

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

CORNERSTONE

NOV - DEC 2022

IN THIS ISSUE:

Is Prophecy Important?

Two Kinds of Doubt

Where Will I Go After I Die?

...and more



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

When Nehemiah received word from one of his brethren that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and its gates had been burned with fire, he sat down and wept after hearing this disturbing news (Neh. 1:2-3). It was disappointing enough that the conditions of the wall were in such a sad state, but it was even more disappointing that it had been that way for so long. Nearly a century before under the leadership of Zerubbabel, a portion of the nation returned from their captivity in Babylon, to begin the process of rebuilding the temple. In time it was completed, but not without resistance. After it was finished, the nation rejoiced, though many were disheartened that it did not possess the same grandeur and glory as the previous temple that stood in its place (Ezra 3:12-13). Nehemiah’s godly concern, led to contrition and ultimately to a course of action as he prayed to the God of Heaven to intervene. Spiritual complacency had gripped the nation, dulling the passion that had once fueled the building program. His course of action included confession of sin both on his part and the nation’s (1:6). His prayer was answered when the door of opportunity swung open three months later, as he explained the reason for his sadness to king Artaxerxes. The result was that Nehemiah was able to secure the resources and permissions that would pave the way for his journey back home to inspect the damage and to inspire the people to repair the wall and the gates (2:1-8). So, it is with any great movement of God. It often starts with one person, spreads to a few more, and then to many as they each share together in a passion for God’s glory, a love for His people, and a plan to move ahead in the strength of the Lord.


The Prerequisites for Revival

But before revival can take place, some preliminary work always needs to be done first—spiritual heavy lifting to clear the path for God to work. After assessing the damage (2:12-16), Nehemiah set to work to stir up others (v. 17). He gave witness to God’s good hand upon him, a vision that was eagerly embraced by his peers who were ready to act. What started with Nehemiah, soon rippled through the ranks. Next on this road to revival was for the gates to be repaired, and significant areas within the structure of the wall that needed fixing.

The Process of Revival

When I think it through this passage, whether in my own life or in terms of corporate testimony, I clearly see how the same principles apply when it comes to revival. The task of self-assessment, asking the tough question “Am I truly pleasing the Lord in my life?” is a question that must be asked. Most of us think of walls as a negative thing, something that needs to be taken down to communicate openness to others. In

some cases, that might be so. But in the spiritual realm, walls represent strength and protection from outside influences that would weaken and compromise the work of the Lord. It was that way for Israel, and it is that way also for the Christian. But if through neglect or companionship with the world, the gates of my spiritual life are broken down, is it any wonder then that spiritual strength is broken down? These gates and the order that they are repaired (Neh. 3) are typical and suggest the path that needs to be taken if revival is to break out as it did later (Neh. 8). These gates—the Sheep, Fish, Old, Valley, Refuse, Fountain, Horse, East, and Miphkad gates are highly representative of the areas of our personal lives that may still need repair if there is to be any revival at all, whether personal or corporate. The need to fix the areas of my life or even that of the local assembly that have been neglected or overlooked need to be addressed. Things such as worship, evangelistic outreach, tried and true elements from the past, humility, purity, fellowship, personal discipline, looking for the Lord’s return, and working for His reward at the judgment seat of Christ—all are typified by the repair of these gates. The fact that so many set their hands to the work demonstrates the corporate aspect of revival. Everyone seemed to be up for the task at hand—the men of Jericho, the Gibeonites, the goldsmiths, the perfumers—all except the nobles who did not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord (v. 5). Some worked on more than one place on the wall (vv. 4, 21); whole families were involved (v. 12); some made repairs opposite their house which surely was done with great interest (v. 23); others were very diligent in their repairs (v. 20). No wonder revival broke out as recorded in Nehemiah 8.

The reason it occurred in Nehemiah’s and Ezra’s day was because the preliminary work had been done. The difficult work of owning up to failure had been acknowledged and then acting on God’s goodness and grace made all the difference. And that is what will make all the difference in our personal lives and in the testimony of the church today if revival is going to happen with you, and me, and the fellowships we attend. 



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by Mark Kolchin

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It is not uncommon in our day to hear people say that prophecy is not important. They insist that we ought to focus on more important matters like evangelism or discipleship and not waste precious time on secondary matters like prophecy. While I empathize with their commitment to evangelism and discipleship, this prioritizing is myopic and fosters an artificial dichotomy between the first and the second coming of Christ. There is zero tension between prophecy (the second coming) and evangelism (the first coming)—at least not in God’s mind. Whatever tension exists is the result of man’s mishandling of God’s redemption.

The following points suggest that prophecy should be a vital part of our evangelism and discipleship, indeed it should be woven into the very warp and woof of our Christian faith.

First of all, nearly thirty percent of the Bible is predictive prophecy. Approximately half of these prophecies were fulfilled in either Old Testament times or in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The remainder await fulfillment in the last days. The Lord would not have incorporated such a high percentage in his revelation to man if prophecy wasn’t important in the big picture. By way of comparison, there is very little predictive prophecy in the Quran or the Hindu Vedas. If we want to accurately reflect God’s emphasis on prophecy, then fifteen percent of our ministry should be on future events.

Second, prophecy is a vital part of the evidence that God is the only true God and that the Bible is the very Word of God. God Himself, in Isaiah 46:9-10, says of his use of

IS PROPHECY IMPORTANT?



prophecy, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." And in Isaiah 44:6-7 he says, "Thus says the LORD the King of Israel, and His Redeemer the LORD of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God. Now who shall proclaim things like I do? Let him declare it and set it in order for Me?" The following paraphrase brings out the sarcasm a little better, "Who shall predict the future like I do? Let him declare the future and make it happen. I want to watch."

God has a good reason for His sarcasm. No other god and no other holy book predict the future with any kind of accuracy, much less the flawless accuracy of the Bible. Prophecy sets God and the Bible apart. They have no peers. Those who marginalize prophecy are snubbing one of the most powerful apologetic tools we have in our evangelism toolbox. The stage for the last days is being set before our very eyes, and anyone who studies Bible prophecy and pays attention to the major developments of our time regarding geo-politics, the Middle East, and the New World Order can easily see the correlation. The stage the Bible foretold is the stage we see being set.

Third, you cannot rightly preach the gospel without incorporating prophecy. Many who preach the gospel have not noticed or considered that the two primary motives given to man in the gospel are prophetic matters. I speak of the two destinies that the gospel sets before men: eternal punishment and eternal blessing. Make no mistake, heaven and hell are prophetic matters of the utmost importance. Ultimately, every person on the planet, indeed every person in history, will spend eternity in the one or the other.


On top of that, the gospel warns that judgment is coming upon the present evil world—not some of the world, but all of the world. Not the worst of its inhabitants but all of its inhabitants. The present world is appointed to a cataclysm of fire even as the past world was appointed to a cataclysm of water. This should stir the unsaved person to action. If they do not desire to perish with the world, they must flee the world and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fourth, the globe of the redemption message revolves around two prophetic poles—the first coming and the second coming of Christ. The first coming was a matter of prophecy for nearly 4000 years before it materialized. The second, after nearly six thousand years, is still a matter of prophecy. If you embrace the erstwhile prophetic message of the first coming as important but decline to give the same emphasis on the future prophetic message of the second coming, you are shortchanging half of the redemption message, and the message will be unbalanced. You put a premium on redemption paid for and discount redemption delivered. You de-emphasize the resurrection of the believer, the judgment and cleansing of the world, and the redemption of the earth when creation enters into

the glorious freedom of the children of God. This is wrong. The Lord Jesus endured the sufferings of his first coming because He had his eye on the second coming, when He would be united with his heavenly bride and His redeemed earthly people. "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (Heb. 12:2). We ought to be looking forward to the rapture and the second coming with the same joy and expectancy.

Fifth, eternal reward is one of the primary motives given to disciples to inspire them to service and faithfulness. We best fulfill our obligation to be steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord when we set our sights on treasure in heaven, even the gold, silver, and precious gems that are available at the judgment seat of Christ. This is a matter of intelligently directed diligence. Entrepreneurs willingly take up sacrifice, hard work, and hardship for temporal gain. When they get discouraged or tired, they turn their eyes upon the rewards that excite their dreams. Disciples should be focused in a similar manner, except that they embrace sacrifice, hard work, and hardship for eternal gain. When they get discouraged or tired, they should turn their eyes upon the prophetic promises that hold out reward in heaven. Furthermore, we do our fellow disciples a disservice if we do not continually encourage them to keep their eyes on the prize, particularly as held forth in prophetic passages which address the rapture, rewards, and the judgment seat of Christ.

Sixth, a biblical focus on the coming of the Lord and its attendant events is a purifying focus. The Bible holds forth such principles as "everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3). What hope? The resurrection when being the sons of God is no longer a promise but a reality. What purification? Not merely from the sins of the flesh but from the distractions and time wasters of the world. When our hope is set on the glory that shall be revealed to us, the attractions of this life and world are seen for what they really are, soap bubbles that are hard to catch and harder to keep.

There is divine blessing when we implement prophecy in our evangelism and discipleship. 



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**

TWO KINDS OF DOUBT



The modern age is plagued by doubt. Moral relativism's onset erodes certainty, leaving indecision about ultimate reality in its wake. Even in religious circles doubt is lauded as humble and high-minded.¹ Yet the Bible teaches believers to take their doubts to the Lord, so that fear and unbelief may be replaced with faith. Matthew 11-12 deals with two radically different kinds of doubt, leading to two radically different outcomes; each of them provides lessons for our times.

A Crisis for A Great Man of Faith

John the Baptist was a great servant of God, fearlessly preaching the gospel to the religious leaders of his day. He pulled no punches, as this passage shows:

"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'"

Matthew 3:7-12

His boldness is further demonstrated in that he rebuked Herod for his adulterous relationship with his brother's wife (Matt. 14:3-12). Yet this courageous ministry led to his imprisonment.

During his incarceration, John sent two disciples to ask Christ: "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Why did such a brave man seem to waver regarding Jesus' identity? Earlier he pointedly identified him as the Messiah (John 1:19-35). Why is he now reconfirming that Jesus is the promised Savior? The context of Matthew 11 offers the answer.


When saints are tried by difficulties, they may doubt what they have previously known. John preached that Christ was coming to judge; yet now his forerunner was imprisoned, and Jesus was being persecuted. By all appearances Israel did not seem to be receptive to the Lord and his message. Circumstantially, the prophet was confronted with the test of waiting. Other servants fell when encountering delays to the fulfillment of God's promises (e.g., Abraham in Gen. 15). Believers can and do doubt—especially when they are threatened or hurting. Eric Alexander makes an important distinction between doubt and faithlessness: "Doubt is not the same thing as unbelief. Unbelief is an act of the will that refuses to trust and obey Christ. Doubt is often asking questions or voicing uncertainty; and it may well be from the standpoint of faith. And doubt which is smothered or ignored can often be the precursor of many problems in Christian experience. Doubt which is confessed and faced and fought through can be a growing thing in someone's Christian experience. It is not the same thing as unbelief or scepticism...a healthy understanding of doubt should go hand in hand with a healthy understanding of faith."² In other words, believers take their doubts to the Lord. They must not wallow in it, allowing it to become settled unbelief. When we waver, we must run to our Great High Priest who upholds our faith through his ceaseless intercession (Heb. 7:25; Luke 22:31-34).

Dispelling Doubt and Building Faith

The Lord Jesus responds to John's emissaries by pointing to his messianic works: "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of me." (Matt. 11:5-6). In the upper room, he later uses the example of his works to bolster his disciples' faith, saying: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves" (John 14:11). By fulfilling Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, Jesus left lasting evidence of his deity and divine mission. The saints can look back on his ministry and take confidence that our faith in Christ is not misplaced. As one writer declares: "Intellectual doubt destroys the peace of the soul. We walk by faith, not by sight. Yet he who believes is

more likely to see than he who believes not. Faith in God, in the certified truths of the gospel, in his promises, and in his overruling providence, brings rest. God reigns! Not a sparrow falleth on the ground without him. His kingdom is sure to come despite all obstacles. The darkest experiences are but the appointments of his infinite wisdom, and in the midst of them he will manifest himself. In every garden of Gethsemane an angel; in every lonely chamber the risen Savior! Do not question, but trust. Be not troubled, only believe."³

The Doubt That Damns

After seeing the Lord Jesus heal the lame, give sight to the blind, cleanse lepers, and many other signs, the Pharisees rejected this evidence, attributing these obviously supernatural deeds to the power of Beelzebub—another name for Satan (Matt. 12:24). As the Lord said: "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me" (John 5:36). When the Spirit-empowered proof of the Lord's identity is rejected, there is no hope. This sin was committed in the face of the pure display of divine light. Not only was such doubt unreasonable, but it was also wilful unbelief. No matter what proof Jesus offered they refused to believe in Him. There is no reason to remain in doubt. The Lord Jesus offers us every reason for faith. His word gives confidence; therefore, read and believe it. As Hebrews 11:6 explains: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." As Christ also said: "Do not be unbelieving but believing" (John 20:27). 

Endnotes

1. "Doubts and fears have in our day been almost elected to the parliament of Christian graces. Some consider it a bad sign not to have any doubts. Doubts and fears are not signs of health, but festers and carbuncles... Give yourselves no rest, day or night, until you can read your title clear to mansions in the skies." T. DeWitt Talmage, in J. S. Exell, *The Biblical Illustrator: Luke, Vol. I.* (London: James Nisbet & Co., n. d.), p. 469.
2. Eric Alexander, quoted here: <http://feedingonchrist.com/doubting-believer/>
3. H. M. King, *Life's Golden Lamp.* (New York Observer, 1889), p. 18.



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by Keith Keyser

WHERE WILL I GO AFTER I DIE?

THE TESTIMONY OF
BROTHER MALICK

"COME AND HEAR, ALL YOU WHO FEAR GOD,
AND I WILL DECLARE WHAT HE HAS DONE
FOR MY SOUL."
PSALM 66:16

COME & HEAR

Introduction by Paul D. Bramsen:

Malick was the first Muslim we saw come to Christ in Senegal (1988). In 1992 Malick became the editor and voice for our Wolof Way of Righteousness radio series. In 1994, he joined me in baptizing our three children in the Senegal River. A few years later he was recognized as an elder in the local church. Here is his own testimony, written in 2004, and slightly revised in 2022 (translated from French to English).

A Terrifying Question

My name is Malick. When I was a Muslim, I often asked myself this question: Where will I go after I die? I really tried to be a good Muslim, faithful to fulfill the requirements of Islam. But despite all my efforts, I never had rest in my heart. I continued to ask myself the same question: Where will I go when I die? Neither my father, nor those who knew Islam better than me could give me a reassuring answer. They would just tell me that "you need to try harder to practice what is good and avoid what is bad. No one can know in this life where they will go after they die. Only God knows." Such a response did not in any way satisfy my heart.

After high school, while studying horticulture, I lived for three years among the Layenes, which is a Muslim brotherhood that believes that Jesus has already come back to earth in the person of one of their spiritual guides. People credit him with accomplishing a number of miracles. I was somewhat impressed. I thought to myself: if this returned "Jesus" did so many miracles, the first Jesus (repeatedly mentioned in the Koran) must have done so many more. Thus, I committed myself to searching out the matter. I

wanted to get a book which spoke of the life and works of the first Jesus. It was in 1986-87 that I met some Evangelical Christians for the first time in my life.

A Sure Salvation

The question continued to haunt my spirit, "Where will I go after I die?" After many months of research, of reading the Bible and discussing the Scriptures with Christians, on April 28, 1988, I surrendered to the evidence. In Jesus Christ I found what I was looking for. Thus, I placed my faith in Him. Only the Lord Jesus was able to provide me with a sure and satisfying answer to that question which would not leave me alone. I learned that Christ had died in my place, endured the punishment for my sin and conquered the grave, so that I could be made right with God and live forever with Him. Jesus had said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me...I tell you the truth; whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life...Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (John 14:6; 5:24; Matt. 11:28-30)

Among others, these Bible verses helped me to accept who Jesus really is. Once I believed, I had assurance. I knew where I would go after I died!!! I know now that I am saved and that I will go to Heaven. And it is not because I am good! Rather, it is by the grace of God which has been manifested by Jesus Christ and by His death on the cross for sin.

My faith in Jesus has changed my outlook on life. I no longer am afraid. Of course, I am conscious of the power of the devil and demons, but Jesus has already proven to me, in His Word and through many personal experiences, that He is by far the most powerful. Today it is Christ who is the Sovereign Lord of my life. It is He who has my life in His hands in accordance with His will and for His glory!

Because of my faith in Christ, I have encountered many difficulties. And I am sure that I will go through many more in a country that is more than 90% Muslim, however, the Lord is ever faithful. He has told us in advance, *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33b). Thus, all these trials have contributed to strengthening my faith. I thank God that He has counted me worthy to share in the sufferings of Christ, even as the Scriptures say, *“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ... without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.”* (Phil. 1:27-29)

A Call to Service

After my conversion from Islam to Christ in 1988, I continued to work as a horticulturist in a variety of agricultural projects in northern Senegal. On January 5, 1991, as I was meditating on Job 22:24-26, the Lord challenged my heart to leave, for His sake, the security of my work. *“Lay your gold in the dust... Yes, the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver; for then you will have your delight in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God.”*

Five days later, as if to encourage me not to worry, the Lord confirmed this call with Deuteronomy 31:8, *“The LORD, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.”*

I heard the Lord’s call, but it was not until the following year that things begin to happen. Our faithful God provided me with work for a Christian mission. My job was to translate Christian literature into Wolof. Months later, the Lord allowed me to become involved in the production of the Wolof “Yoonu Njub” (*Way of Righteousness*) radio broadcasts. These chronological programs, for which I became the voice, clearly explain God’s plan of salvation according to the Bible (See www.twor.com).



Dakar, Senegal • moored Senegalese pirogues

Today I am in my 30th year of radio ministry. And in the last seven years, my wife and I recognized the need for itinerant ministry among the Wolofs and Wolof speakers throughout Senegal. With the Lord’s help, we have launched out into this new ministry which God has put into our hearts to do (Neh. 2:12). This ministry has us going from place to place following the example our Lord Jesus (Luke 8:1). We organize seminars and conferences to teach the Scriptures: encouraging, exhorting, and counselling Wolof believers seeking to contribute to their spiritual growth.

My wife Feluine and I have been married for 28 years and have three boys, who all love the Lord. Our eldest son and his wife have two children. My wife accompanies me in my travels and provides an indispensable support in this ministry. Thank you for your prayers and part with us.

Please pray too, for the Christians in Senegal, and in particular the Wolof believers. It is not an easy thing to live as a Christian in

a Muslim land. Often new believers are afraid to express their convictions and their faith in Jesus because of fear of what might happen to them. In our country, the local community and society have such a powerful grip to the point that folks don’t do anything before considering what others might think. This is a special area of need to pray over regarding new converts. 🙏

by Malik

Report: 30 Years Broadcasting The Way of Righteousness

Tools that Evangelize and Equip

“Great is our Lord, and mighty in power... His Word runs very swiftly!” (Psalm 147:5,15)

It was in May of 1981 that Carol and I and our 19-month-old son, moved to Senegal, West Africa. Those early years were hard and hallowed as our happy little family grew to three children, and as we worked to build relationships, learn two languages, a new culture, and the Islamic worldview. In time, we began to share the story and message of God’s prophets with neighbors, friends, and families—from our home to our downtown book room to surrounding villages.

Seven years would pass before we had the thrill of seeing the first Muslim turn from Islam’s system to Christ’s salvation. Those were years of growing in trust and in intimacy with our God as He was teaching us to wait on Him—for His strength and direction (Ps. 25:3-5) and to wait FOR Him—for His working and timing (Ps. 25:20-21). In His faithfulness, the Lord met us at crucial times in personal ways: encouraging us amid discouragement; reminding us to let Him be God; and that the work was His. Our part was to rely on Him as we explained the gospel in a way that made sense to Muslims, confident that He would bring about a harvest in due season. (Hab. 3:17-19; Eccl. 11:1, 4-6) This He has done.

In September of 1987, through a series of God-directed events, Malick, a 26-year-old Muslim truth-seeker, stepped into our book room and into our lives (See his testimony in this edition of Cornerstone). After seven months of searching the Scriptures, Malick transferred his faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of whom all the prophets wrote. Having received God’s gift of forgiveness and righteousness, Malick’s mind, heart, and life were transformed. Persecution followed. Around that same time other Senegalese also traded in their religion for a relationship with the one true God. A fledgling church was planted.

It was in 1992 that the Lord put it into our hearts to contact Senegal’s national radio station, expressing our wish to buy airtime to produce and broadcast a series of Wolof programs that would “present the stories of the

prophets according to the Scriptures of the Bible.” In a God-orchestrated sequence of events, every obstacle fell away, and a door opened before us to sign a two-year contract for a weekly broadcast on Senegal’s national radio station. With Malick as the voice, the first of one hundred 15-minute programs were broadcast throughout the nation on November 2, 1992. The program is called “*Yoonu Njub*” (pronounced YO-NEW JOUP, as in SOUP), meaning, “The Right Way” or “The Way of Righteousness.”

Thirty years later, these Wolof programs continue to be aired—dozens of times a week—on ten Senegalese radio stations—all owned and operated by Muslims. While the station managers like that we pay for airtime, they are also captivated by the content. Some even choose to freely air our programs extra times each week, “because our audience likes them.”

Muslims are spellbound by the stories and words of the prophets—and those who regularly tune in discover that all the prophets point to Jesus and His all-sufficient sacrifice.

Today, this Creation-to-Christ-to-New Creation radio series not only continues to be broadcast in the 94% Muslim nation of Senegal, but, through many partnerships, these 100 programs, translated and recorded in scores of languages, are being broadcast into the Muslim world and beyond.

In Senegal, Malick wrote earlier this year: “Let us glorify God for a man who visited me last weekend to tell us that he has given his life to the Lord through the ‘*Yoonu Njub*’ programs, which he listened to as a teenager. Now he leads a ministry that uses the radio programs to reach and disciple teenagers.” Trans World Radio uses this chronological series on various platforms in over 50 languages. TWR’s West African director writes: “We are seeing lasting fruit from ‘The Way of Righteousness’ broadcasts. We receive

calls from listeners in isolated areas. In Ghana, a group of 100 people have formed as a fellowship with 10 other cell groups. In Burkina Faso, 7 groups are listening to the radio programs and meeting together. In Ivory Coast, coffee and cocoa plantation workers are turning to Christ.”

Over the past 15 years, the Lord has also put into our hearts the vision and inspiration to produce other multi-media chronological gospel tools, including the movie *King of Glory*, now in more than 50 languages. In the last year alone, more than 4.5 million people have watched this multi-language movie on YouTube with an average view time of 45 minutes per click. The Lord still delights to multiply our “five small loaves and two small fish” to feed the multitudes.


Thank you for praying for our team and worldwide partners as we oversee dozens of ongoing media projects—each with its precise translation requirements and tedious technical challenges. Pray for more workers with the vision and skillsets to join us in limitless global gospel opportunities. And remember, these multi-language resources are not just for souls across the sea; they are for people in your homeland, including “the foreigner residing among you... Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners.” (Lev. 19:34). To be effectively equipped to help people of all ages and cultures understand and believe the gospel, visit ROCK’s website (www.rockintl.org/resources), and avail yourself of free multi-media downloads in more than 85 languages.

One non-threatening way to offer souls the chance to experience the story and message of the world’s bestseller is with a *King of Glory* business card (www.rockintl.org/store). I keep these small, beautiful, embossed cards in my wallet and offer them to people I connect with in stores, gas stations, restaurants, drive-throughs, repair shops, etc. With such a proven gospel tool in your pocket, purse, or wallet—an otherwise mundane errand can be turned into a mission with potential eternal value. This “King’s card” equips the receiver to watch the movie on their phone or device and discover for themselves the big picture of God’s plan of salvation. For the person who is an obvious foreigner, I’ll greet them and ask them something like, “So, where is your family from?” and/or “What language(s) do you speak beside English?” In most cases, the *King of Glory* movie is in their language, and in the flow of a brief conversation, they are delighted to receive the card with its QR code and link (www.king-of-glory.com).

Whatever our method, the Lord Jesus calls us to plant gospel seeds. He makes them grow. What a day of rejoicing that will be when we meet Him in glory and the redeemed souls who have come to Him because we were faithful to scatter gospel seeds along life’s pathway!

“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” (2 Cor. 9:6) Be equipped. To stream, download and share *The Way of Righteousness* radio programs or *King of Glory* movie in



many languages, etc. visit: www.twor.com | www.king-of-glory.com | www.rockintl.org/resources. Be edified. For life-transforming discipleship books and podcasts by Nate Bramsen, visit: www.rockintl.org/discipleship-focused-tools (Check out the ongoing “Exodus” Podcasts!) 



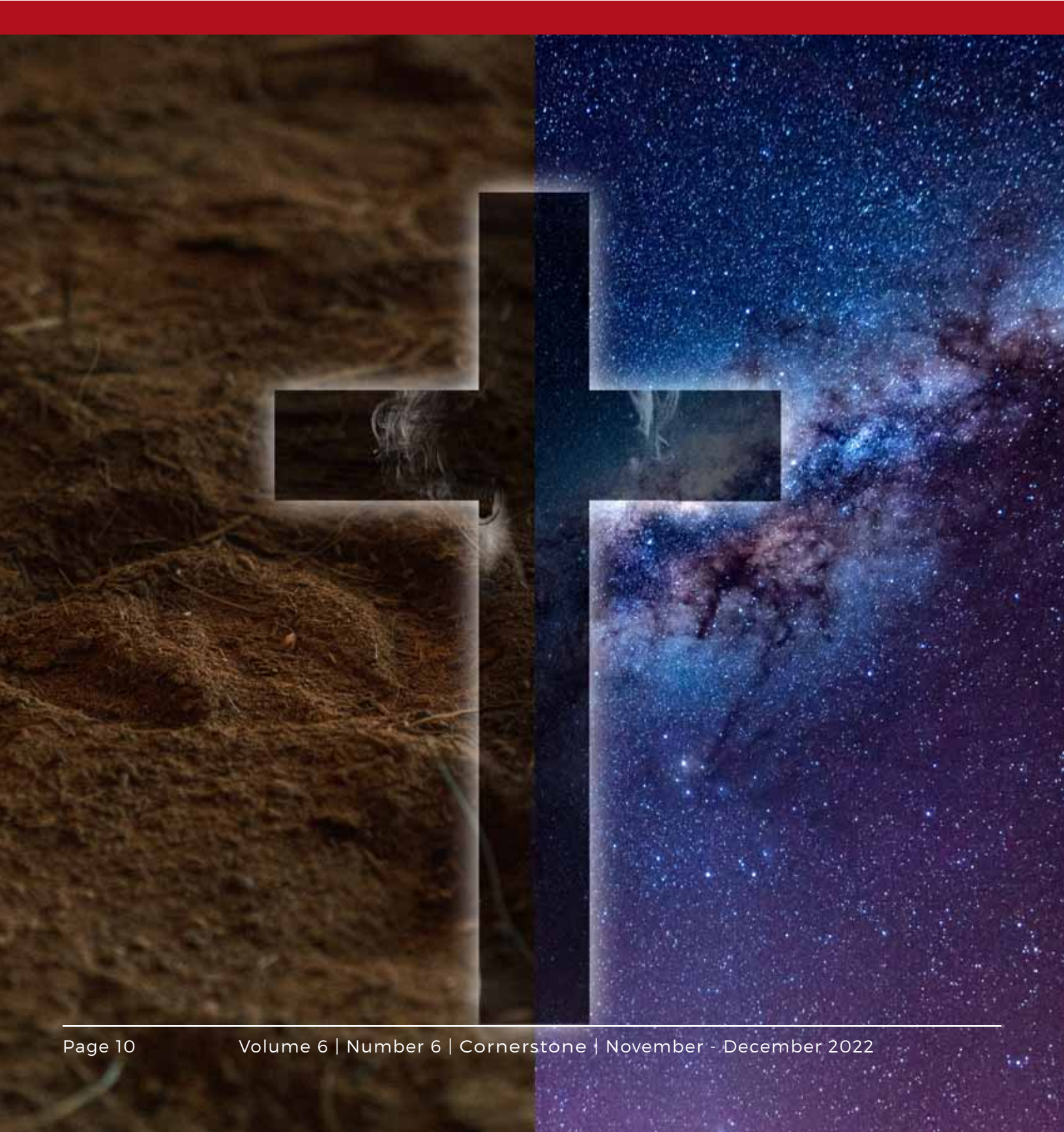
Paul and Carol Bramsen, who first went to Senegal, West Africa in 1981, are commended from Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville, South Carolina. Though currently based in the US, their ministry focus is “the Muslim world and beyond.” They and their remote teams produce and disseminate multi-media, multi-language, chronological-gospel broadcasts, books, audiobooks, and movies—made for a worldwide audience of all ages and cultures.

by **Paul Bramsen**

FOUNDATIONS

of the faith

JESUS CHRIST — GOD AND MAN IN ONE PERSON



Jesus of Nazareth is the unique, one-of-a kind Person in all of history. Having witnessed His miraculous calming of the sea, His disciples asked in wonder and amazement, **“What kind of a man is this?”** (Matt.8:27). Jesus clearly and directly claimed to be God when He said, **“I and the Father are one”** (John 10:30). Throughout His teachings, Jesus audaciously claimed to be equal with God (Matt. 11:27; John 5:17-18; 10:30; 12:44; 14:9-11).

Jesus is also man. In His incarnation the eternal Son of God took upon Himself, an additional nature, humanity (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7; Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4). He did not stop being who He is, but He changed the form of who He is. He is the Son of God and the Son of Man. He poured out the fullness of His deity into a human form. It is amazing and incomprehensible to our minds!

God-Man

The result of incarnation is that Christ remains forever unblemished deity and perfect, complete humanity in one person forever. Thus, Jesus is the unique God-Man (in theological language, the *theanthropic person*)—the union of full deity and perfect, complete humanity in one person. This is called a hypostatic union, a union of two natures to form one person. This is indeed a very difficult concept to comprehend. But the Scriptures make it clear that Jesus is the union of full deity and perfect humanity in one person. His human nature is built upon His divine nature. He is always God, in all situations God.

Jesus is not a split personality, with His divine and human natures in conflict. The Lord Jesus is not two persons, one human, and the other divine; but having one personhood, He is one person. He always acts as one Person. Jesus never spoke of either His deity or His humanity as separate from Himself; He always spoke and acted as one Person. He is a unique Person with two natures, making Him the God-Man. Attributes of both natures (known as the communion of attributes in Christian theology) are expressed through the one Person. His human nature never exists without His divine nature. Jesus could not sin, for He was God as well as man in one person. He was more than a true man; He was the God-Man.

Our Human Nature and Jesus' Human Nature

We have only one nature—a fallen, corrupt, sinful nature. But Jesus had two natures, a divine nature and a human nature. The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person. The virgin birth also makes possible Christ's true humanity without inherited sin. Luke 1:35 connects the conception by the Holy Spirit to the moral purity of Christ—**“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God”** (Luke 1:35, RSV). Jesus did not inherit a corrupt, fallen sinful nature. Inherited sin and moral corruption did not taint His humanity. There was no latent sin in Him.

When Jesus became a man, **“He was being made in the likeness of men”** (Phil.2:7). The Son was sent **“in the likeness of sinful flesh”** (Rom.8:3).“

Observe with what care the incarnation is stated. Paul does not say “in sinful flesh,” lest the Son's sinlessness be compromised, nor “in the likeness of flesh,” which would convey a docetic idea and thereby deny the reality of the humanity of our Lord, making it only an appearance of corporeality.”¹ Ryrie observes that “The word “likeness” is crucial, for it indicates that Jesus was a true man but not a sinful man”² Jesus' human nature was both sinless and real.

Jesus was tempted in all things as we are “yet without sin” or apart from sin (Heb.4:15)³. He was in all points, apart from sin (or sinlessly) tempted like as we are. The New English Bible (NEB) brings out the meaning well: **“One who, because of his likeness to us, has been tested everyway, only without sin.”** The author of Hebrews affirms that Jesus Christ is a high priest **“who is holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners...”** (Heb.7:26). **“Separate from sinners”** is corresponding to **“apart from sin”** (Heb.4:15). The category of sinners is a category to which He does not belong. Though Jesus lived and worked among men, and had close contact with family, friends and His own disciples, His nature was totally separate and different from theirs and ours. He was free from any moral or spiritual blemish not only in His character and conduct, but also in His very nature. There was no constitutional susceptibility to sin in His human nature.

Jesus—Sinless and Impeccable in His Person

I believe a proper understanding of Jesus' unique person with two natures (the perfect God-Man) helps us to answer the question, was it actually possible for Jesus to have sinned? We must conclude that it was not possible. The union of His human and divine natures in one person prevented it. His divine nature was the dominant and controlling principle in His personality. Thus, the person was impeccable. An act of sin would have been a moral act that would have involved the whole person. Jesus was fully man and Jesus was fully God in one person, and **“God cannot be tempted by evil”** (Jas. 1:13).^{CM}

Endnotes

1. Everett F. Harrison, *Romans, The Expositor's Bible Commentary With the NIV, Vol. 10, p. 87*
2. Ryrie *Study Bible, NASB, p. 1712*
3. **“Tempted in all things like manner, sin apart”** (Darby Translation)



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

A Word *Fitly* Spoken

PROVERBS 25:11

All too often men, young as well as old, get up to read long passages from the Word with a comment here and there but lacking any central thought. Others string together reference after reference while we turn the pages of our Bibles to keep up with the reader, making it difficult to meditate upon the Word ourselves. Others seem to pay no attention to what the Lord is leading other brethren to share. Still others fill up the time with a detailed exposition of some topic that might better be dealt with in the preaching service. This disturbs me.

Several years ago, my wife and I visited several of our assemblies in one region of eastern Canada. We were surprised to discover that they do not favor reading or commenting on the Scriptures at the Lord's Supper. Instead, they indulge in long prayers, either full of teaching or replete with truths which our Lord already knows, all depending on whom the prayer was meant for. Certainly not the way to go.

The following is offered with the desire that it might be helpful, providing seed thought to young men as they prepare and participate audibly in the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper. The sample outline provided here has actually been used in that context by the author on one occasion.

All May Change But Jesus Never

How wonderful to know that our God does not change—never, never, never!

- "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6).
- "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

If He never changes, how is it that week after week we come together to talk about Him but never seem to run out of things to say? Many are amazed that one can go on week in and week out in this way. Some even suggest that this cheapens what they call the Communion Service.

The answer? Because of the inexhaustible facets of the person and work of the One Whom we worship. Here's just one example—the many names and titles together with the character that Christ bears.


Someone has well said, "The list of names and titles of Christ is not exhaustive; the resources of language are taxed in the sacred record to set forth the full excellence and worth of the Son of God."¹

Here's a hymn we often sing which illustrates what we're talking about:

*I have found a Friend in Jesus, He's everything to me,
He's the Lily of the Valley, in Him alone I see
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.
In sorrow He's my comfort, in trouble He's, my stay.
He tells me every care on Him to roll.
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star.
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.
He will never, never leave me, nor yet forsake me here,
While I live by faith and do His blessed will.
A wall of fire about me, I've nothing now to fear.
With His manna He my hungry soul shall fill.
Then sweeping up to glory, I'll see His blessed face,
Where rivers of delight shall ever roll.
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star.
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.²*

In conclusion, sing together the above hymn, the chorus, "Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same", or something similar.

A Final Word

Be brief brother, be brief and focused, that He not you might be heard, seen, and worshipped. Throughout the week be in prayer that the Holy Spirit might give you a word, a phrase, a thought, capable of development into a brief and focused presentation such as the above. Waiting upon the same Holy Spirit, and listening to what He has led others to contribute, share it as He may direct. 

Endnotes

1. Everett Harrison, "Christ, Jesus" in *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, 1963, 2nd edition, p. 161
2. Charles W. Fry, 1837-1882



Richard Strout and his wife Virginia reside in Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada, where they have lived since being commended in 1970 by assemblies in the US to work among French Canadians. He is currently a teaching elder at Grace Chapel, Sherbrooke. The couple have four children, 14 grands and 4 great-grandchildren.

by Richard Strout

LORDS OF THE LOCUSTS

The people of Israel were reeling. A tsunami of locusts had swept through the nation and ravished the land from one end to the other. In the wake of this devastation, the prophet Joel has been assigned the unenviable task of letting his wayward countrymen know why it happened and what they must do to get back into God's good graces (2:12, 13).

For most of us, a locust plague is so far from our realm of experiences, that the magnitude of such a disaster is difficult to comprehend. Although we tend to relegate calamities of this order to the far reaches of ancient history, they are much more common than you might expect. As recently as 2020, for instance, these voracious invaders launched an horrific assault on the countries on the Horn of Africa, resulting in devastation that affected more than 35 million people. Scientists, in fact, warn that as the earth's climate continues to warm, such insect plagues will only get worse (www.wired.com). Such dire predictions should come as no surprise, however, since Jesus, Himself, warned that in the last days we should expect to see an increase in pestilences (Luke 21:11).

Joel begins by reminding his readers that the recent locust plague was sent from the Lord and he calls upon the people to repent and return to Him. Then to the peoples' consternation, the prophet forecasts yet another invasion, one even more devastating than the first (2:1). He informs them that a vast and terrible army is poised on their borders waiting to attack. Imagine what must have gone through the minds of Joel's readers at this point. How could they possibly survive another such catastrophe? Surely, there would be nothing remaining of their country.

Midway through his book, however, Joel steps aside from his message of doom and encapsulates their dire predicament in one succinct sentence. Quoting their beloved King David from Psalm 103:8 he reminds them: "Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster" (2:13b, ESV).

First, they must return to the Lord.

Second, He describes four specific characteristics of God:

- He is gracious
- He is merciful
- He is patient (slow to anger)
- He is abounding in steadfast love

Third, He will relent over the impending disaster. After reading these words the Israelites no doubt felt an enormous sense of relief, for God was assuring them of his steadfast love and as such was providing a way of escape. It reminds one of a parent, who after disciplining his child, takes the little one in his arms and tells the child that they are still loved.

It is interesting that the first of the divine attributes highlighted by the prophet is grace: the unmerited, unearned love of God. Grace has been described as the most important concept taught in the Bible. We see in this verse that God's grace is grace in action, for springing from His grace comes mercy, patience and love. The prophet continues by describing just how thoroughly God will demonstrate His grace to them.

Physical Needs

First of all, He promises to meet their immediate physical needs. Grain, oil and wine will be abundantly provided so they will be completely satisfied (2:19). Next, He ensures their physical safety from the army lurking on their borders, for the enemies of Israel will soon feel the power of Almighty God and be driven far from their presence (2:20).

Emotional Needs

He also shows a concern for their emotional needs, telling them that soon their hearts will turn to gladness and rejoicing because they will no longer be a reproach among the nations (2:19, 23). Revealing more of His tender heart, God even comforts the land itself and the beasts of the field, telling them that even though they have suffered, they will no longer need to live in fear. Once again, the pastures will be green, and the trees will bear fruit in abundance (2:21-22).


Continued on page 14...

...continued from page 13.

All these blessings from the hand of God are concrete evidence to the people of His steadfast love, a love He has manifested to Israel, even to this very day. It is also a precious reminder that He also now expresses this same grace, mercy, patience, and love to the followers of His Son.

The writer of Hebrews exclaims, "God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ...but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness" (Heb. 12:7b, 10, ESV). God's ultimate purpose in disciplining His children is so that they might share His holiness. The writer then goes on to develop this thought, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:11, ESV). What then is the peaceable fruit of righteousness which we receive when we share in His holiness? Is not it the very four characteristics ascribed to God by Joel:

- Being gracious
- Being merciful
- Being patient
- Abounding in love

Alfred Lord Tennyson once wrote, "What the sunshine is to the flower, the Lord Jesus Christ is to my soul." May the love of the Savior warm our hearts in this way, so that the grace, mercy, patience, and love we show to others will leave a visible reminder of One who loves them so deeply that plumbing its wondrous depths will reach beyond time and eternity. Such is the Father's love for us. 



Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario Nathanael was an elementary school teacher and principal for 29 years. Upon retirement in 2003 he and his wife, Joyce, moved to Peterborough where for three years they were hosts at Amicus House, a respite home for missionaries on furlough. They fellowship at Southdale Bible Chapel in London, Ontario. Nat has authored five books including God of the Trees (Everyday Publications) and Visions of Eternity (with his son, Joel Reed) (Gospel Folio Press).

by Nathanael Reed

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ISSUES *and* ANSWERS

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

What does it mean that an overseer must be "the husband of one wife?" (1 Tim. 3:2)

The phrase "the husband of one wife" (also in Titus 1:6) does not likely have polygamy in mind because in New Testament times it is debateable how widespread the practice was in Roman and Jewish culture. A Roman citizen by law could only have one spouse at a time. Further, the corresponding phraseology that a widow must be the "the wife of one husband" (1 Tim. 5:9) to receive financial help must then be interpreted that a woman could not have more than one living husband (polyandry), but this practice was relatively unknown. Still, having more than one living wife would certainly disqualify one from seeking the office of an overseer.


Some have suggested that it disqualifies widowers who had remarried. However, the remarriage of widows and widowers is permitted in the New Testament (Rom. 7:1-3). The Lord expected younger widows to remarry and raise a family (1 Tim. 5:14). First Corinthians 7:39 says: "A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord." Hebrews 13:4 says: "Marriage is to be held in honor among all..." (NASB). The Bible would not insist that a widower who desired to be an overseer remain celibate while at the same time condemning the false teachers who prohibited marriage (1 Tim. 4:3). These false teachers held the incorrect belief that the unmarried life was more spiritual. On the other hand, Paul does recommend that widowers do not remarry so that they have more time to serve the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32). Yet, the fact that a widower remarried should in of itself not disqualify him from the oversight.

Others believe it rules out those who have remained single. This seems unlikely. Though all the other apostles were married, the Lord did not exclude Paul from an apostolic ministry because he was single (1 Cor. 7:8; 9:5). Instead, there is an assumption that most men will marry just as it is presumed that most couples will have children (vv. 4-5). A single man can still wisely apply Scripture to family issues in concert with married men on the oversight. This is the strength of a plurality of leadership in the local church. As already mentioned, a single man has more freedom and time to serve the Lord (1 Cor. 7:25-38).

Instead, the context of this section (1 Tim 3:1-7) is listing the personal attributes to consider when it comes to recognizing elders in a local assembly (1 Tim. 3:1-7). Therefore, the phrase "the husband of one wife" is describing the character of a man in his marriage.

One commentator notes: "The two nouns are without the definite article; which construction emphasizes character or nature. The entire context is one in which the character of the bishop (*overseer*) is being discussed. Thus, one can translate, "a one-wife sort of a husband," or "a one-woman sort of a man."¹ Consequently, a one-woman sort of a man speaks of a married man's total faithfulness to his wife.

Since normally there is fault to be found in both parties of a divorce, this would appear to exclude divorced men from the oversight. Since elders are to lead by example it is important that an overseer has a demonstrated faithfulness to his first wife. Depending upon the circumstances, there may be rare exceptions to this exclusion which requires great discernment on a case by case basis.

The overseers of the local church are called to lead by example in their personal, family, and church life. Marriage serves as one of the barometers of a man's suitability for leadership. How a man conducts himself in his marriage and with his children (vv. 4-5) is an indicator of how he will exercise spiritual leadership in his local assembly. Regardless of marital status, an overseer must have a morality that cannot be truthfully challenged, and if married, have an unquestioned faithfulness to his wife. 

Endnotes:

1. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), vol. II, p. 53



George Ferrier is a 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 fellowships at Bethel-Park Bible Chapel in Brantford, ON.

by George Ferrier

News & Notices



CMML Youth Night

November 11, 2022

Maplewood Bible Chapel 127 Burnett Ave,
Maplewood, NJ 07040

CMML will hold their annual Youth Night at Maplewood Bible Chapel on November 11, 2022. The speaker this year will be Dr. Steve Price. The in-person event will also be live-streamed. Visit CMML.us/youthnight2022 for more information and to register.

CMML's 52nd Annual Fall Conference

November 12, 2022

Grace Bible Church 4041 Squankum
Allenwood Rd, Allenwood, NJ 08720

CMML invites all to join in-person or online for their 52nd Annual Fall Conference, scheduled for November 12, 2022. The conference theme is "Missions 101: Your Role," and will feature keynote speakers Dr. Steve Price and Tim Beer, along with 10 missionary reports, Zoom Q&A sessions, presentations from the CMML team, and musical performances. In-person attendees may also take advantage of a children's program, Chick-fil-A lunch, and a ministry expo. Visit CMML.us/fallconference2022 for more information and to register.

Cornerstone Magazine Webinar

November 21, 2022

Cornerstone Magazine's YouTube Channel

Cornerstone Magazine will be hosting a webinar on the topic of "No One Man, No Any Man", a discussion on the priesthood of all believers. Participants will be Warren Henderson, Keith Keyser, and Mark Kolchin.

Emmaus Worldwide Employment Opportunities

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Bethesda Administrator (CA Licensed)

Bethesda is a Christian Retirement Home in Hayward, CA that is established to show the love of Christ by serving the elderly with quality and compassionate care that nurtures spiritual, physical and emotional needs with dignity and respect. They are seeking a qualified Administrator that will direct daily operations according to Federal, State and organizational standards. The ideal candidate embraces and fulfills the mission and vision of Bethesda and is a skilled leader with excellent critical thinking skills. Qualifications include: current California Nursing Home Administrator's (NHA) License, in good standing; Current Social Services Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE) License; at least 2 years of current experience as SNF Administrator; strong organizational and time management skills, and ability to prioritize; must be a self-starter and driven; excellent communication and interpersonal skills; strong problem-solving skills and analytical abilities. For more information please contact Dorothy Naidu at dotjyot@aol.com.

Volunteers Sought for Voices For Christ

Voices for Christ (www.voicesforchrist.org) has an extensive backlog of cassette tapes (and reels) from several nations that is overwhelming our present team of volunteer digitizers, and we would love to train more ambitious young (or young-at-heart) servants for this ongoing work. Experience helpful but not necessary. For more information please contact Doug Engle at dougengle76@gmail.com or 620-200-2045

Book Offer

"Solving the Spiritual Dilemma—Why is Discernment Key to Receiving Eternal Life" by Michael Copple officially releases April 8. It reveals the problem of man's separation from God and how to fix it. To solve this eternal life or death issue the author explains how to be redeemed to God using Scripture and discernment. This book is written for seeking souls wanting to know who God is and how He invites one into His kingdom, and for parents looking to explain the truth about False Teaching; Indoctrination; Climate Change; Abortion; Transgender; Gay Marriage; LGBTQ+; and Peer Pressure to their children, and the evangelistic community in general. For more information visit Mike's website at <https://michaelcopple.com>.

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How easily tempted and subtly lured,
To pray for mountains to move,
When oft, the stark reality is,
Tis you, not the mountain He moves.

The climb may be steep and the threats may loom large,
Yet with Caleb we boldly will pray,
“Give me this mountain, if the Lord be with me!”
It’s but a platform on which to praise.

We have been called “A city on the hill”, yet in fear, we crouch down,
And ask for a valley wherein to hide.
When the obstacle we fear, is an opportunity to claim,
For the Master who taught us to climb.

So, sisters and brothers, let us confidently pray,
For feet like the deer to scale the peak.
And rather than pray for the mountain to move,
For the courage to mount up may we seek.

*Nathan Bramsen
August, 2022*

