

EXALTING CHRIST · EQUIPPING BELIEVERS · EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

CORNERSTONE

MAY - JUN 2023

IN THIS ISSUE:

Rising Above Our Circumstances

The Scriptures of Truth

My Journey From A Library to a Funeral Home

...and more

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

When Moses uttered the words “for their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges” (Deut. 32:31), he did more than just declare a mild difference between the world’s ways and God’s. It was a bold declaration to the people of God that the resources they possess in the Lord are far greater than what this world has to offer in dealing with the issues of life. It is not just a case of the world having their ways of tackling problems and we have ours, as if both ways are legitimate. No, their ways are ultimately ineffective and inadequate “...themselves being judges.” The point is that they know it, they just don’t want to admit it. Their rock is indeed not as our Rock. There is a difference—a big difference—though I once saw a clever application of this verse as a justification for contemporary Christian music. Maybe there is not a big difference there, except in words. But at least there is a difference, and that is the point.


The Smitten Rock

The symbol of Christ as our Rock is seen throughout God’s Word in many ways. When the children of Israel were traveling through the wilderness, it was the smitten Rock that brought forth life-giving water to the weary travelers. As Israel experienced, the water that gushed from this Rock stands in stark contrast to the broken cisterns of this world. These cisterns have always failed eventually and for those who have tried to find true refreshment from them they will ultimately testify that they “mocked me as I wailed.” The world’s broken cisterns hardly provide lasting and satisfying spiritual refreshment to the desperate soul. Their rock is not as our Rock!

The Sustaining Rock

Later in their wilderness sojourn that same Rock would sustain Israel on their journey in another place. First Corinthians 10:4 states: “They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them and that Rock was Christ.” It was that same Rock, though it was a different situation. The fact that it is in another location (Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11) and that it only required to be spoken to and not struck again is a plain reminder to us that we have a Resource that we can come to time and again to help us, subsequent to our salvation. The world’s cisterns will eventually run up or be abandoned in time for some new cistern that proposes to be better than the last. They too will fail, but Christ will not. Their rock is not as our Rock!

The Solid Rock

This same Rock—Christ—is also the place we should go to when our hearts are overwhelmed. Problems will always come up and sometimes many at one time. Like Jehoshaphat, we may be overwhelmed by “a great multitude” coming at one time against us (2 Chron. 20:2). All he could do was to look to the Lord, not knowing what to do (v. 12). His experience stands in complete contrast to Jacob who heard that Esau was on his way to settle an old score with him (Gen. 32:1). We tend to implement our own plan first—resorting to our own wisdom and ingenuity first, then praying for the Lord to bless. Really it should be the other way around—first praying, then asking the Lord for guidance as to the next course of action. Foolish for us to think we should manage our affairs without His help! The overwhelmed heart—which seems to be a common thing these days—needs to go to higher ground. “The Rock that is higher than I,” is where we get the solid footing to deal with the issues of life that assault us every day and in every way. Regardless of the way we feel, we are assured of help to withstand the assault from an array of enemies. Hymnwriter Edward Mote stated it this way: “when all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.” Mote penned those words in the mid 1800’s when no internet existed, nor the societal ills that saturate our cultural landscape today. If he felt overwhelmed then, how much more would he feel overwhelmed if he were living today? All the more reason for us to heed his spiritual advice during the “present distress” (1 Cor. 7:26) and any personal issues that we may be going through now. Like David, when our hearts are overwhelmed, we need to go to that Rock “that is higher than I” and show to those around us that their rock is not as our Rock! 



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by **Mark Kolchin**

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Donations: For **U.S.** donors: please send gifts to
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PO Box 690096, Charlotte, NC 28227 USA
For **Canadian** donors: please send gifts to
Cornerstone Magazine Trust
PO Box 246, Waterford, ON, NOE 1Y0
For **online** donations, please go to:
www.cornerstonemagazine.org

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Design and Layout: Danielle Robins

Website Design: Matt Williams, Louise Street Marketing

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Purpose: Cornerstone Magazine seeks to build up and encourage the Lord's people by publishing Bible teaching articles and reports of the Lord's work. Its aim is to present truth in words that are easy to understand in regard to the person of Christ, His church, and evangelism.

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Donations: Cornerstone Magazine is jointly published by Cornerstone Magazine, Inc., an United States Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit corporation, and Cornerstone Magazine Trust, a charitable trust registered with Canada Revenue Agency. Cornerstone Magazine is dependent upon the Lord to provide for its needs. It is freely sent upon request, as the Lord enables. No subscription fees are charged. Cornerstone Magazine is supported by those who appreciate the aims and the work of this ministry. All donations are tax deductible in accordance to law. All funds received are used towards the ministry of Cornerstone Magazine. We are thankful to all who practically support the work of Cornerstone Magazine.

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RISING ABOVE OUR CIRCUMSTANCES



Life!... Life is hard. Living life with the attitudes and ideologies of society is hard. And then there are the day-to-day events that seem to weigh us down and make us wonder if God is truly present in our daily struggles. You know what these weights can be: financial concerns, health issues, family members going astray, the loss of a loved one, and on and on the list grows. Speaking from experience, I want to encourage you; God truly is still in control, and He does care for your struggle. The example that comes to mind is the life of Joseph.

Joseph's life and struggles are a good example to help us refocus. Read his story again (Gen. 37-50) and take note of the way he handled himself in various circumstances.

From sibling rejection to sexual temptation, he maintained his relationship with God and did not waver from following what he knew God required of him. It appears God was preparing Joseph for the main work of his life which was still years away into the future. Would Joseph cave under pressure or would he turn his back on God? We do not see anything like that in Joseph's life. In fact, it seems that his faith was growing steadily despite his circumstances. As we put ourselves into Joseph's situation, we must ask ourselves, what is God preparing us to do? Am I still in the process of life's experiences in preparation by God for future responsibilities? Is He preparing me for some special ministry or service?

We all have different types of temptations throughout the various stages of our lives. Solomon is another example. As an older man he was carried away by his own superior intelligence and having tried everything that life, money, and power could provide, became disillusioned with life. He began to allow the women in his life to turn his heart away from God. Perhaps this might be one of the greater temptations as people get older. They allow distractions of this life to occupy their time, and soon their interest is in their own comfort and happiness, their business, or activities. Difficult times such as brought on by the loss of a spouse or loved one, financial crisis, or other concerns can cause a person to blame God for not keeping life as it was. James 1:2-4 addresses how we should face trials of many kinds.

As a youthful, handsome man Joseph perhaps faced sexual temptation. Potiphar's wife certainly tempted him. But he resisted knowing that God had a plan for his life and kept his focus on what was important saying: *"How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"* This clearly shows that he measured everything in life against God's standards and purposes. In all the circumstances of our lives, both good and bad, we should ask ourselves, "Would God want me to live like this?"

Joseph's jail experience must have seemed like the last straw! How many times might it have seemed as if God had forgotten him, and yet he never wavered. Instead, he behaved as God would expect him to behave. Even in the worst of circumstances when we have God as our focus, He can, and will, bring good out of it (Col. 1:1-12). If we maintain a right focus on the Lord even though we may be down because of problems, sickness, bereavement, or persecution, God will still use us and make our lives fruitful.

With each time of being forgotten, Joseph could have given up. You see, it wasn't God's time and God had a purpose in making this special servant wait. Waiting for God's time is another area of weakness for most of us. I know that I become very impatient when my prayers are not answered quickly. I begin to wonder why God doesn't do what I want. After a time, it is easy to just think, "Well, why should I keep praying about it? I'll just move on to do, or prepare, for something else." When we do that, we probably miss out on God's best for us.


I like to think about how the Lord Jesus was able to abide by God's timing. In Galatians 4:4 we read, *"But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son..."* Then the Lord waited 30 years before He began His ministry. During His life, on many occasions we hear Him saying *"My time is not yet come..."* (John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20). When the time for His betrayal and death was close, He could say, *"The hour has come..."* (John 12:23); *"Jesus knew that the time had come..."* (John 13:1); *"Father, the time has come..."* (John 17:1). The Lord Jesus could summarize His incarnation by telling Pilate, *"In fact, for this reason I was born, and for*

this I came into the world..." (John 18:37). He was always aware of God's timing and purposes.

Think about the way Joseph was eventually called on to interpret Pharaoh's dreams and then elevated to the highest position of authority under Pharaoh. Had he been released years earlier he would not have been available, nor would he have been in a place where Pharaoh could easily find him. His years of rejection, ill-treatment, and suffering played an integral part in the formation of his character, and at the same time gave evidence that he was a man whom God could trust and use in a position of power.

Eventually, his brothers came to Egypt to purchase food for their families and when Joseph recognized them, and they showed that there was sorrow for what they had done to him, he frankly forgave them. Joseph could see things from God's perspective and say to them, *"God intended it for good..."* (Gen. 50:20-21). God demonstrates His love to us the same way. (Rom. 5:8).

In all our circumstances, including the death of loved ones, we should, *"fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..."* (Heb. 12:2-3). The void this leaves is tangible and the ache in the heart is so very real. I used to think the term "heart ache" was just a way of feeling sorrow. However, having first of all lost my little two year old son in an accident, then my first wife dying of a sudden heart attack after 26 years of marriage, only to be followed ten years later by the death of my second wife to breast cancer, I know from personal experience, that the ache in the heart is not just a metaphor for sorrow, but a strong, actual heart pain that makes you wonder if you are having a heart attack. Yes, we need to grieve as part of the healing process; however, don't be overcome by sorrow, but rather see the circumstances as part of life and living, then, press on *"toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 3:13-14).

I have found that in each situation that seemed like "the end", it was God's way of giving my life a new direction and a change of ministries. Perhaps God is leading you in such a journey. We should always keep in mind that God is in control, and He allows us to pass through times of testing to strengthen our faith and help us mature spiritually. 



Ian Taylor a commended missionary to Colombia in 1968, served 20 years there, later moved to the USA, and has continued as an itinerate teacher, currently serving on the Board of Trustees of Emmaus Bible College and chairing the Board of Emmaus Worldwide.

by Ian Taylor



The SCRIPTURES *of* TRUTH

The Formation of the Scriptures

The Apostle Peter says in 2 Peter 1:16: “for we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of His Majesty.”¹ He goes on to describe his personal experience when he was with the Lord on the mount of transfiguration (v. 17).

He then continues by explaining that this event was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, demonstrating the reliability of God’s Word and assuring us of its truthfulness: “We have the prophetic Word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first that no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

So, from Genesis to Malachi the divine Author was the Holy Spirit of God using human writers. The New Testament writers were also guided by the Holy Spirit to bring to completion the divine revelation of the entire Scriptures. The book of Revelation, revealed to John in exile, was written to the seven churches of Asia. The solemn word presented gave this injunction: “He that has an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit to the Churches.” This wonderful book, the Bible, closes with some very serious consequences

to anyone who would add or take away from what is written in it. In other words, from Genesis to Revelation the divine Author is the Holy Spirit of God.

An unknown author wrote the following:

“The Bible was written by approximately 40 writers. The first and last were separated by 1500 centuries. The writers were kings, statesmen, soldiers, scholars, philosophers, physicians, poets, herdsmen, shepherds, and fishermen. Parts of it were written in the desert of Sinai, the wilderness of Judea, the river of Babylon, the prison in Rome, and the Isle of Patmos. It contains history, geography, genealogy, law, ethics, prophecy, poetry, philosophy, hygiene, and principles to which obedience will produce individual happiness and national greatness. The Bible is so diverse in composition and contents. It gives the impression that each part is necessary to the other. Taken together these parts form one complete and coherent whole.”

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

Having considered the formation of Scripture and the wonderful way it all came together, we are thankful it has been translated into many languages and is being distributed throughout the world. According to the Guinness Book of Records it is still the world’s best seller. We need to keep

praying and supporting those who print and send out the Scriptures here and across the world.

Let's consider the fact that it is divinely inspired. The simple understanding of the word "inspiration" means it is God breathed. In 2 Timothy 3:16 we read: "**All** scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." What tremendous blessings and benefits are given to those who read and give heed to it! There are many who teach that only parts are inspired while the rest is added by human thought and experiences. This verse states quite definitively that all of the Bible is from God.

The Lord Jesus while being confronted by Satan reminded him: "*Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*" The new believers at Thessalonica gave Paul reason to "*thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe*" (1 Thess. 2:13). Dear believer, what is your attitude to the Scriptures you read? Listen to what James says: "*But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves*" (Jas. 1:22).

The Profit of the Scriptures

In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul speaks about being nourished up in good, sound teaching which is so important in laying a solid foundation for Christian living and service. It is doctrine that shows us the right way. David could say: "*He restores my soul.*" (Psa. 23:3). How many times have we been blessed by the restoring grace of our God leading us back to Himself through His Word.

One other thing to consider is teaching children "*the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*" (2 Tim. 3:15). May this be an encouragement to parents, Sunday School teachers, Kids Club leaders, camp ministries, and all who work in bringing the gospel to children in a very ungodly world. Many have come to the Savior in later years through the seed of the Word sown in their hearts when they were young.

The Searching of the Scriptures

This subject is inexhaustible but here are a few pointers to encourage, especially our younger people to take the time to patiently search them out. The believers at Berea "*received the Word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*" (Acts 17:11). Do you accept what you hear from speakers you listen to or do you search it out to see if it is true? Peter warns of many false teachers among us "*who will secretly bring in destructive heresies... and many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*" (2 Pet. 2:1-2). We are thankful for every gifted Bible teacher and gospel preacher who handles the Scriptures as the "oracles of God."

It is good to follow the exhortation from Paul to the young Timothy: "*give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine...meditate on those things, give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may appear to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will both save yourself and those who hear you.*" (1 Tim. 4:13, 15-16).


Below are a few excerpts from the introduction to the Gideons Bible:

"Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end."

"It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure."

"It involves highest responsibility; will reward the greatest labor; and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

"Owned it is riches; studied, it is wisdom; trusted, it is salvation; loved, it is character; and obeyed, it is power."

What a wonderful blessing to have the liberty at this present time to read it without harassment. We pray for those in other parts of the world who are denied that privilege. How good that we have the freedom to invite others to come and know the great blessing it can be to their lives. The Scriptures carry with it all the authority of the living, eternal God behind it! One day everyone will have to give an account as to how they received and obeyed its truth. I trust the reader will give God's Word the very serious consideration and deep respect that is due it. 

*Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,
Be Thou forever near,
Teach me to love Thy sacred word,
And view my Savior there.*

Anne Steele

Endnotes:

1. All scriptural references quoted from the NKJV



Jim was commended to the work of the Lord by his assembly in Broxburn in 1981 and by the Bridlewood assembly in Ottawa Ontario in 1991. Jim has been involved in prison ministry, camp work, hospital chaplaincy, and has preached the Word throughout Canada and the US. He presently lives in Port Colborne, Ontario with his wife, Elizabeth.

by Jim Paul

MY JOURNEY

From A Library to a Funeral Home

THE TESTIMONY OF
SHANE JOHNSON

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

COME & HEAR

My salvation story begins in a library and ends in a funeral home, although I now know it started much earlier than that. But from what I remember that day in the library was the first step that guided my feet to the gospel of God.

I was not raised by Christian parents. My father died from cancer when I was very young, so my mother struggled to raise my brother and I. We never went to church a day in my life, but I was quite proud to tell anyone who asked, "I'm Anglican!" Whatever that was, I had no idea.

Fast forward ten years. My mother remarried, and I fell into the wrong crowd. From grade 8 to grade 12 I tried on several identities in an effort to find out who I was - a rapper, a jock, a rock star - but none of them fit, none of them satisfied.

Then in my last year of high school, I started to become a little sick of sin, although I did not know it was called "sin" at the time. I was disappointed with myself, and at times, even a little disgusted. My choices, the way I had treated other people, and the person I had become had severed some relationships and almost broke my mother's heart. I looked around and was sick of the way my peers were behaving too. But there was a man sent from God whose name was Dave...

Dave was a little different than all the others. He was a Christian, a Bible "thumper," as many of us called him. He didn't drink, he didn't swear, and he wasn't desperate to be "cool." In short, he was a nice guy. Since I had turned a new leaf in my final year of high school, choosing to take my studies more seriously, and because Dave was a serious-minded student as well, we quickly became friends. He did not share Christ with me right away, but from time to time he broached the subject and gradually it became one of the issues we discussed.

Now for the library. One time I remember discussing evolution vs. creation with him in the library. He gave

me an illustration: "suppose we shut all the doors in this library and sealed it airtight for millions of years, would life spontaneously begin from within?" No, I said, "because it made no sense." "So why do you think the universe started that way?" he asked. I had no answer. From that day forward, I made a shift in my thinking. There was a God... but now who was He?

Fast forward again a few months. Dave and I had moved to McMaster University together as roommates. I met his family a few times; they bought me a Bible; and I had eaten at their table. When they prayed, I remember, it was quite personal and seemed as if God were seated right next to them. It was nothing like the prayers I had heard as a kid, which were "God is good, God is great, thank you for this food, let's eat." Their prayers impressed me as genuine and real.

At the same time something else was happening. My aunt and uncle had become Christians, and they were extremely exuberant about it. They told us about Jesus every time we saw them at family reunions. They invited us to their baptisms. They gave us various pamphlets and books. I did not know it at the time but they were becoming more and more "Pentecostal" and would eventually become ministers in the Vineyard Movement years later. But in the beginning their conversion was contagious and it got my attention. The rest of my family may have cringed to hear about Jesus and the cross, but I had ears to hear and measured what they were saying against my disappointment in life up to that point.

Then my grandmother fell sick around Christmas, and she was pretty close to me. As she was nearing death it was the first time, I had come face to face with the question of my own mortality. I remember thinking, "Where will Grandma go when she dies? Where will I go when I die?" Jesus spoke

about heaven and hell. I knew I had done things that were not right so if there was a place called hell, I was pretty sure I would be going there.

Eventually my grandmother died. The last time I saw her was at Christmas during my first year of university. I attended the funeral. My aunt and uncle were there. They were talking about Jesus again, which was typical. The minister was blathering on about Grandma being a good person, about Grandma being in heaven, about Grandma looking down on us from above, blah, blah, blah.

I remember thinking: if this minister is right then the Bible is wrong, because the Bible says we are sinners and that we are not good, and that is why Jesus needed to die for us, to forgive our sins since we cannot wash them away on our own, with good deeds, or charity or penance, etc. The minister, however, was suggesting my grandmother was in heaven because she was a good person.


Silently, thoughtfully, sitting right there in the pew, I disagreed with the Anglican minister and agreed with the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for my sins. I prayed in my heart and for the first time believed. I immediately “felt” unburdened of my fear of judgement and Hell. I finally felt at peace with God and knew my sins were forgiven. I also immediately felt a new kinship with my aunt and uncle at the same time feeling a “distance” from the rest of my family. Although I didn’t have the language to express it yet, I later found out that I had become born again. I had passed from death to life. I had received a new nature and received the Holy Spirit. The Bible became alive to me.

Looking back over the years I have drawn a few lessons about sharing our faith in a world blinded by the devil. Number one is that my friend Dave used to think his “light” shone so dimly because of some of the bad choices he was making during high school. I’ll admit he wasn’t perfect, but he was so different from the others that his “dim” light shone like a floodlight in the darkness of my high school years. Therefore, take heart and know that your Christian witness may have more of an impact than you think.

Number two is that some people come to Christ gradually. Conversion happens in a moment but persuasion may take a lifetime. I began believing in God in a library at my high school. A year and a half later I put my faith in Christ while listening to a false minister at a funeral. A conversation here, a shared meal there, a good friendship, and a life observed all convinced me that if Christ was real, then He was certainly able to make a person strong and whole. Dave was living proof.

Number three is that God may use two or three witnesses to establish His word. Not only was I subtly learning about Jesus through my friendship with Dave, through his character, choices, and family life, but I was also learning

about Jesus overtly through the continuous onslaught of Jesus talk from my aunt and uncle. They may have pushed a lot of people away through their brash witnessing, true, but they did get through to me, or rather God got through to me in spite of them. Therefore, take heart that you do not bear the yoke alone. God has others He is using in tandem with your witness and in time, it will come to pass.

Since then I have tried to share my faith in hope, knowing that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world, blowing wherever He wishes, drawing people to Himself in all places and at all times, working through whatever means He chooses. 



Shane Johnson was commended by Bethel-Park Bible Chapel as a full-time worker from 1999 to 2017. He now serves the Lord in itinerant teaching, preaching and children’s ministries. He is also the author of 31 Days Christmas Devotionals available at Gospel Folio Press.

by **Shane Johnson**

Cornerstone Magazine 2022 Financial Report

Gifts Received	US\$
From • individuals	29,513
• assemblies	8,264
• foundations & organizations	24,932
Total Gifts Received	62,709
Expenses	
Printing	22,708
Layout and Design	1,641
Postage and Shipping	16,665
Website	1,198
Honorarium for Panelists, Speakers, etc	1,722
Bank & PayPal Charges	175
Office Supplies	277
Licenses & Permits	359
Miscellaneous	366
Total Expenses	45,111
Net Surplus	17,598

The Cornerstone committee wishes to express their heart-felt appreciation to all who have had a part in prayer or have financially participated in the work of this ministry. God is able.



God's Scholarship Grant

PART TWO

In the last issue we noticed that two benefits of the believer's trials are that they can be a defense against pride as well as a testimony to others. God's Word also teaches that suffering:

3. Deepens Our Faith

First Peter 1:6-7 says: *"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*¹

When we think of Christ, our living and sure hope, we rejoice in this knowing that we are kept by God's power for our certain salvation and inheritance (vv. 3-5). But what happens when trials come? Can a believer keep on rejoicing in the midst of suffering?

One commentator illustrates this seeming paradox:

"There are some parts of the sea where there is a strong current upon the surface going one way, but that down in the depths there is a strong current running the other way. These two currents do not meet and interfere with one another... Now the Christian is like that. On the surface there is a stream of heaviness rolling with dark waves, but down in the depths there is a strong undercurrent of great rejoicing that is always flowing there."²

God brings trials into our lives because He has determined that we need them ("if need be"). These trials are various (different and numerous); and God specifically tailors each one to our individual needs. First Peter 5:10 reads: *"But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you."* The word "perfect" means to "to complete, make a perfect or suitable fit, such as one should be, deficient in no part."³ The Lord has allowed that specific trial because He has determined that we need it in His ongoing work to complete us and make us suitable for the service He has in mind.

After His resurrection, when our omniscient Lord prophesied to Peter that his manner of death would be crucifixion, Peter asked if John would die the same way. The Lord answered, *"What is that to you? You follow me"* (John 21:18-22). Sometimes we can wonder why some believers suffer more—or differently—than others but we must trust the Lord's management of our lives as well as His shepherding care of other believers.

The word "grieved" suggests events that are distressing, hurtful, and sorrowful. Trials can be hard, crushing, and painful. Whether we have come through a trial or are still passing through it, God can use us to encourage others going through similar testing (2 Cor. 1:3-4). Encouragingly, our trials are only for a "little while." God controls the end date; He may terminate them while we are still on earth or

as Paul's thorn in the flesh they will only end when we pass into the Lord's presence.

The Lord tests our faith to increase it, strengthen it, and prove it genuine (v. 7). For the three young men in Daniel chapter 3, deliverance from the fiery furnace was not necessary for their faith, the fire proved the reality of their faith regardless of the outcome. From a Philippian prison, Paul and Silas, demonstrated that a heart rejoicing in God delights in His will in all circumstances (Acts 16). We too can be proven worthy servants that the Lord can depend upon in all situations.

4. Promotes Our Spiritual Growth

Romans 5:3-5 says: "And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

Though trials can be very grievous, believers can glory (rejoice) in their spiritual growth as they patiently remain under their difficult circumstances. We can delight in the perseverance, godly character, and Christ-likeness tribulation is producing in our lives. Derived from the verb "endured" (Strong's - G5278), the word "perseverance" (Strong's - G5281) means to remain under, exhibiting a patient continuance or waiting.⁴

In Hebrews 12:2 we read that the Lord endured the cross, ignoring the taunts to come down, patiently remaining under the punishment of our sins until the task was finished. We can take pleasure that we are following His example when we patiently endure suffering, ignoring any whispers from within or without, to step outside God's perfect will and purposes (Job 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:21). Further, we can rejoice in a greater experiential knowledge of God's love, and look with confident expectation to heaven and being with the Lord Jesus (v. 5). Any suffering will be worth it when we see Him. We will not be disappointed in having trusted Christ through every experience in life.

Sometimes suffering is a result of God's rebuke. Like an earthly father who chastens his children, the Lord may discipline (teach) us, to train us in righteousness, correcting us unto the right path. Hebrews 12:5-6 says: "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.'"

Two wrong responses to the Lord's correction is to despise it (have little regard for it, rebel against it) or to get discouraged (be tempted to give up). The proper response is to receive it as a blessing from God to teach us, anticipating the ensuing spiritual profit from His training (vv. 10-11). Moreover, we can rejoice that we are God's sons, knowing that both His character and love for us ensures He will correct us when we need it (vv. 6-8).


5. Gives a Greater Awareness of God's Presence

First Peter 4:14 says: "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part, He is glorified."

While our faith does not rest upon our feelings but on the truth of God's Word, the Lord does delight to manifest His presence, power, and help in a special way to believers who choose to suffer for His Name's sake.

When the cloud rested over the mount, tabernacle, or temple it signified the Shekinah glory, the very presence of God (Ex. 24:16-18; 40:34-38; 2 Chron. 7:1). Many have testified of a greater sensitivity to the inner witness and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit during a time of suffering. The Lord's tangible presence in suffering testifies that we belong to God and He cares (Acts 7:55-56; Rom. 8:14-18; 1 Pet. 5:7).

One has written: "The flower follows the sun even when it is not shining, it follows its hidden workings."⁵ The believer who follows Christ should obey His will in all conditions. Our trials should ultimately draw us closer to the Lord as we look to Him for His sustaining help. To the world, our suffering suggests God is absent, but to the suffering believer they have gained a greater awareness of God's presence in the midst of their suffering.

Sometimes God directly brings trials into our lives; other times He allows them by His permissive will. Though there is a mysterious aspect to suffering, the believer can correctly view our testing as God's gift, knowing God's purposes for our trials may only be revealed in glory. 

Endnotes

1. All scriptural references are from the NKJV
2. *The Biblical Illustrator: Old and New Testament Collection*, e-Sword X software version
3. *Complete Word Study Dictionary* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2013), e-Sword X software version
4. Strong, James, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc. Publishers, 2010), e-Sword X software version
5. *The Biblical Illustrator: Old and New Testament Collection*, e-Sword X software version



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**

FOUNDATIONS

PRESENT SERVICE AND ETERNAL REWARDS

The subject of crowns and rewards for the Christian is not a salvation doctrine. Salvation is a gift according to Ephesians 2:8-9 and other scriptures:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”¹

However, those who exercise faith for salvation will work because of salvation, not to earn salvation.

First Corinthians 3 is an important chapter to understand the connection between how we serve now and how we will be rewarded in the future and how those rewards will affect us in eternity.

The fundamental problem in Corinth was that the Corinthian believers were importing worldly wisdom into church building. They were impressed with the worldly wisdom of the day and thought it could be useful in building the local church. If you follow the thought flow of chapters 1 through 4 you will notice how Paul deals with this.

It is important instruction for the church of every age as

every age can be tempted to try to press into service worldly wisdom. Things that may work well in the natural realm will not necessarily work in the spiritual. Methods that are useful in business, education, administration, or politics cannot govern spiritual work.

In Paul’s development of thought he turns to the subject of the evaluation of our service in a coming day and what it will mean in eternity. Here are some things for us to know.

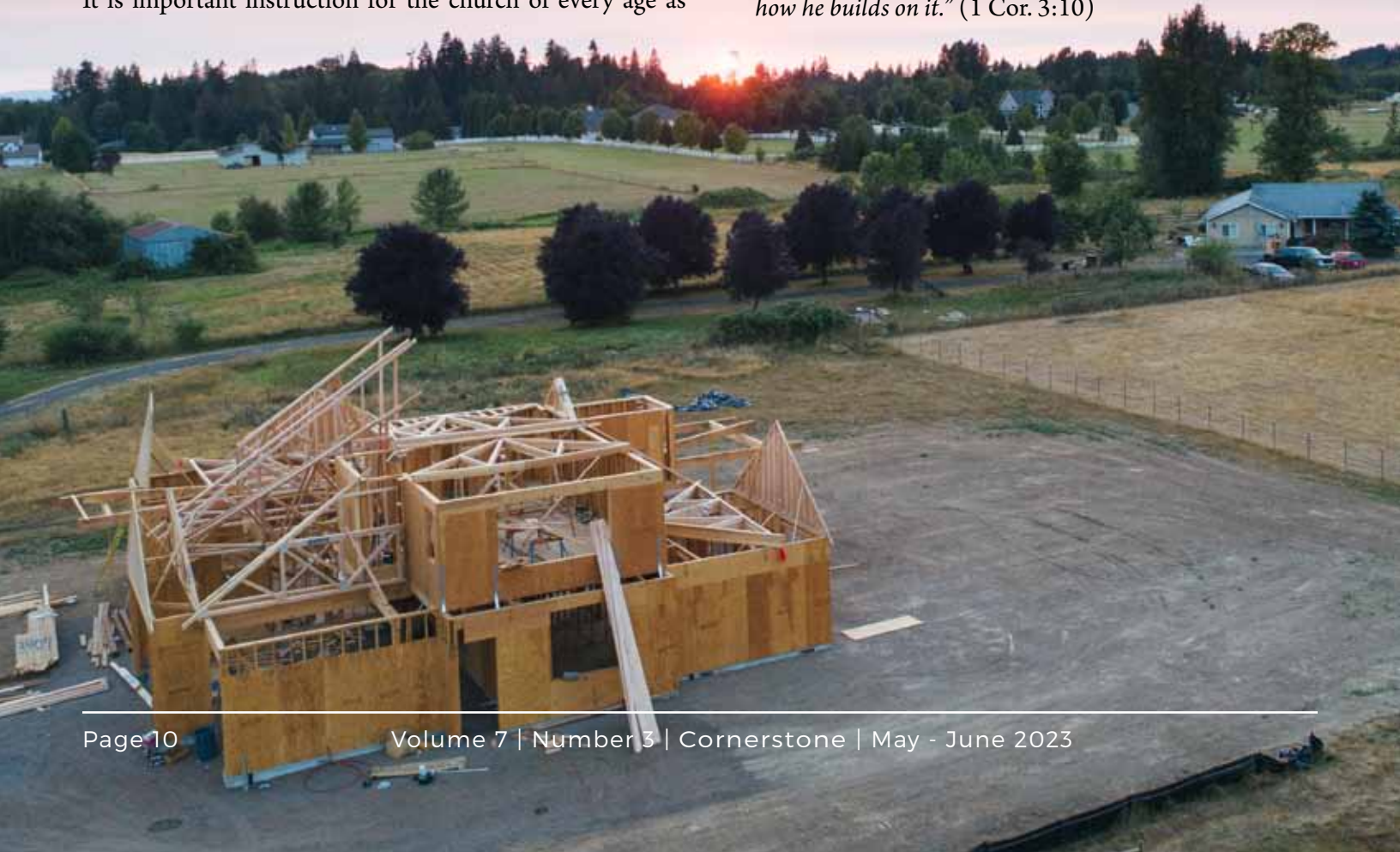
We are God’s building

“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building” (1 Cor. 3:9).

Notice the ownership of the local church. It is not our assembly, it is God’s. It follows therefore that we are to follow His plan of building, organizing, and administering.

We are called to build with care

“According to the grace of God, which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.” (1 Cor. 3:10)



Mere willingness or enthusiasm for building is not sufficient. One is called to build with care and to “take heed how he builds on it.”

We are building on a foundation

“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 3:11)

A foundation determines everything about a building – its size, height, length, depth, and capacity is all governed by the foundation. To attempt to build in a way that does not understand the foundation is to run the risk of building a structure that may misrepresent its purpose. Or worse, create a hazard where lives can be lost. So too in the local church, all that is done in building should be governed by its foundation, our Lord Jesus Christ. This teaches me that the methods and message of the local assembly should be Christlike and represent Him well. As I work with others, I must be Christlike, especially in times of differences of opinion or conflict. The message of the local church should likewise point to Christ. It should be evident to all that He is the governing authority. Everything should reflect His character.

We will be evaluated as to the quality of our building and such quality will be revealed

“Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is” (1 Cor. 3:12-13).

Evidently, we are to be conscious of the importance of quality and it should always be part of our thinking as we go about our service in the local church.

We will receive a substantial reward if we have built in such a way that it survives the test by fire

“If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward” (1 Cor. 3:14).

The word for reward is the same word used to describe compensation or payment for hire. This reward will be substantial and not merely a symbolic token. Just as present-day compensation in work is useful to us to function in the economy, so it may be that our rewards for service will be necessary for us to function in God’s eternal purposes yet to be seen. We will be enabled to navigate and serve in the ages to come. The principle of being faithful in small things now will be rewarded with greater things to do for God.

We will suffer if our work is careless or shoddy (i.e., in any way inconsistent with the foundation) and causes harm to the church

“If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the


temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (1 Cor. 3:15-17).

Paul helpfully reminds us again that this evaluation has nothing to do with eternal salvation. There will be a fiery judgement at the great white throne (Rev. 20:11-15) but this is entirely different. A believer’s eternal security is not governed by service. The picture Paul gives us here is one of testing to see the true nature of that which is being tested. Service done rightly will be of superior quality and will easily survive a fiery evaluation. Service done by mere human fleshly effort or contrary to God’s Word will be easily consumed by the fire.

There are two possible outcomes, reward (vv. 13-14) or loss (v. 15). This is challenging for us. It is possible to suffer a loss. Such loss will be in the present (v. 17). Corinth had many pagan temples. Any Corinthian citizen would have been familiar with them. Paul tells us that likewise we as a local church are “the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you” (v. 16) and further that “the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (v. 17). It follows therefore that in such a holy place we should always work in such a way that neither grieves nor quenches the Holy Spirit.

Paul further warns that those who try to build contrary to God’s word will “defile” or “destroy” the temple of God or the local assembly. The consequence of this is that the individual guilty of this destruction will likewise be defiled or destroyed. Again, this is not a statement about the loss of salvation, but some kind of loss to themselves and their counterfeit ministry. This loss is felt now in time and will be felt in eternity through the lack of reward.

Conclusion

There is no greater privilege and meaningful purpose in life than to build in the local church. These are challenging words we have considered. None of us serve perfectly and likely all have served in a “wood, hay or stubble” way at times. But as we go forward, we should keep in mind the importance of Christlike service in our local church. 

Endnotes:

1 All scriptural references quoted from the NKJV



Brian Gunning is married to Marlene and they have four children and nine grandchildren. They make their home in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. Brian is a self employed accountant. He came to know the Lord at the age of seven and has been in fellowship at Brockview Bible Chapel since his early teens. He currently is an elder in that assembly. In addition to itinerant preaching he is on the boards of the Ontario Workers and Elders Conference, Gospel Folio Press Trust, Bible Conference Corporation and Cornerstone Magazine Inc.

by Brian Gunning

The *Incomparable Beauty* of Jesus Christ

What is beauty? What makes something beautiful?

Our society tells us that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, that beauty is relative, and we must categorize persons or things as beautiful based on our own personal preferences. This, however, is not the definition of beauty that we find when we study the Scriptures. There, beauty is a divine attribute, a glorious perfection of our glorious God. Everything in creation that is beautiful is only reflecting (to a very small extent) the infinite beauty of the Creator.

By this definition, our Lord Jesus, as the eternal Son of God now made flesh for us, is **uniquely** beautiful. What follows here is a short, and at best imperfect, meditation on some facets of the immeasurable, inexpressible, and unfathomable beauty of Jesus Christ.

He is beautiful in His deity

Before all creation Jesus existed as the eternal Word in His Father's presence (John 1:1–3), one with His Father in radiant glory (John 17:5). There was nothing He was lacking, no inadequacy, no sense of incompleteness (Acts 17:25). There was only pure joy, unending happiness in the eternal life and love of Father, Son, and Spirit. Jesus' words to His Father during His earthly life give us a window into their eternal relationship: *"I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent me"* (John 6:38); *"I always do the things that are pleasing to him"* (John 8:29); *"You loved me before the foundation of the world"* (John 17:24). We experience love and joy, albeit in a limited and temporal way, because of our creation in the image of the triune God who eternally overflows with joy and love.

He is beautiful in His creativity

By the eternal Son all things were created (John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). Paul says, *"...for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things"* (Rom. 11:36). Jesus is the source of creation (*"from Him"*), the agent of creation (*"through Him"*), and the purpose of creation (*"to/for Him"*). He fashioned the world through His creative omnipotence at the command of His Father. And what a beautiful world it is! Who among us has not gazed into a star-filled night sky in awe of the complexity of our universe, or watched the brilliant hues of the heavens at sunrise? *"For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God"* (Heb. 3:4). If this world is beautiful, surely it reflects only dimly the manifold beauty of its magnificent Creator.

He is beautiful in His revelation

Jesus is the perfect word of the Lord who communicates the

unknowable and invisible God to us. *"No one has ever seen God,"* the apostle boldly declares in John 1:18. How can this be? Who appeared to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Who met with Moses in the burning bush and gave the law at Sinai? Who spoke to Israel through the prophets and confirmed His covenant with David? John says, *"The only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has explained him"* (John 1:18). Even before His incarnation, the Son was disclosing the plan and purpose of His Father through His Old Testament appearances. Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father.

He is beautiful in His humanity

The eternal Word condescended to become the incarnate Word (John 1:14). He is God with us (Isa. 7:14). Jesus is human in every area that makes for true humanity. He thinks (Matt. 9:4); He feels (John 11:35); He desires (John 6:38–40). He is flesh and blood and psyche and soul. He knows the relational aspects of humanity, family, and friendships (John 15:13–15). He feels all the sorrow and pain and sufferings of a world broken by the curse of sin (Isa. 53:3). Jesus even knows death experientially (Rev. 1:18). He feels the external effects of sin in the world without ever experiencing any of the internal corruption of sin that **affects** the rest of humanity. He knows the war against sin, what it's like to be tempted and to triumph over sin (Heb. 4:15). He is truly human, as we were meant to be, perfect, without the afflictions of sin.

He is beautiful in His character

In Him dwells all the fullness of God in bodily form (Col. 2:9). Each of the divine attributes are perfectly on display in Jesus, whether before or after the incarnation. Every action He undertakes is perfectly loving, perfectly righteous, perfectly gracious, perfectly wise. Think of His compassion toward the afflicted, the oppressed, the outcast, the sinner. Yet He did not hesitate to expose and condemn the hypocrisy of the self-righteous. When we read about the life of our Savior in the Gospels, we are reading inspired witness to a life lived entirely in moral perfection.

He is beautiful for His gospel

Jesus, being perfect in glory, love, and holiness, infinite in His creative power, looked upon His creation in love even as they rebelled against Him. Humanity failed to recognize the beauty of Jesus as the source of life and true happiness and instead sought meaning in the worthless things this world offers as substitutes. Sin is rebellion against God, and

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Father, Teach Us to Pray!

Our Father, we recognize before You that we need You to teach us to pray. We would like to excel as people who pray. Thank You for Your Scriptures that give us such rich motivating truths about prayer. Please grant that these divine realities would reach our hearts by the power of your Spirit and have a transformative effect. Teach us just now from Daniel 9 and 10 that:

Praying is more powerful than military forces or political activities.

Empires conquered each other (Dan. 10:1) and kings would fight and conspire for years to come (Dan. 11), but Daniel's praying touched the real battlefield in the heavenly places. So also, does ours as we pray in the Spirit (Eph. 6:10-20). Daniel's persisting in mournful prayer for 3 weeks (10:2) parallels 21 days of spiritual warfare touching the nations and their rulers (10:12-13). It is true that Persia had conquered Babylon, but what really mattered was how this would open the way for God's "desolate sanctuary" (9:17) to be restored for His name's sake (9:19). Daniel begged God to act as he perceived what really mattered in current events. Some exiles had returned to Jerusalem (Ezra 1), and Daniel, who was too old to return, was with them in spirit with his windows open toward Jerusalem (6:10). Surely, he longed that the temple would be rebuilt as he had prayed a couple years earlier (Dan. 9). The timing of his praying in the third year of Cyrus in the first month from the third to twenty-fourth days (10:1, 4) may mean he also was longing that the people would celebrate the Passover for God's pleasure, for it was to occur in the first month on the fourteenth day (Lev. 23:5; Ezra 6:19). Strengthen us to grasp that praying is the most powerful thing we can do.

A person who pleads with God for God's concerns is precious to God.

Three times Daniel is told that he is precious (greatly beloved; treasured), and all of these times are when he is fervently pleading with God about God's concerns (9:21; 10:11, 10:19). As the Lord heard Daniel's pleading, it moved His heart, and He rejoiced in having a companion who longed for what He longed for. How Daniel's heart longed that the sweet aroma of the evening offering (9:21) would at last ascend again to the Lord's nostrils. He passionately prayed for what would bring God pleasure. What a delight his words must have been to God. God may have heard Daniel like Joseph heard Judah when he at last fervently begged for his lord to act in grace for the well-being of his father and brother (Gen. 44:33-34), and Joseph couldn't contain himself any longer (Gen. 45:1-2). How precious Judah must have been to Joseph in that moment. Strengthen us to be those whom our Father hears pleading, bringing tears of joy to His eyes as He sees that we deeply desire what He desires!

Father, strengthen us as we aim to imitate Daniel's example, being devoted to Your interests such that praying becomes essential living to us. Help us to have praying that is:

A Persistent, Passionate Priority

Pray in response to crisis (Dan. 2) but also as a persistent priority in life. Daniel prayed 3 times a day (6:10) across 7 decades (Dan. 2 as a teen until Dan. 10 as an old man) including intense, focused times such as 3 full weeks of passionate mourning when the people were back in the land to rebuild the temple (Dan. 10). May our praying be fervent.

Perceptive of God's Plans and Pleasure

With eyes of faith, he looked out the window towards Jerusalem and saw God's name dishonored as people reproachfully looked at the Lord's people (9:16). May we perceive what touches God's reputation and pray earnestly about it. May we see what would bring God joy and then urge God to bring it about! Daniel's praying in chapter 9 was spurred by his reading the Scriptures (in Jeremiah). His prayer overflowed from grasping God's revealed will. He called on God to do what God said He wanted to do. What a great way to pray! How helpful it is when our praying is based on God's Word (His revealed purposes), God's Character (His person), and God's Reputation (His name associated with His people and interests here). What confidence this gives us as we address our God! May our praying have the aroma of desiring and perceiving God's will.

Personal and Precious

Daniel completely identified with the people, including confessing "we" have sinned (9:5), having a heart wrapped up with God's people and interests. He reminds himself and God of who God is—"great and awesome" (9:4), capable

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it distorts humanity to the core. But God demonstrates His wondrous and beautiful love in that He saw our hopeless condition and came down in the person of His eternal Son (Rom. 5:8). He did not cling to His divine glory but temporarily set aside the full benefits of deity by becoming human and obeying the Father to the point of death (Phil. 2:6-8). Jesus is beautiful in that He has visited His people to act in deliverance on their behalf. Christ died for our sins; He was buried; and He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

He is beautiful in His sacrifice

The Son of God journeyed from perfection in glory with infinite joy to the horror and grief of the cross. The Creator of all became the man of sorrows whose body was crushed and broken (Isa. 53:3-5). His sacrifice is beautiful not in the gore or the carnage of death itself, but in what His death achieved. **He died in my place.** He took my punishment. He bore the wrath of God that I deserved. *“He was wounded for my transgressions, crushed for my iniquities, the chastening that brought us peace was upon him, and by His wounds we are healed”* (Isa. 53:5). His death is beautiful, not in the violence of the crucifixion of the Son of God, but in what it accomplished for us once and for all. *“For our sake he made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Cor. 5:21).

He is beautiful in His resurrection

Death could not hold Him captive (Acts 2:24). He has been raised to endless and indestructible life (Heb. 7:16). Jesus possesses the keys of death and Hades (Rev. 1:18) — He owns the grave. His resurrection becomes the basis for our hope in the future resurrection of our bodies (1 Cor. 15:20). Jesus loved us all the way from heaven down to death and back up again, that He might bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10).

Jesus is beautiful. He is beautiful as God, as man, as creator, as king, as prophet and priest, as shepherd and Savior, as He who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). May the God of heaven give us the spiritual vision to see the exquisite beauty of Jesus Christ our Lord. 



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by Jonathan J. Routley

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of working and also of *“keeping covenant and mercy.”* He should be interested to work because He is personally connected with the people. As Daniel engages God’s heart by His words, no wonder God finds him precious and gives him further insight into His plans. This type of praying is contagious for two centuries later we hear Nehemiah praying like this (Neh. 1). No wonder that God chooses to use a man with such a heart for His interests to rebuild the city that had been revealed to Daniel (9:24-25). Does God hear me praying like this? May our praying show hearts personally engaged with God’s heart.

Profitable and Powerful

Though the *“sound”* of the words of the man clothed in linen left Daniel on his face with no strength (10:8), yet Daniel’s words were also powerful! *“Your words were heard”* (10:12). How marvelous that is! *“I have come in response to your words”* (10:12). How overwhelmingly wonderful! Prayer moves the hand that moves the world. May we by faith see our praying affecting heavenly activities.

Father, help us enjoy the privilege of a real, vital fellowship with You. May You hear our voices often! May our prayers be personal yet corporate, humble yet confident, passionate and specific. Keep encouraging us to pray *“without ceasing,”* persisting for weeks and even

decades, day after day. May our continual, fervent praying be contagious even to saints in future generations. Give us eyes to see from Your perspective so that we have hearts concerned for what interests You. Give us nostrils to smell what pleases You.

Oh Father, make us a delight to You by developing us as ones who plead with You to do what Your heart longs to do. Grant each one of us grace to perceive what would further Your revealed desires in the situations You have allowed in our lives and service, and then to persistently pray for You to accomplish it. 

A brief YouTube recording on Daniel’s praying is available on YouTube



Bruce and his wife Amie reside in Mechanicsburg, PA. They were commended to the Lord’s work from Mechanicsburg Christian Fellowship in 2014 and have a ministry among local college students. Bruce teaches in local assemblies and conferences and also serves on the Board of Greenwood Hills Bible Conference in Fayetteville, PA. In addition, he maintains a website at saintsserving.net and a YouTube channel at Encourage Depending.

by Bruce Hulshizer

ISSUES *and* ANSWERS

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

What happens to the believer's children at the rapture?

The rapture has been imminent throughout church history. At any moment Christ could finish building His church and return in the air for her. When the rapture does occur, the dead in Christ will be resurrected first; then living believers will be instantly glorified and caught up to join them in the air. The Lord will then escort His bride to heaven (John 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:1-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). What about young children who have not yet believed on Christ?

The Old Testament saint Abraham once prayed: *"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* (Gen. 18:25). Though there is no Scripture that directly addresses the believer's children at the rapture, we can suggest that they are not left behind based upon God's character as well as His past actions. Today He is still the same righteous God, for He does not change (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8).


Consider God's special care and love for children. The Lord designed the family unit for parents to nurture their children to the age of maturity: guiding, teaching, training, and disciplining them (Eph. 6:1-4). Since the various facets of the Lord's eternal purposes cohesively fit together, at the rapture it is inconceivable that He would disrupt His creative design by separating believers from their young children. For the same reason we would suggest that the unbeliever's children will remain on earth with their parents.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 18:10: *"Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."* This would suggest that the Father has tasked various angels to minister to young children as well as to believers (Heb. 1:14). Additionally, He said in Matthew 18:14: *"Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."*

Consider the Lord's mercy for His people Israel in the Old Testament. During the first Passover, all the young children of Israel were sheltered under the blood that their parents applied to the lintel and doorposts of their homes in obedience to the Lord for their protection (Ex. 12:21-23). Though too small to understand they were still protected, with the parents and children all being redeemed out of Egypt.

Later, due to a lack of faith to enter the promised land, the people of Israel rebelled, planning to select a new leader and return to Egypt (Num. 13-14). Apart from faithful Joshua and Caleb, the Lord judged them by preventing those twenty and older from entering the land. They sojourned in the wilderness for 38 years until the older generation had all perished (Deut. 2:14). The Lord did not hold those younger responsible. Consider as well King David's words after losing his baby: *"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me,"* indicating that David expected to see his baby again in paradise (2 Sam. 12:23).

Similarly, in this church age it is reasonable to suggest that young children are covered by the blood of Christ until they reach the age of accountability; the time when they are capable of choosing to accept or reject God's way of salvation in Christ alone. This age could vary from child to child. Those protected by Christ include the children of miscarriages, murdered unborn babies, the untimely death of young children, as well as living believers' children at the rapture. In Matthew 19:14 the Lord said, *"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."* Heaven will have many children.

First Corinthians 15:23 says that those who take part in the first resurrection and the rapture are *"those who are Christ's at His coming."* The purpose of the Lord in removing believers is so that His wrath and judgment can fall upon an unbelieving world. The church is Christ's beloved. It is unthinkable that He would leave His beloved's innocent children behind for wrath. Instead, their children who have not reached the age of accountability are included in those who are Christ's at His coming. 



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



Weekend in the Word

**May 5-7 • Community Gospel Chapel
20 Bergen Ave Voorhees, NJ 08043**

All are invited to a spiritually refreshing weekend in the study of God's Word. The speaker, Warren Henderson (Stevensville, MT) will present a six-session series on the Ministries of Elijah and Elisha. This series contains practical ministry on various points, especially on the necessity of mentor/mentee relationships in the assembly. The series begins on Friday at 7PM with two sessions, and continues Saturday at 10AM with three sessions. The final session will be on Sunday at 11AM. Lunch will be served on Saturday and Sunday. All sessions will be available via Zoom. For more information contact Sherman Fray at cgospelchapel@gmail.com or 856-778-1459

78th Annual Bible Conference

**May 6-7 • Lake Park Chapel
201 Schlieff Drive, Belle Chasse, LA 70037**

Come join them for a spiritually refreshing weekend in God's Word from May 6-7, 2023. The meetings will begin on Saturday May 6 at 3:30PM Dave Bosworth from Pembroke Pines, FL will be the speaker, DV. For more information please contact Ray Cummings at 103 Dickson Drive, Belle Chasse, LA 70037, or 504-239-7068, or 504-393-7083, or lakeparkchapel@att.net.

Vessels of Honor Conference

**May 26-29 • Calvary University, Belton
Campus, Kansas City, MO**

Vessels of Honor is a young adult conference that seeks to honor the Lord Jesus Christ by grounding this generation in the Word of God. The conference will be hosted in the Kansas City Metro area on Memorial Day Weekend. It is open to anyone aged 18 or older. The theme is "Faithfulness in Fulfilling your Role in Your Local Meeting." Speakers expected: Mike Attwood, Mark Lightfoot, and Bruce Hulshizer, along with Hannah Kelderman who will be leading ladies seminars. Visit our website, www.vesselsofhonor.org, for more information or to register.

Sharon Gospel Chapel Conference

**June 23-25 • 7540 - 106 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta**

The believers at Sharon Gospel Chapel in Edmonton, AB extend an open invitation for all to attend their conference on June 23-25 with meetings on Friday at 7:00PM, Saturday at

11:00AM and 7:00PM, and Sunday Breaking of Bread meeting at 9:30AM, with ministry at 11:00AM and 6:00PM. The invited speaker is George Ferrier (ON). For more information contact Roy Koshy at koshyrm@gmail.com or 587-590-5175

Skyland Bible Conference

**July 1-7 • Eastern Mennonite University
1200 Park Rd Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

The 67th annual Skyland Bible Conference will be held at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, VA. Continuing the tradition of excellent Bible teaching, the speakers for the 2023 conference will be Mike Attwood, Steve Price, and Nate Bramsen. If you are looking for a spiritually enriching vacation, this is your best choice. Skyland Bible Conference is one of the most unique family oriented Bible conferences you will ever experience. There are activities for all ages. From toddlers to teens to seniors, there is something for everyone. Participate in athletic activities, off-site adventures, or simply enjoy fellowship with other believers around the beautiful campus. For more details see <http://www.skylandbible.org/> or contact Mark Petry at mpetrync@gmail.com or 336-923-1030.

The Indian Brethren Fellowship (IBF) Family Conference

**July 5-9 • Indiana Wesleyan University
Marion, IN**

The Indian Brethren Fellowship (IBF) Family Conference convenors prayerfully plan to hold the 44th IBF Family Conference at Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, IN. The theme of the conference is "A Living Sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1). The speakers are Brs. Sam Oommen (Sudbury, Canada), Jose Mathews (Mangalore, India), and Simon George (Ft. Lauderdale, Florida). Kindly pray for this ministry that the Lord may bless His people and be glorified. Please visit <http://www.ibfus.org> for additional updates. For more information contact Regimon Kallinkal at rkallinkal@yahoo.com.

Israel - Land of the Bible Tour

July 8-19

The Holy Scriptures and Israel Bible Society is arranging the Israel—Land of the Bible Tour from Florida. Gideon Levytam, President of the Holy Scriptures and Israel Bible Society, was born and raised in Israel, and is the host and Bible teacher on this journey. Having become a believer in the Lord Jesus, he has worked extensively in ministry and used his vast experience in

leading groups to Israel, teaching the Holy Scriptures from a Hebrew—Messianic perspective. He has a radio and podcast ministry, and has authored books on Daniel and Romans. He is in fellowship at Willowdale Christian Assembly, Toronto, ON.

To check if there is availability on the July 8-19, 2023 tour or future tours, please contact Sid Bhatt (US) at 704-930-8179 / sidbhatt0718@gmail.com or Dave Smith (Canada) at 905-641-3053 / beyondadream@travelonly.com.

West Virginia Bible Conference

**July 23 - 28 • Bluestone Camp & Retreat
36 Middle Camp RD, Hinton, WV 25951**

The West Virginia Bible Conference invites you to their annual family camp from July 23-28 with speakers Andy Hylton (OH) and Dan Gustafson (SC). There will also be meetings and activities for the children. The conference is held at Bluestone Camp & Retreat near Hinton, WV. For more information contact Brent Jones at 304-466-4738 or brentandhope@frontier.com.

Greenwood Hills Bible Camp

7062 Lincoln Way E, Fayetteville, PA 17222

When will we see you at Greenwood Hills this summer?

Three long weekend conferences are available (Memorial Day with Mark Bebee speaking, July Weekend Alive Teen Program with Richie Benitez and Dan Weaver, Labor Day with Brian Gunning) and one full week (August 5-12 with Larry Price and Tim Beer). These are great times of edification and fellowship for all ages. Looking for an intensive study?

Consider Men's Intensive Bible Study (August 27-30 with Mike Attwood). For young people consider Summit Week in June (age 16+) or girls or boys camps in July.

Register at GreenwoodHills.net.

Guelph Bible Conference Centre

2023 Summer Camps

485 Waterloo Ave., Guelph, ON N1H 3K4

Victoria Day Weekend (May 19-22; Gary McBride); Family Camp A (Aug 6-12; George Ferrier, Mark Kolchin); Family Camp B (Aug 13-19; John Aldom, Dave Dunlap); Family Camp C (Aug 20-26; J.C. Schroeder, Warren Henderson). For more information on these as well children, youth, and day camps see www.guelphbiblecc.com/ or call 519-824-2571.

Director of Facility Services (Senior Living Community)

Pittsboro Christian Village (PCV) is seeking a Director of Facility Services to join our staff. PCV is a Senior Living Community in Pittsboro, NC. We have Independent Living

Homes and Apartments, along with an Assisted Living Facility. The Director of Facility Services has overall responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of our Senior Living Community. This person should have organizational and supervisory skills. For more information, contact Gerald Baker at gerald.baker@pcvnc.org or 919-542-3151.

Morningstar Bible Camp

**3031 McIver Rd, West Kelowna, BC, Canada
Discipleship Training Program**

Morning Star Bible Camp is an assembly church camp looking to recruit people for their Discipleship Training Program in Kelowna, BC. Come join their 3 and/or 4 week session if you would like to be mentored and are interested in sacrifice, discipline, hard work, and reward to take your walk with the Lord to the next level. Email: manager@morningstarbiblecamp.com for more info.

Ministry Opportunity – Camp Registrar

A new Camp Registrar is needed at Morning Star Bible Camp, effective immediately to plan for 2023. Computer and people skills are a must. Contact Josh at manager@morningstarbiblecamp.com for more information.

Executive Director – Horton Haven Christian Camp

The board of Horton Haven Christian Camp in Lewisburg, TN, is prayerfully and carefully seeking an individual to serve in the role of Executive Director. A job description and an application are available upon request should you or someone you know be interested in filling this position. If so, please contact Jon Glock at jonwglock@gmail.com or call 563-580-3884.

Information Help – Danforth Gospel Hall (Toronto, ON, Canada)

The assembly at Danforth Gospel Hall will be marking 125 years of testimony in the spring of 2024 (the second oldest assembly in Toronto). As part of this anniversary, their brother, Michael Thomas, is writing a book on the history of the work at Danforth and its former days as Swanwick Gospel Hall (Deut. 32:7). They are appealing for information, stories, memories, photographs, or documents to help in telling of the work. Any information is greatly appreciated. So if you, or anyone you know was either connected to or has any details of the assembly work at Danforth/Swanwick Gospel Hall please send it along to Michael Thomas at big_m_prop@hotmail.com or by mail: Michael Thomas c/o Danforth Gospel Hall, 2237 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K4.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Face to Face with Christ, My Savior

Face to face with Christ, my Savior,
Face to face—what will it be
When with rapture I behold him,
Jesus Christ who died for me?

*Face to face I shall behold him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face in all his glory,
I shall see him by and by.*

Only faintly now I see him
With the darkened veil between,
But a blessed day is coming
When his glory shall be seen.

What rejoicing in his presence,
When are banished grief and pain;
When the crooked ways are straightened
And the dark things shall be plain.

Face to face—oh, blissful moment!
Face to face—to see and know;
Face to face with my Redeemer,
Jesus Christ who loves me so.

Carrie Ellis Breck (1898)