conscience), but other decrees are simply right because God commands them (these test our conscience).

### **Glory and Gender**

We live in days in which the devil is relentlessly trying to undermine the rudiments of God’s creation order in Genesis 1: What is life? What is the origin of life? What is gender? What is marriage? What is work? Unfortunately, many identifying with Christ today are falling prey to the undercurrent of humanized religion which craves to erode God’s purposes. While discussing creation order, Paul explains that what is created by another becomes the glory of the originator: God created man from the dust of the ground, thus man represents God’s glory. God created the woman (the gender) from the side of the first man, thus the woman symbolizes man’s glory; and the woman’s long hair originates from her and is hence her glory (1 Cor. 11:3-15). What originates from another should not rule over the originator (1 Tim. 2:13-14).

Some have wrongly linked 1 Corinthians 1:3 (ESV) to male headship in marriage only, but Eve was created as a woman; she later became Adam’s wife. Rather, Paul is referring to God’s design for each gender when He created male (to lead) and female (to help). Given our depraved nature, humanity will naturally devalue God and His purposes, but

He has given believers a reminder, a reoccurring salute, to preclude us from doing so.

### **Saluting God**

Paul often refers to military illustrations to explain spiritual truths. We will likewise consider such an example to reflect on Paul's teaching of headship and the head covering practice. If a commanding officer suddenly entered a room filled with subordinates, each soldier would be expected to stand at attention and salute their superior without saying a word. The soldiers' silence and salute demonstrate a willful yielding to the authority over them. When addressing the group the commander would speak directly to the next-highest ranking officer while the remaining outranked soldiers remained silent.

The idea of believers visibly saluting God's authority and demonstrating audible order when they come into His presence is subject matter of 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, respectively. The same verses that command the what of the head covering practice also provide the when: when believers enter the Lord's presence to pray (Heb. 4:14-16) and when the Lord draws near to us to express His Word (i.e., through prophecy/teaching; 1 Cor. 11:4-7). Church Order in 1 Corinthians 11 is not specifically referred to until verses 17-34 when the subject changes to the Lord's Supper. In this portion Paul clearly states, *"when you come together in one place... as a church"* (1 Cor. 11: 17, 18, 20). Thus, constraining the visible salute to only church meetings is contrary to the "when" commanded in the Creation Order section (1 Cor. 11:2-16). Anytime that we come into God's presence to talk to Him or He comes into our presence to communicate His Word to us, as subordinates to the Lord, we all should give Him a visible salute: men should have uncovered heads and women would have covered heads.

As sisters willingly cover themselves (man's glory) and their hair (their glory), all competing glories to God's glory (as symbolized in the uncovered heads of the brothers) are removed. Such a scene is a reflection of God's heavenly throne room where angelic beings such as Cherubim and Seraphim use their own wings to cover their intrinsic glories, so that only God's glory is seen by all. Any visible portion of these creatures (such as their differing faces) that is described is a reflective glory of Christ and is hence recorded for our appreciation. The covering behavior of these heavenly creatures ensures that even a woman's hands covering her head during times of impromptu prayer is acceptable salute to God. May all believers be increasingly aware of God's holiness and glory when we speak to Him or for Him!


### **What Does Silence Mean?**

Continuing with the soldier illustration, we now consider the matter of willful silence. The meanings of two Greek words connected with silence must be understood to ensure a proper contextual study of pertinent passages. The first word is the verb *sigao* (1 Cor. 14:28, 30, 34), which means

"to keep secret" or literally to speak within oneself or under one's breathe, but not in a way that would preempt or impede another person's speech (e.g., Luke 18:39). This is the idea conveyed in the context of 1 Corinthians 14:28-32: anyone speaking in tongues was to yield to someone receiving a word of prophecy. Paul then applies *sigao* to preclude women from speaking publicly in the church meetings:

*"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women keep silent (sigao) in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church"* (1 Cor. 14:33-35).

Women are not to speak in a way that would impede the male speaker because he is representing God while speaking to the assembly. In a spiritual sense, women in the congregation have voices such as the Seraphim in God's presence in heaven (Isa. 6:1-6). Their voices in unison praise God in the background of heaven's throne room, but they never compete with God's voice or authority. What would happen if a Cherub decided to usurp God's authority by speaking in God's place and uncovering themselves in God's presence? We already know the answer to this question, for that is what God's anointed covering cherub (Lucifer) did and was cast out of God's presence (Ezek. 28:12-19; Isa. 14:12-15). Consequently, the devil will always oppose the head covering practice of the Church; it is insulting to him to see creatures of lower estate giving God what he failed to do, submission and reverence.

The second Greek word of importance is *hesuchia*, a noun rendered "silence" twice in 1 Timothy 2:11-12: *"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence"* (1 Tim. 2:11-12). *Hesuchia* conveys the idea of submissive quietness or to "settle down" as in Acts 22:2; 2 Thess. 3:12. Hence, when men and women are gathered for spiritual exercise, the women were to receive instruction from male leaders with quiet subjection, but they were not forbidden to speak altogether. But what types of meetings does this passage refer to? To be continued... 



Warren Henderson and his wife Brenda serve the Lord full-time and currently make their home in Stevensville, Montana. Warren is involved in a writing, evangelism, and Bible teaching ministry and has written and published a number of books which can be obtained worldwide through online retailers.

**by Warren Henderson**

# Things that Become Sound Doctrine

PSALMS 117.1—118.28

**117** Oh praise Jê-hô'vâh, all ye nations,  
Laud him, all ye peoples,  
For his lovinckindness is great  
toward us;  
And the truth of Jê-hô'vâh endureth  
for ever.

**118** Oh give thanks unto Jê-hô'vâh;  
For his lovinckindness endureth  
for ever.

**2** Let us ra-êl now say,  
That his lovinckindness endureth  
for ever.

**3** Let the house of Aâr'ônnow say,  
That his lovinckindness endureth  
for ever.

**4** Let them now that fear Jê-hô'vâh say,  
That his lovinckindness endureth  
for ever.

**5** Out of my distress I called  
upon Jê-hô'vâh;  
Jê-hô'vâh answered me  
and set me in a large place.

**6** Jê-hô'vâh is on my side; I will  
not fear;  
What can man do unto me?

**7** Jê-hô'vâh is on my side among  
them that help me;  
Therefore shall I see  
upon them that hate me.

**8** It is better to take refuge in  
Jê-hô'vâh  
Than to put confidence in man.

**9** It is better to take refuge in  
Jê-hô'vâh  
Than to put confidence in  
princes.

**10** All nations compassed me  
about;

**13** Thou didst thrust upon me  
that I might fall;  
But Jê-hô'vâh helped me,  
and he shall not let me fall.  
**14** Jê-hô'vâh is my strength,  
and he shall not let me fall.  
**15** The voice of rejoicing and  
righteousness:  
The right hand of Jê-hô'vâh  
doeth valiantly.

**16** The right hand of Jê-hô'vâh  
doeth valiantly;  
The right hand of Jê-hô'vâh  
doeth valiantly.

**17** I shall not die, but live,  
and declare the works of  
Jê-hô'vâh.

**18** Jê-hô'vâh hath chastened my  
sore;  
But he hath not given me  
unto death.

**19** Open to me the gates of  
righteousness;  
I will enter into them,  
and give thanks unto thee,  
O Jê-hô'vâh.

**20** This is the gate of Jê-hô'vâh;  
The righteous shall enter  
therein,  
and will give thanks  
for that they thank thee,  
O Jê-hô'vâh.

**21** I will give thanks unto thee,  
O Jê-hô'vâh,  
for that thou hast  
delivered my soul from  
death.

**22** And art thou best among  
the stones?  
The stone shall not say,  
I am rejected.

**23** This is Jê-hô'vâh's doing;  
It is marvellous in our  
eyes,  
vâh hath made;  
We will rejoice and  
save now, we be-  
cause Jê-hô'vâh  
O Jê-hô'vâh

**19** Oh give thanks unto Jê-hô'vâh;  
For his lovinckindness endureth  
for ever.

Meditations and Prayers relating to the  
Law of God.

**19** Blessed are they that are  
perfect in the law of Jê-hô'vâh.  
Who walk in the law of Jê-hô'vâh.

**2** Blessed are they that keep his  
testimonies,  
That seek him with the whole  
heart.

**3** Yea, they do no unrighteous-  
ness;  
They walk in his ways.

**4** Thou hast commanded us thy  
precepts,  
That we should observe them  
diligently.

**5** Oh that my ways were estab-  
lished  
as those of thy statutes!

**6** I shall not be put to  
shame,  
When I shall I not be put to  
shame,  
When I shall I not be put to  
shame,  
When I shall I not be put to  
shame,

**7** I will give thanks unto thee  
with uprightness of heart,  
When I learn thy righteous  
judgments.  
I will observe thy statutes:  
Oh forsake me not utterly.

PSALMS 118.29—119.29

**14** I have rejoiced in the way of  
thy testimonies,  
As much as in all riches.  
**15** I will meditate on thy precepts,  
And have respect unto thy ways.  
**16** I will delight myself in thy  
statutes;  
I will not forget thy word.

**17** Deal bountifully with thy ser-  
vant, that I may live;  
So will I observe thy word.

**18** Open thou mine eyes, that I  
may behold  
wondrous things out of thy law.

**19** I am a sojourner in the earth;  
Hide not thy commandments  
from me.

**20** My soul breaketh for the long-  
ing  
that hath unto thine ordi-  
nances at all times.

**21** Thou hast rebuked the proud  
that are cursed,  
That do wander from thy  
commandments.

**22** Take away from me reproach  
and contempt;  
For I have kept thy testimonies.  
But thy servant did meditate  
on thy statutes.

**24** Thy testimonies also are my de-  
light  
and my counsellors.

**25** My soul cleaveth unto the dust;



What do you teach? Have you ever thought about this question seriously? In the face of false doctrines and distortions of truth, what is the content of your teaching? Even as the world around us is changing, are you boldly teaching the Word? What do you teach to people who need consolation, counsel, encouragement, motivation, and correction? What about people who are spiritually hungry and thirsty for the deeper things of God's Word? Do you escort them to the heights of divine revelation with joy and excitement? Are you fully aware of the awesome magnitude of your calling to teach the Word? These are probing questions that must be pondered over by everyone who handles the Word of God.

Titus was Paul's delegate on the island of Crete. Paul had invested in his life. Thus Titus became an honorable minister of the gospel (his name means "honorable"). The training and mentoring by the apostle made Titus the ideal man to bring order to the rugged, undisciplined assemblies of Christians on Crete. *"For this reason I left you in Crete to set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you"* (Titus 1:5).

In contrast to the false teachers described in Titus 1:16 (*"but as for you"*), Titus was commanded to teach the *"things which are fitting for sound doctrine"* (NASB) or *"things that are consistent with sound teaching"* (Holman Christian Standard Bible). The present imperative "speak" literally means continue speaking. The saints need diligent and constant instruction. Titus was to always maintain this type of teaching, no exceptions. He was to carry his ministry among the people of God according to their age and sex (Titus 2:2-10). Titus was to speak things fitting for sound doctrine. His teaching was to be healthy and wholesome. This chapter commences and concludes with a direct charge to Titus to *"speak"* (2:1) and *"speak, exhort and rebuke with all authority"* (2:15).

## "But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine"

Titus 2:1

The Greek word *hygiaino* rendered "sound" (2:1), is the term from which we get our word "hygiene." Titus' instruction was to be health-giving, uncontaminated, wholesome, and edifying. The purity of his teaching would disinfect what had been contaminated by the false teachers. It was to be a Word-oriented and Word-focused ministry. We should also not teach or preach what we like—our preferences, traditions, opinions, and pet ideas, or what we have read, or somebody has said or taught without doctrinally verifying it. It has to be *"things which are proper for sound doctrine"*

(NKJV). It has to be befitting to or in accord with the sound doctrine of the Bible.

Timothy also was charged by Paul to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:1). Paul urged Timothy to *"rightly divide the Word"* and to handle it accurately (2 Tim. 2:15). Both Titus and Timothy had to be extremely careful about their teaching, so are we.

Paul's command to Titus challenges us to evaluate our teaching. What do we teach? Do we just teach our opinions, opinions of others, our preferences, and traditions? What do we try to promote in our teaching? Parading of our spiritual pride and parochial spirit is too common today from many of our pulpits. Recently a brother sent me an audio message from a so called conservative assembly. Sorry to say that the teaching has nothing to do with the scriptural truth of the assembly, but rather it was just a promotion of certain peculiar views on the assembly. How misleading!

Since we enjoy the New Testament freedom in ministering the Word, our pulpits are wide open, and sometimes even for unprofitable and "any-man" ministry. Our freedom can easily be misused or abused. We have to be very vigilant and careful in this area. Our teaching has to be consistent with the written word of God. It has to be healthful ("sound") instruction. All who teach the Word must find a basic guideline here. Our teaching has to be wholesome and health-giving, spiritually edifying and instructing. It must be the exposition of the Word: nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. We must make this a required policy in our assemblies thus doing justice to our claim for New Testament pattern. The purity of our teaching should disinfect the spiritual contamination. The instruction should be based on the Word through legitimate interpretation leading to proper application, with exegetical integrity, and not simply based on our "pet ideas." After 43 years in full time ministry, I consider this to be one of the greatest needs of the assemblies.

God has promised to honor His Word, not our pet ideologies. *"But on this one will I look...who trembles at my Word"* (Isa. 66:2). His Word should be our focus in teaching. What do you teach? *"But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine"* (ESV). What a timely counsel to all who teach the Word! 📖



Alexander Kurian is a commended full time worker serving the Lord for the last forty years in itinerant ministry of evangelism, teaching, training, writing, and equipping. He and his wife Valsa fellowship at their commending assembly, Edmonds Lane Bible Chapel in Lewisville, Texas.

by Alexander Kurian

# Report: Listowel Bible Chapel

## Waiting on the Lord

The establishment of Listowel Bible Chapel originated from a vision of John Martin, a full-time worker from the Hawkesville, ON assembly. In 1945, he had a desire to plant an assembly in Listowel, a village 35 km west of Hawkesville. Mr. Martin and another brother, Mr. Murray set up a tent in Listowel Park where they conducted DVBS and evening meetings for several years. However, nothing came of it at that time.

Many years later, in the early 1970's, Mr. Martin began praying again about Listowel. Around 1972, he started a Bible study in the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Geurkink, who lived about 14 km south of Listowel. For two or three winters these Bible studies were held in their home. Then Mr. and Mrs. Dave Dunlop, who had moved their business from Waterloo to Listowel, started to attend the Bible studies and invited those attending to come to their home the next winter. After 2 years, the study moved to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Bender, in another part of town. Most who attended were in fellowship at Wallenstein Bible Chapel, which had replaced the Hawkesville assembly. By this time, John Martin was a bit discouraged, thinking that once again nothing would come of it. But it was the Lord's work, and when His timing was right things would happen.

Early in 1978, some people of Dutch background began attending the Bible studies. Soon there were so many attending, that the Bender house was too small. A room in the local high school was rented and the Bible studies continued there until the end of school. Plans were then made to rent the Orange Hall for meetings.



The first official meeting of Listowel Bible Chapel (LBC) was on July 2, 1978, when the believers met at the Orange Hall to break bread with 70 to 80 in attendance. Meetings were held there for 2 years and soon they began looking for land to build a chapel. Several lots were considered and finally one was chosen, at the end of a street in a residential neighbourhood. The chapel was built in 1980 and on the first Sunday in July, the assembly moved into their own building. The first elders were John Martin, Dave Dunlop, Lyle Bender, Bob McEachern, and Mervin Martin with Henry Weber as the first Sunday School superintendent.

There have been some happy times and some hard times. In the 1990's, there was a time of dissension with some of the families leaving the fellowship. In 2008, a car accident took the lives of two young people and a 2-month-old baby. These were difficult times, yet through it the Lord's people learned that He does indeed "work all things together for good" (Rom. 8:28). Shortly after the accident, six young people were convicted to obey the Lord in baptism.

From the beginning, the assembly has had a keen interest in missions. They support many full-time missionaries and many, of all ages, have taken part in short term mission trips to many parts of the world.



HEAD BIBLE CHAPEL—Not having a regular minister, the Listowel Bible Chapel has its meetings conducted by a lay person. A group of men heads the church. Shown in the photo is the chapel's building committee. Counter-clockwise are: Mervin Martin, John Martin, Terry Williams, Keith Koetsler, Laverne Bramhill, Wayne Martin, and Lyle Bender. (Banner Photo)

Through the years, they have used many different ways to reach out to the community with the gospel: children's meetings; ladies' coffee hours; men's breakfasts; and door to door visitation. One summer Jabe Nicholson came and set up a display of classic cars. Volunteers visited homes in Listowel to invite people to the park where they could see the cars. Gospel tracts were handed out and a gospel message given. Another opportunity for outreach was that for several years the churches in Listowel held summer Sunday evening services in the park, with LBC taking their turn. When the other churches decided to discontinue the meetings, LBC took the opportunity to continue this outreach four times each summer. People can sit on lawn chairs or in their cars and listen to music, followed by a gospel message.

In 2011, a website was set up so people can listen to sermons, find links to several reliable Christian organizations, as well as get free Bibles or audio downloads. Many Bibles have been sent out to various parts of the world. *"So, shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it"* (Isa. 55:11).

Each week an article, taken from the adult weekly Sunday School paper (published by Gospel Folio Press), is printed in local papers. Readers are invited to contact the assembly. There have been some responses and even though there are no known conversions, believers have been blessed and there may be those that only the Lord knows about. In addition, Hope Reidt, a young woman in the assembly, writes a weekly column of encouragement and hope from God's Word, which is also published in a local paper.

For the past five years the youth group has built a snow sculpture in a local park. Their enthusiasm and imagination are evident as they have fashioned things like the ark, a train, a castle, and so on. Children and their families are invited to attend on Family Day in February, a statutory holiday in Ontario. The children can climb around and through the snow sculpture, and then hear a presentation of the gospel, explained so children can understand, but also heard by the adults. Gospel tracts are handed out, as well as cookies donated by the assembly. Believers from the assembly are available to talk with or answer any questions visitors may have.

In recent years, the assembly has grown as believers looking for good Bible teaching, have started to attend and come into fellowship. There are about 30 families in the assembly, with many more attending as visitors. Many who have grown up in the assembly have been baptized and are seeking to serve the Lord. The Lord has blessed with an abundance of spiritual gifts, which are being used to edify and build up the church. Quite a few of the younger men have taken advantage of courses offered at general

conferences and men's conferences, which has resulted in further developing their knowledge of the Scriptures and their ability to expound God's Word.

There are approximately 40 children in the Sunday School. Many who were part of it as children are now teaching. Each year they enjoy doing a Christmas program, telling not only the Christmas story, but also telling about Jesus "in all the Scriptures." Several times other Bible characters, such as Joseph (a type of Christ) or stories of missionaries are acted out. Another highlight is the Sunday School picnic, which can more accurately be described as a church picnic, as everyone enjoys a fun time together. Currently, Rick Weber and Steve Vandenbrink are the superintendents.



During the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings have been held by conference calls on the telephone. Each week about 15 different brothers take part, either on Sunday morning for the breaking of bread and a short time of teaching or on Wednesday night for prayer. This has been an unforeseen blessing, proving again that God can bring good out of seeming hardship.

At this time, the elders are Nelson Weber, Jake Kraayenbrink, Dan van Veen and Rob Weber. Their desire is that the assembly will grow, not just in numbers, but that the Lord's people will mature in their faith, so they may be a faithful witness in their homes and in the community. *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"* (Eph. 1:4). [GM](#)



Seleda and her husband John have been in fellowship at Listowel Bible Chapel from the beginning. She served as a Sunday School teacher until 2020, and is a speaker and volunteer for RSVP Ministries.

by **Seleda Frey**

# FOUNDATIONS

## THE CHRISTIAN AND THE MOSAIC LAW

Dating back to the early church, believers have questioned their relationship to the Mosaic Law (Acts 15:1-31, Gal. 2:1-21). While Bible believing Christians would agree that the Law cannot save them, some still believe that we must follow the Ten Commandments as our rule of life for sanctification. To fully grasp our relationship to the Law, we must first understand the Law's origin, characteristics, and purpose.

### ***The Law's Origin and Scope***

Scripture refers to the Jewish people "*as those who are of the law*" (Rom. 4:16). In showing that all are sinners, the Bible includes Gentiles who have sinned without the law and Jews who have sinned in the law (Rom. 2:12-16). Speaking of Christ the Holy One, it states that He was born a Son of Abraham, born under the law (Matt. 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38, Gal. 4:4).

This tells us that the written Law was given to one nation and did not exist in the time period between Adam and Moses, though sin and death certainly did (Rom. 5:13-14). But shortly after their redemption from Egypt, God gave it exclusively to Israel on Mount Sinai, its stipulations encompassing every aspect of their lives.

First, revealing God's holiness and distance from them, its terms provided a way for a sinful people to approach Him both as individuals and as a nation. The offerings and feasts provided a temporary covering for sin, opportunities to worship, and a time to remember His goodness to them.

Second, it instituted their judicial law, transitioning them from slaves to a nation about to inherit its own land. It instructed them how to govern themselves, on their relationships with each other, its precepts also providing remedies for any wrongs committed.

Third, the Law was one of Israel's many privileges (Rom. 9:4-5), that uniquely set them apart as a special nation. A separate people, they were to distinguish themselves as the nation that worshipped one God and obeyed His law (Deut. 4:8). Being God's revelation, the Law set a higher standard for them than the Gentile nations who governed themselves by their own consciences and laws.

### ***The Law, a Greater Revelation***

In Scripture we find that with each revelation God builds on what was known before. This progressive revelation culminates in God's complete and final revelation, the coming of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the express image of God (Heb. 1:1-3).

At Sinai the Law revealed God's holiness and righteousness in written form (Psa. 12:6, Rom. 7:12), a greater revelation than what was known up to that time. It gave Israel a clearer picture of right and wrong, a knowledge that the nations being guided only by their conscience did not have (Rom. 2:12-14, 3:20). Though all have sinned by missing the mark falling short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23), Israel's sin took on the nature of transgression because they stepped over recognized boundaries, breaking known precepts and commands. Every year they faced a continual reminder of sins (Heb. 10:3) because the Law revealed sin as a transgression (Rom. 4:15; Gal. 3:19).

### ***The Law's Conditional Terms***

Visibly demonstrating His distance, God gave the Law through the agency of angels (Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2) with Moses mediating upon behalf of the people. A conditional agreement between two parties—God and Israel—it required a mediator (Gal. 3:19-20, Deut. 5:5). God promised Israel that if they would follow Him with all their heart He would bless their nation with many earthly blessings. If they failed to do so, many curses would fall upon them (Deut. 28). The Law could never bring personal salvation to the Israelite. Even in the Old Testament personal salvation was always by grace through faith (Gal. 2:16, 3:1-9), both to the Jew and to individual Gentiles such as Rahab and Ruth.

Contrast this with how God appeared and spoke directly to Abraham. The Abrahamic Covenant required no mediator, being an unconditional promise (Gal. 3:20). It was common in Abraham's day to ratify a contract by having both parties walk hand in hand between divided offerings, each party promising to fulfill their end of the agreement. But in the Promise a smoking oven and burning torch went through the offering signifying God alone was responsible to fulfill it (Gen. 15:5-6, 17; Gal. 3:6-9).

### ***The Law's Timing***

Though added 430 years after the Promise (Gal. 3:17) the Law did not retract God's earlier guarantees to Abraham (Gal. 3:17-18, 21). Neither did it add to or enhance the Promise but instead was supplementary, a separate covenant, a parenthesis within the eternal Promise.

A clause within the Abrahamic covenant promised that through Abraham's Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3, 22:18; Gal. 3:16, 17, 19). Here God

swore that it was through Christ, Abraham's Seed, the whole world could be saved. The Bible says that the Law functioned only until Christ came, using the phrase "till the Seed should come" (Gal. 3:19), affirming a new standard for the Jew when faith in Christ was revealed (Gal. 3:23, 25; John 1:17).

Paul, a Jew includes himself by using the pronoun "we" when he says "we (Israel) were kept under guard by the law," (Gal. 3:23) and then again in verse 24 "Therefore the law was our (Israel) tutor to Christ, that we (Israel) might be justified by faith." Staying true to both the passage and the letter's context Paul is expressing the thought that the Law was Israel's custodian or guardian until Christ came (Gal. 3:19, 23-25, 4:4). Later when referring to both Gentile and Jewish believers and their oneness in Christ he uses the pronoun "you" (Gal. 3:26, 28-29).

### **The Law's Purpose**

In Paul's day, a tutor (custodian, guardian, child-conductor), normally a slave, looked after a child's moral and physical well-being, providing a restraining influence on the minor. He helped train the children both in their behavior and in their studies. He did so until the child came of age becoming an adult son (Gal. 4:2). Until then the child was expected to obey his guardian, having no more rights than a servant (Gal. 4:1).

Similarly, the Law functioned as a guardian of the Jewish nation. When obeyed, it had a preserving influence on them, protecting them from the immoral practices, idolatry, and unrestrained behavior of the nations around them. It helped them in their studies—their knowledge of God's righteousness and their own sin. Preserving them was necessary because it was through them the Old Testament was revealed and kept, and it was through them the Messiah would come (Gal. 3:23). Therefore, even though Israel was apostate throughout most of their history God always preserved a remnant. The coming of Christ, elsewhere referred to as the "fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4) is Israel's coming of age.

Since Christ has come, the Jew is no longer under their "law guardian." Instead upon trusting Christ they become adult sons, fully entering into the rights and privileges of sonship that God has bestowed on all believers. They have died to the Law (Rom. 7:1-6), their past relationship to the law having ended. Though they were never under the Law, Gentiles also faced the same condemnation for their sins, but upon believing Christ they too become adult sons. Both Gentile and Jewish believers are one in Christ.

### **Christ, The Law's Theme**

Yet the Law and Israel's experiences still have spiritual value today. For it is God's Word and all scripture is God breathed and profitable (2 Tim. 3:16). The Holy Spirit can use any portion of scripture to lead a lost soul to salvation because Christ is the theme of God's Word. Responding to the Jews the Lord confronted His accusers by telling them that the scriptures testified of Him (John 5:39). After His resurrection, while travelling on the Emmaus road, He

expounded from the Old Testament beginning with Moses, the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27).

Knowing this we can meditate upon Christ in the Pentateuch, seeing Him foreshadowed in the feasts, offerings and different personalities of the Law. The examples of Israel's failures in the wilderness were written for our admonition and instruction. Appealing to our conscience, mind, and will they exhort us to learn from their example (1 Cor. 10:11). The entire Old Testament can instill patience, comforting us with hope, fortifying us with an unshakeable trust in a faithful God (Rom. 15:4).

### **Christ, God's Definitive Revelation**

After Calvary, some significant changes occurred demonstrating that we are not under law but grace (Rom. 6:14). First the church, a separate entity from Israel, was born at Pentecost. The Mosaic Law was given to an earthly people, a national identity whom God promised earthly blessings upon their obedience to the law. Christians are a heavenly people comprised of Jews and Gentiles, citizens of heaven, spiritually blessed by God because of our union with Christ Who both fulfilled the law and bore its curse (Eph. 1:3, 19-23).

Second, there was a change in the law of priesthood. The Old Testament priesthood functioned according to the order of Aaron while Christ is now Priest according to the greater order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek (King of Righteousness) is an Old Testament type of the eternal Christ in that his genealogy is unknown. He was the Priest King of Salem (peace) who met Abraham upon his return from rescuing his nephew Lot. The fact that he blessed Abraham and received a tithe from him gave evidence that his priesthood was greater than the Levitical priesthood that would begin with Abraham's great-grandson, Levi (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:1-17).

In the Mosaic Law one became a priest by genealogy because the priesthood was restricted to the tribe of Levi. In the church, all believers are priests with the opportunity to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God (1 Pet. 2:5). In addition to being from the tribe of Levi, the Old Testament High Priest also had to descend from Aaron. On the other hand God appointed Christ, born of the tribe of Judah, to be our great High Priest. The Aaronic priesthood had a continual succession of priests because eventually each one died. Christ has an eternal priesthood, living forever to make intercession for us. The Law prohibited combining the offices of priest and king. But Christ is the Priest who is now appointed to someday rule the entire earth.

Third, Christ is God's consummate and final revelation. In the past God spoke at numerous times and in many diverse ways through prophets like Moses, bringing greater understanding to Israel. Giving the Law, God visibly demonstrated His transcendence over all creation, including His distance from separated sinners. But the law not only demonstrated God's distance but also pictured the better things to come (Heb. 10:1). *Continued on page 16*

# THE POWER OF SACRIFICIAL LOVE

## AGAPE & PHILEO IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

The Greek language has many variations on the word love, where English is unfortunately limited to a single word. By using only one word to describe such a vast sentiment, the English language has lost much of the meaning and nuance. Because the Bible recognizes variations of the word, we are able to gain deeper understanding from the text.

In John 21:15-19 Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him three separate times. The first two times the Bible uses the Greek verb *agapao* when Jesus speaks to Peter, which is understood to be a general meaning of the word. This love is not based on merit of the person loved, but rather it is unconditional and sacrificial. This love is kind and generous. It continues to give even when the other is unkind, unresponsive, and unworthy. It desires only good for the other and is compassionate. But the third time that Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, He uses *phileo*, which speaks of tender affection, fondness, and the love of companions.

However, the Bible teacher who might express the idea that our Lord had any special intent for using these two verbs for love has often been belittled as being ignorant of the Greek text. Many learned writers heap scorn on any who attribute special meaning between the two words, because they hold that these two verbs are used interchangeably in the gospels.

In 1990, Dr. D. A. Carson, in his commentary on John's Gospel, in reference to the two Greek words used in John 21:15-19 explains,

Some expositions of these verses turn on the distribution of the two different verbs for "love" that appear... This will not do, for at least the following reason... The two verbs are used interchangeably in this Gospel...<sup>1</sup>

It seems to the modern scholar that the principle of "interchangeable use" rules the day. Nevertheless, we find that Bible scholars of a former generation seem to give

special intent to these two Greek words in John 21:15-19.

In the past many capable Bible teachers reminded us that in the New Testament the verb *phileo* is to be distinguished from *agapao*. In the gospels the two words are used for the love of the Father for the Son, Christ's love for the believers, and Christ's love for John the apostle. Yet the distinction between these two verbs remains, and they are never used indiscriminately in the same passage. Additionally, *phileo* is never used in a command for men to love God, but rather the verb *agapao*.

Bible scholars and expositors of a former generation saw meaning in the rich language of this well-known passage. Richard Chenevix Trench (1807-1886), the former Archbishop of Dublin and renowned Greek scholar, wrote in his excellent work *The Synonyms of the New Testament*, when referring to *agapao* and *phileo* in John 21:

In that threefold "Lovest thou Me?" which the risen Lord addresses to Peter, He asks him first, do you *agapao* me; at this moment, when all the pulses in the heart of the now penitent Apostle are beating with a passionate affection toward his Lord... And now when his Lord puts the question to him a third time, it is not *agapao* anymore, but *phileo*. All this subtle and delicate play of feeling disappears unfortunately, in a translation which either does not care, or is not able, to reproduce the variation in the words as it exists in the original.<sup>2</sup>

Again, concerning the nuance between verbs *agapao* and *phileo* in John 21, New Testament Greek authority W. E. Vine writes,

The distinction between the two verbs finds a conspicuous instance in the narrative of John 21:15-17. The context itself indicates that *agapao* in the first two questions suggests the love that values and esteems. It is unselfish love, ready to serve. The use of *phileo* in Peter's answers and the Lord's third question, conveys the thought of cherishing the Object above all else, of manifesting an affection characterized by constancy, a form of the highest veneration.<sup>3</sup>

While *agapao* is a more universally understood meaning of love that is shown to a person rising from no action of their own, did our Lord also want Peter to know that He loved him despite his denials? Did our Savior choose to use *phileo* to force Peter to think a little deeper about his love for Christ?


### Application

How do we apply these rich truths in our lives? I believe that the Bible is asking us to go deeper in how we express love to others. Let me illustrate. Dr. T. E. McCully was the father of Ed McCully, one of the five missionaries martyred by the Auca Indians in Ecuador. One night when Dr. McCully and William MacDonald were praying, McCully's thoughts went back to that day when his son was killed on the Curaray

river in Ecuador. Bill MacDonald writes, "He prayed, 'Lord, let me live long enough to see those fellows saved who killed our boys, that I might throw my arms around them and tell them I love them because they love my Christ.' When he arose, I saw rivulets of tears zig-zagging down his cheeks."<sup>4</sup> This is the display of deep, sacrificial *agapao* love the Lord desires. But *phileo* love is just as important.

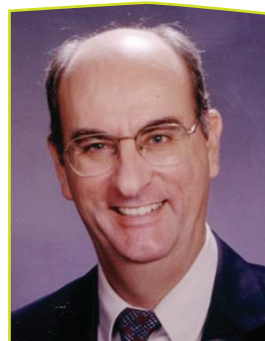
Jack Wyrzten, the founder of *Word of Life International*, conducted a Bible camp each summer at Schroon Lake, N.Y. At one of the adult conferences, a guest with a serious physical impairment attended. Because he could not control the muscles of his mouth, this guest was not able to swallow all his food. Much of it came back out of his mouth and fell down on newspapers with which he covered his chest and lap. At mealtimes, this dear believer usually sat by himself. Whenever, Jack Wyrzten would arrive at the dining room, people would beckon to him to come sit at their tables. But Jack never did; he always went to the table where his guest was eating alone. Jack loved this man with *phileo* love—a love that is brotherly, affectionate, and the love of a companion. Both *agapao* and *phileo* are crucial and needed in the church of God and the world today.

### Conclusion

We are humbled by these simple and yet profound displays of love and I think that is what God calls us to. He wants us to go deeper, to offer love unconditionally, despite the actions of others. It is a kind of love that says, "I will love you, even when you deny me love in return." We need believers in Christ who will show *agapao* love to a needy world, but also those who will sacrificially show *phileo* love. Will we be the kind of Christian who will show both of these forms of love? 

### Endnotes

1. D. A. Carson, *Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapid, MI: Eerdmanns, 1990), p. 676-677
2. R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, London, 1880, Section xii, p. 41. (Digitized by Ted Hildebrandt, Gordon College, Wenham, MA March 2006)
3. W. E. Vine, *Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Vol. 3, (Revell: Old Tappan, NJ, 1981), p. 21-22
4. William MacDonald, *One Day at a Time*, (Port Colborne, Ontario: Everyday Publications, 1985), p. 66



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by David Dunlap



REST HAVEN HOMES

by love serve one another

OPENING SOON!

Love Wing &  
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Rest Haven Homes is thrilled to share that in Fall of 2021, we will be welcoming residents into the newly completed Phase I of our modernized care facility: Love Wing and Loft Apartments. Love Wing offers many benefits to our residents and staff:

- Expanded ability to provide high quality Christian care
- Additional housing amenities and common areas for residents
- Improved and expanded memory care environment for our residents
- Updated and improved working spaces for our employees

We are currently accepting applications for *Independent Living*, *Assisted Living*, and *Phase I Love Wing* prospective residents. If you are interested in discussing the Rest Haven Homes option for yourself or your loved one, please contact Greg Tracy at 616-363-6819 or by e-mail at [gtracy@resthavenhomes.org](mailto:gtracy@resthavenhomes.org).



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**Healthcare - Telemedicine** One of the things that Assembly Care Ministries attempts to provide is such support for our missionaries with CMML and MSC as well as our commended workers of North America. The service is available 24/7 via the website ([www.assemblycare.org](http://www.assemblycare.org)) or the phone line (1-747-226-4577). Our goal is to assist in answering questions, addressing

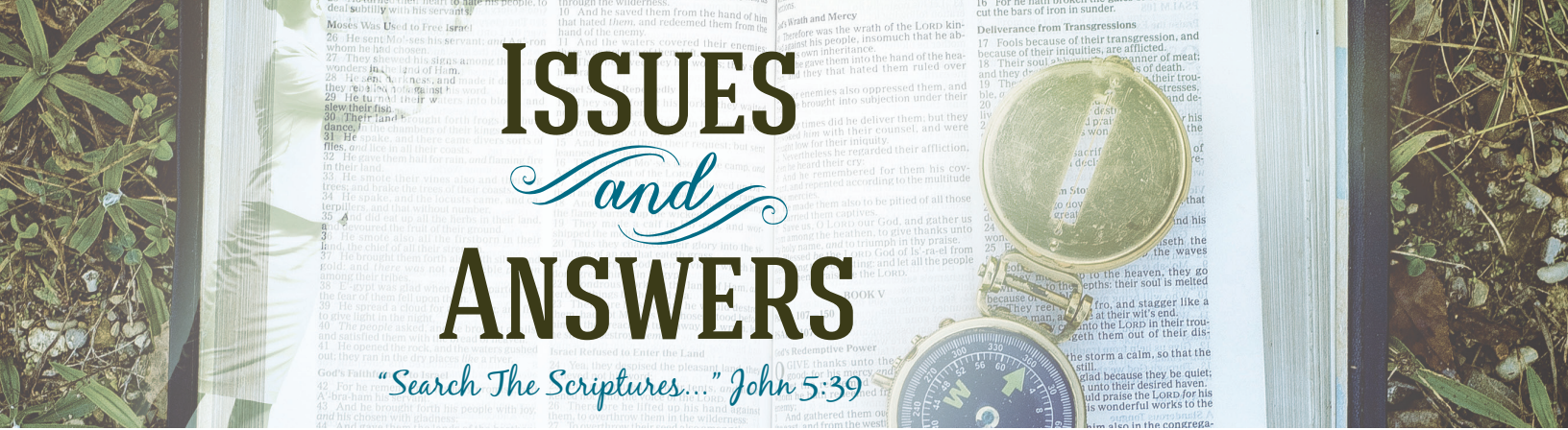
simple health needs, assisting with prescriptions, or similar items—all in an effort to reduce the health care burdens and costs for our missionaries. We cannot solve all health care problems, but we might be able to at least point our patients in the right direction. All is done with voluntary staff and thus at no cost for our fellow servants. We invite our missionaries to freely use these services and hopefully reduce health care distraction from the call of God in their field of service.

**Tax Care** We understand that commended workers have complicated tax situations and we want to help take that burden off with the knowledgeable workers that have years of experience.

**2COR9** A system that networks hundreds of believers nationally so they can meet the financial needs of commended workers by combining small gifts from larger groups of people. It works by sending text messages that contain a short summary of a commended worker's material need. If most or all of the participants text back a small monetary gift, the need is easily met by working together. Everyone's gifts are combined to meet the larger need of the worker.

**Get Involved** Help support state side commended workers by giving to ACM. All funds are used for the needs and care of our local assembly meetings in North America, and the Full Time Commended Workers from those assemblies. If you have a specific need you would like to suggest, then please leave a note, otherwise funds will be distributed to the CURRENT needs. Funds are distributed at ACM's discretion.





***I have believed in Christ since I was a young child but is it important that I cannot remember when I became a Christian?***

The circumstances involved in each believer's testimony are as unique as the people themselves. Though God may use diverse events to draw lost souls to Christ, the spiritual work of the Holy Spirit in illuminating God's Word to the sinner's heart is the same for all. He brings conviction that we were born into this world as lost sinners (Rom. 3:23). He reveals Christ as the eternal Son of God, who on the cross willingly became our substitute, taking the punishment for all humanity's sins (Rom. 5:8). He urges us to receive God's free gift of salvation and escape a lost eternity in hell (Acts 16:31; Rom. 6:23). He pleads with us that trusting in Christ is the only way to heaven (John 3:16-18; 14:6). The Holy Spirit delights to bring these truths to the level of a seeking child's understanding.

Though all believers are saved at a certain point in time, not all believers will necessarily remember the time and place. Those who trusted Christ in their adult years will normally find it easier to remember the events leading up to their salvation while it is more difficult for those saved as a child because many childhood memories tend to fade over time. What is important is that you presently know you have trusted Christ as your Savior. (1 John 5:11-13).


The Lord Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). The Lord had been asked "who is the greatest?" and He used a child to teach the importance of humility. It is easier for a child to humble themselves, which is a necessary attitude for one to recognize their need of a Savior. Their inquisitive minds and unhardened hearts are more receptive to the gospel because they have not had time to be significantly deluded by the deceitfulness of sin and the influences of the world. As one grows into adulthood, pride becomes a tremendous stumbling block. Whether one is a child or an adult they must come to Christ in child-like faith. "Children do not have to become adults to be saved, but adults have to become like children."<sup>1</sup>

The Lord has given Christian parents the privilege and responsibility to share the gospel with their children but they must avoid the temptation to pressure them into a confession before they truly understand. They should read

and tell Bible stories to them, taking the opportunity to apply the gospel at every opportunity. Encouraging them to ask questions and answering their inquiries from God's Word is also important. If it is clear that the Spirit is working on their hearts, parents should ask positive questions to help gauge their understanding. If a child understands and without prompting expresses an interest to be saved, then they should be encouraged to do so. However, when presenting the gospel to anyone—children or adults—we must never play on their emotions. Instead we must wait for the Holy Spirit to convict their hearts.

It is important to remember that we are not saved by our words or by just intellectually believing the gospel facts. Instead we must each individually enter into a personal relationship with Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), believing in our heart that when Christ died, He died for me (Gal. 2:20).

The reality of spiritual life is more noticeable in adults than children but even little ones can demonstrate their love for God and His people in ways that are commensurate with their age. Those truly saved as young children should exhibit more discernable fruit as they grow into adulthood.

Being born into a Bible-believing family is a tremendous blessing. Hearing God's Word in the home and in local church gatherings can expose a child to the gospel at a very young age. It is possible for a one to be saved at such a young age that later in life they cannot remember the time, place, and circumstances of their salvation. However, the important question is: "Does their present lifestyle demonstrate that they have truly believed?" 

**Endnotes**

- 1. William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1995), p. 1276



George Ferrier is full-time worker commended by Bridlewood Bible Chapel (Ottawa, ON). In addition to itinerant preaching and teaching at assemblies and conferences in North America and overseas, he is on the board of Cornerstone Magazine Inc. where he also serves as assistant editor. He lives in Southern Ontario.

**by George Ferrier**

Continued from page 11

With the coming of the eternal Son, God Himself came to earth and spoke (Heb. 1:1-3). Equal to the Father Christ is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person. God's grace has brought us near to Him through Christ (John 1:17-18, 14:21-23) without diminishing His unchanging transcendence. Seeing Christ exalted above all, brings greater clarity and understanding of the High and lofty One who invites us to come boldly to His throne of grace.


While one may separate the Mosaic Law into three parts: civil, ceremonial, and moral, and because nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament, some may be tempted to believe that while the ceremonial and civil have passed the Ten Commandments are now the believer's standard. But we must remember that when it comes to its adherence the law is an integrated seamless whole that must be fully followed (Gal. 3:10, Jam. 2:10).

Instead Christ must be our rule of life. He brings greater light for guidance, superior strength for service, and abundant power for practical holiness. We must foster our relationship with Him, abiding in Him, seeking His direction, wisdom, and power. Measuring our spiritual health by the Law may lead some to legalism, self-reliance, and a sense of self-righteousness that hinders the Spirit's work in their lives.

In others, it may lead to despair as the Law awakens their sinful flesh, accusing and condemning them. This was Paul's experience. He had a sense of self-righteousness

before he met Christ (Phil. 3:4-6). Yet trying to fulfill the Law after his conversion, he experienced something new—its condemnation. Now the law accused him, awakening in him evil desires which conflicted with his new life in Christ (Rom. 7:7-25). In this he recognized his utter helplessness to please God in his own strength. God subsequently revealed to him the liberating truth that there is no condemnation for the believer and that by living a Spirit-filled life, God's righteous moral law could be fulfilled not by him but in him (Rom. 8:1-4).

The Bible states unequivocally that one does not achieve spiritual growth by following the Law (Gal. 3:1-3). Instead it exhorts the believer to live by a new law, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2). This law exhorts us to live by the Spirit, walking with our eyes solely fixed on Christ (Gal. 5:16; Heb. 12:1-2).

The Lord promised His disciples that after His ascension the Holy Spirit would remind them of truths He taught them, introducing also new doctrine specifically for the church (1 Cor. 11:23, 1 Thess. 4:15), bringing greater clarity to the Old Testament. Christ has removed the old and brought in the new (Heb. 10:9). With Him all things have become new (2 Cor. 5:17). 

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by **George Ferrier**

## Homecall

### **Ross Rainey** *"Forever with the Lord"*

On May 28th at the age of 91, W. Ross Rainey entered into the Presence of Christ whom he loved and served for over 75 years. He is survived by his wife Lillian, his lifelong partner in the service of the Lord.

Brother Rainey accepted Christ at eight years of age during the summer of 1937 in Foxmead, Ontario, Canada. At the conclusion of a tent meeting in a nearby town, Ross came to the Lord after singing the hymn, "When the Roll is Called up Yonder." When he questioned whether he could truly say "I will be there!", he came under conviction of sin, and trusted the Lord that night.


At age 12, he attended Stony Brook School in Long Island, New York, serving during his time there as the personal office helper for school headmaster, Dr. Frank E. Gaebelein. Upon his graduation in 1946, he attended and later graduated from Stetson University in Deland, Florida.



Soon afterwards, he began studies at Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas. In 1954, he graduated with a master's degree in theology, and just four days later, married

Lillian Enchelmaier, whom he met previously at South Side Bible Chapel in St. Louis, MO. In time, they would have three children: Laurelyn, Paul, and Timothy, all of whom are going on for the Lord.

In 1954, Ross and Lillian were commended to the Lord's work by four area assemblies with Ross following in his father's steps, who also was engaged in itinerant ministry. He also served for over 20 years as editor of "Food for the Flock," later known as "Ministry in Focus." Many of his messages can be heard on voicesforchrist.org.

His desire in his walk with the Lord was to *"finish well"* and to do it all for the glory of God. 

—Editor

# News & Notices



## The Ezekiel Project School of Evangelism (Virtual Conference)

July 24, 2021

The Ezekiel Project School of Evangelism (TEPSE) will be sponsoring an all virtual conference via Zoom on Saturday, July 24th, 2021 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (EST). The speaker will be Christopher Schroeder from Richmond, Michigan. There will be four sessions on the topic: "Reaching Your World." To register for this event and to receive a link and password, please email [bjschroeder@tepse.org](mailto:bjschroeder@tepse.org).

## West Virginia Bible Conference

July 25 - 30, 2021 • Hinton, WV

The West Virginia Bible Conference invites you to their annual family camp from July 25-30 with speakers Dan Gustafson (SC) and Jonny Lovelace (IA). Children's ministry will be taught by Tim and Liz McNeal (KY). The conference will be held at Bluestone Camp & Retreat near Hinton, WV. For more information contact Brent Jones at 304-466-4738 or [brentandhope@frontier.com](mailto:brentandhope@frontier.com).

## Jersey Shore Weekend in the Word

September 10-12, 2021

Speaker: Brian Gunning (St. Catharines, Ontario) This conference is designed for everyone in mind—singles, couples, families, and seniors with various types of accommodations to fit any need or budget ([www.hcbible.org/accommodations](http://www.hcbible.org/accommodations)). Children's meetings will also be available. For more details and rates, go to [knowtheword.com](http://knowtheword.com) or email [knowtheword@gmail.com](mailto:knowtheword@gmail.com).

## Bible Conference on the Bay

September 13-17, 2021

Speaker: Jim Comte (Ontario, Canada). Conference will be in person with messages streamed live through YouTube. Cost: \$425 pp. To register, go to [www.knowtheword.com](http://www.knowtheword.com) or send the full amount to Know the Word c/o Mark Kolchin P. O. Box 305 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734 by Aug. 15th. Free overnight (Sept. 12th) for those who register for both conferences.

## Workers & Elders Conference

October 12-14, 2021 • Pearland, TX

Manvel Bible Chapel • 4230 FM 1128 • Pearland, TX • 77584 (Near Houston, TX). You don't have to be a Worker or an Elder to attend! The conference is focused on ministering to current and FUTURE workers that we are praying for and believing God to raise up. We would love to see a young generation come and benefit from multi-generational fellowship, prayer and focused teaching of the Word. Please pray about attending!

## Teaching Opportunity: Immanuel Mission School

2021-2022

Immanuel Mission School in northeast Arizona has openings for teachers. Our Pre-K through 8th grade classes are small, which give the teacher a chance to really invest in the children's lives. We do not provide a wage; people come as volunteers and trust the Lord to provide for them financially through a supporting church and praying friends. We can work with someone who does not have a current teaching certificate, but they must have a heart that loves Jesus and children. We also have lots of opportunities to present the Gospel in other ways to our community here on the Navajo reservation. If you know of someone who might be called by the Lord to join us in the work here at Immanuel Mission, please contact the school principal Anne Denny, at 928-489-0421.

## Free Online Gospel Videos from Everyday Publications Inc.

God's Rescue Mission • Clear Gospel lessons for grades 3 to 8 ideal for summer camps and DVBS's. These videos consist of five Gospel lessons, delivered by gifted young men, in an attractive and compelling format. They can be used remotely or for in-person meetings. They are available for download from [www.everydaypublications.org](http://www.everydaypublications.org)

## Rest Haven Homes Job Opportunity

Rest Haven Homes is an Assisted Living Facility in Grand Rapids, MI providing care to our elderly saints. Their mission is based on Galatians 5:13, "By love serve one another." They are looking for people that will come along side this ministry to the elderly and join them as they serve their needs in love. Their staffing needs are for Nurse Aides and Kitchen Staff. For more information see their website [resthavenhomes.org](http://resthavenhomes.org) or contact Isaac Taylor at [itaylor@resthavenhomes.org](mailto:itaylor@resthavenhomes.org) or 616-363-6819

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Submit online: [cornerstonemagazine.org](http://cornerstonemagazine.org) or by email: [gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org](mailto:gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org)

# GOD KNOWS THE BEST

Some time, when all life's lessons have been learned,  
And sun and stars for evermore have set,  
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,  
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet—  
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,  
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;  
And we shall see how all God's plans were right.  
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,  
God's plans go on as best for you and me;  
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,  
Because His wisdom to the end could see,  
And even as prudent parents disallow  
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,  
So God, perhaps is keeping from us now  
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine,  
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink  
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine  
Pours out this potion for our lips to drink.  
And if some friend we love is lying low  
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,  
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,  
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath  
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend;  
And that sometimes the sable pall of death  
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.  
If we could push ajar the gates of life,  
And stand within, and all God's workings see,  
We could interpret all this doubt and strife;  
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day, Then be content, poor heart,  
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;  
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,  
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.  
And if through patient toil we reach the land  
Where tired feet with sandals loose may rest,  
When we shall clearly know and understand,  
I think that we will say  
"GOD KNEW THE BEST"

—Anonymous