

*The Advocate of
Truth*





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As Sounding Brass and Tinkling Cymbal

By: Moisés Torres M.

Apostle Paul uses these words in one of his sermons alluding to those who only exhibit feigned or false love.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” (I Corinthians 13:1).

Why did Paul write about this? He wanted for sure to get the church in Corinth back in the spiritual principles of the church, and make them see the messy spiritual situation in which they were living. In many ways the church in Corinth was very out of order, even in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, as everyone did as they wanted. (I Corinthians 11:15-22).

Another major hindrance was that, in one way or another, some tried to stand out among others. Everything they did was premeditated to show themselves and not to exalt the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were trying to gain other’s attention for their own glory, and fought to take over and be leaders of groups that others had already established. They became proud, and made themselves the greatest, surpassing all limits and authority. This type of Christian really did not have charity, they just “made noise”, “as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

Let us read the reproach and sermon the apostle makes to such individuals:

“For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men’s labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule

abundantly, To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man’s line of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth” (II Corinthians 10:12-18).

It seems that this type of situation, carnal mind or carnal spirit, still affects the church today. As there are some projecting only to themselves, seeking to stand out among others. They become proud, arrogant, disobedient, and are not subject to any authority. They are not wise (II Corinthians 10:12). And finally, they only love themselves, and there is no charity in them toward others. They are as “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

A cymbal is a percussion instrument consisting of two hollow plates. When their sound tinkles, colliding these discs against each other, their thunderous resonance could impact, but at the end they are only two hollow plates. So the Apostle Paul compares all individuals in the church who really have not charity for others, or for the church, and only have feigned love.

Sometimes “a handshaking” or a “God bless you” or a “hallelujah, Glory to God” could sound very bright and resonant, but it may be only as tinkling cymbals and hollow expressions lacking of sincerity. Sometimes pastors can create exciting situations from the pulpit trying to motivate the congregations with loud proclamations and movements, or making them “clap their hands while singing” instead of sharing good sermons full of the Spirit of God.

Sometimes someone tries to praise you with hypocrisy at any moment, and it is so evident that his words can be well compared to a “tinkling cymbal” which is hollow inside. Remember that episode when Paul was suddenly upset and rebuked a divination spirit that ironically praised him for several days:

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain

damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour” (Acts 16:16-18).

The Apostle John advises us, saying, “... but try the spirits whether they are of God...” (I John 4:1). Dear

readers, the Lord knows those working in all honesty and sincerity in His church. We do not need to make much noise to call the congregation's attention, or commend ourselves before the Lord. It may happen as the saying goes: “Much ado about nothing” because by breaking nuts looking for fruit, they are hollow.

Again, we should not seek our own glory. “But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth” (II Corinthians 10:17-18).

SELF

By Bibi Shimon Allicock

Most self-opinionated people will not do things according to the ways of Almighty God, but they will do things that please themselves; which will portray the things of the flesh such as, “...Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like....” (Galatians 5:19 last part - 21 first part).

But if we put God in everything we do and say, we will be able to portray the fruit of the Spirit which is, “...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Ahab, a man full of self, accused the Prophet Elijah of troubling Israel. “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” Thus the prophet responded by ensuring him that “...I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim” (I Kings 18:17-18).

Therefore the prophet staged a way whereby he (Ahab) could acknowledge who really is Almighty God. “Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the

children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: And I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is will spoken” (I Kings 18:19-24). So Baal’s prophets dressed their bullock and called upon the name of Baal from morning until midday. When “...midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded” (verse 29). So the Prophet Elijah dressed his bullock and called upon the “...LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel...” (verse 36), that He (Almighty God) should shew forth Himself and let it be known his day “...that thou art the LORD God ...” (verse 37). “Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust,

and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God” (I Kings 18:38-39).

Although all these things took place to show forth who is God Almighty, yet Ahab, in self, lusted after another man’s possession. And because Ahab was king, he wanted to show off himself, that anything he wanted or desired must be granted or given unto him. If possible his wife Jezebel would use deceit, which all adds up to self. “And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, the LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread” (I Kings 21:1-4).

We saw here that because he (Ahab) is king, he wanted the man’s vineyard so badly, that he offered another vineyard, or a worthy portion of money unto the man instead, meaning that he must have that specific vineyard.

But because of self, and of the instructions which Samuel had given Israel concerning the way in which a king would operate, or rule over them, in that whatever the king wishes must be carried out, whether the people complied willingly or not, the king would even use force.

In the Book of I Samuel, the Prophet Samuel told the people, “...This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen. . . . And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants” (I Samuel 8:11-14).

He did not want it for his servants but for himself. His wife Jezebel did not want to see her husband sad so she intervened into the matter. And since they were not worshipping the Almighty God, they definitely did what

SELF requires. “And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite” (I Kings 21:7). Jezebel told him, that he governed the kingdom of Israel, not realizing that Israel’s kingdom belongs to Almighty God. For we know that, “The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1). Nevertheless, Jezebel told Ahab that she will give Ahab the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So they wrought deceit in order to gain access to Naboth’s vineyard. “So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it” (I Kings 21:8-16).

But as he was going to take possession of the vineyard the word of the Almighty came to him by Elijah the prophet, saying, “Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak

unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity...and him that is shut up and left in Israel, And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin... Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.” “And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel... But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel” (I Kings 21:18-22, 24, 23, 25-26).

Although Ahab called Elijah his enemy, yet as the words which Elijah spake came from Almighty God, Ahab decided to humble himself in sackcloth before Almighty God. “And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his sons’s days will I bring the evil upon his house” (I Kings 21:27-29).

Although Ahab humbled himself and saw that Almighty God stayed His hand against him, yet it pleased him to go into battle for Ramoth in Gilead without seeking Almighty God properly first. Thus he was punished according to the fruit of his doing in SELF, according to the words of Almighty God. “...And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle. But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel... And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his

chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded... So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the LORD which he spake... So Ahab slept with his fathers...” (I Kings 22:30 last part, 31,34, 37-38, 40 first part.) Also, his wife continued in her pernicious ways and a full punishment was meted out unto her. “And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot... And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel” (II Kings 9:30-33, 35-37).

As children of God, when someone is spreading heresies, we are supposed to weigh the matter according to the words before we do or say anything, and find ourselves falling into the same condemnation. Let us therefore put off SELF and “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand... Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

“Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen” (Ephesians 6:11-13,18,24).

LIGHT

By: Gloria Ygay

*When I saw the light, darkness faded;
Thank You, Lord, for the light.
Now I see the way where to go,
Whatever I do, in every step, that light
guides.*

*Now I have no more fears at all;
To stumble I am not afraid anymore.
When I was lost, a Shepherd called;
That light I saw is JESUS, my Lord.*

*Thank You, Lord, for the light, thank You
Lord;
Nothing more I can say, thank You Lord.
The way where to go, whatever I do,
The rays of light always abide.*

*You are my light, Lord, You are my light,
Shining on me everyday so bright;
No more darkness in my life;
For the light You gave is always my
guide;
Thank You, Lord, thank You.*



The Unchangeable Christ

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8).

--Reprinted

The ruling idea of the letter to the Hebrews is the immutability of Christ as a Redeemer from sin. The inspired author contrasts, first of all, the changelessness of Christ with the ever-changing universe: The heavens "...shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Hebrews 1:11-12). Then he contrasts the immutability of Christ as a Redeemer with the succession of high priests and the yearly offering on the Day of Atonement, when the high priest went within the veil to sprinkle the mercy seat with blood. But Christ is the eternal Priest. His sacrifice will never be repeated. He offered Himself on the cross once for all.

The writer then contrasts the immutability of Christ and His kingdom with the passing kingdoms of this world. They are shaken down and removed; but Christ's kingdom is a kingdom which cannot be removed. Then, in a beautiful and tender passage, he contrasts the immutability of Christ as a friend and companion with the passing friendships and relationships of this world. He calls the roll of the great heroes of faith, from Abraham and Moses to the later age. He speaks, too, of the friends, pastors and teachers of those to whom he is now writing. Many of them had been removed, and not a few, no doubt, by the martyr's death. Their friends who were left were sad and heavyhearted. But in contrast to those passing teachers and friends, Christ is the immutable Friend and Companion. It is in this connection that he flings out the grand assertion of this text, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

CHRIST'S IMMUTABLE PERSON

He is the same today that He was yesterday; the same yesterday as He is today; the same tomorrow and forever, that He is today, and that He was yesterday.

He was the same yesterday. How far back that yesterday carries us! Before the foundation of the earth was laid and before the mountains were brought forth, Christ was the eternal Son of God. Before the morning

stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy, Christ was all then that we know Him to be now. He was the same when man fell and the first promise of His advent as Redeemer was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. He was the same when Abraham rejoiced to see His day; when Moses wrote of Him; when Balaam saw His scepter rise out of Israel and His star out of Jacob; when David sang of His everlasting kingdom; when Isaiah described His passion and death; when John the Baptist called Him the Lamb of God; when the star of Bethlehem halted over His house; when he spake the parables of truth and wrought the miracles of mercy; when He was denied by Peter and betrayed by Judas; and expired amid the curses and darkness on the Cross. He was the same when He rose the third day and third night from the grave and ascended into heaven; the same when Stephen saw Him standing at the right hand of God; when He appeared to Paul at the gates of Damascus; and when John on the Isle of Patmos saw Him standing amid the seven golden candlesticks. He was the same when your father and mother loved Him and followed Him. He was the same when you confessed His name and gave Him your early love. All that He was yesterday, He is today. **“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”**

ASA TEACHER

A great philosopher once said that a man’s three great questions are these: What can I know? What ought I to do? For what can I hope? Christ as a teacher answers all three questions. Man can know God because he can know Christ who reveals Him. His duty is to do the will of God, and he can hope for life everlasting.

As a teacher, as one who answers life’s great questions, Christ never changes. This is in contrast to all other teachers. Human systems come and go; the applauded science of today may be the jest of tomorrow. But Christ abides the same. One of the striking things about the teaching of Jesus is that you cannot think of one saying of His that has been rendered obsolete by the passing of time. **“Blessed are the pure in heart.” “Seek ye first the kingdom of God.” “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” “Love one another.”** Which of these sayings is out of date or obsolete today? What Jesus taught on the shores of Galilee or on the banks of the Jordan He teaches today on the banks of the Thames or the Ohio. What Jesus taught in the streets of Jericho or

Capernaum or Jerusalem He teaches today in the streets of London and New York and Pittsburg, Cebu, Hyderabad, Port Harcourt, and Chicago. As a teacher, He has stood successfully that severest of all tests and that foe of all error – time.

What Christ said about God, the soul, sin, and heaven is ever the same and ever true. As long as the heart has passions, as long as life has woes, as long as man has hopes, the words of Christ will speak to his soul. Nothing that has transpired, nothing that has been done, or said, or taught, or discovered in the nineteen centuries which have passed since Jesus spake to man on the shores of the Sea of Galilee has raised the slightest question as to the truth of that utterance of His, **“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”** He towers over the wrecks of time. He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end of wisdom and knowledge, and He alone has the keys of death.

CHRIST IMMUTABLE AS A REDEEMER

The Cross is an eternal act as well as an eternal fact. It reaches back into all eternity, for Christ is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. It reaches forward to the eternal ages, when Christ is forever the Redeemer of His people, for when the windows and doors of heaven are pried open for us briefly by the inspired pen of John, that is the music that we hear floating down upon our ears, that is the song that stirs us, the song of redemption from sin: **“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”**

Whenever you see Christ in the Scriptures, He is the Saviour from sin. There are those who seek to tell us today that this is not the real Christ, that He has been foisted upon the Church by ecclesiastics, theologians and metaphysicians, and that we must get rid of Him and go back to the real Jesus of history. Since all my hope rests upon this Christ, I want to know whether or not He is the real Christ, and the same yesterday, today and forever. To whom shall I go? I will go to the archangels who sang His praise before the foundation of the world, and I will say to them, Michael and Gabriel is the Christ whom I believe and trust the same whom you adored? And all heaven will echo with this answer, “He is the same!” I will go to Abraham, who rejoiced to see His day, and to Moses, who wrote of Him, and I will say to them, “Is the

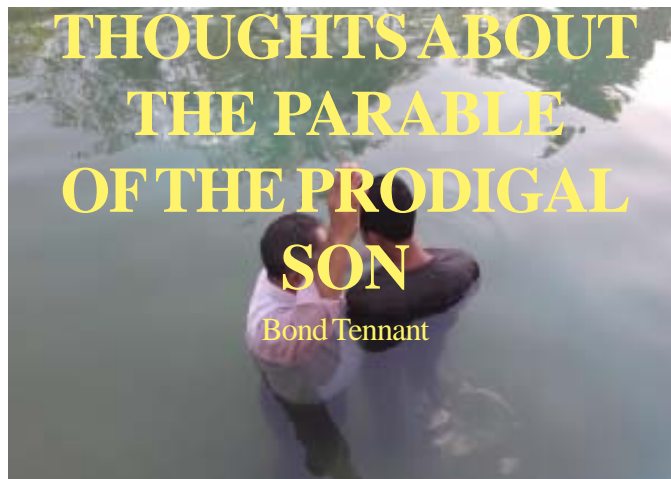
Christ whom I follow the same whom you foretold?" And with one voice they will answer, Abraham from Mt. Moriah, and Moses from Mt. Sinai, "He is the same!"

I will go to David, and I will say to him, "David, sweet singer of Israel, is the Christ in whom I trust the same about whom you sang?" And with all the music of the Psalms, David will answer, "He is the same!" I will go to Isaiah, and I will say to him, "Is the Christ whom I trust the same of whom you wrote, who was wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for mine iniquity?" And with all his seraphic eloquence, Isaiah will answer, "He is the same!" I will go to John the Baptist, and I will say to him, "Is the Christ whom you hailed by the banks of Jordan as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world the Christ in whom I trust and believe?" And with his great voice, as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, John will answer, "He is the same!"

To whom else can I go? I will go to John, and I will say to him, "Is the Christ in whom I trust the Christ upon whose breast you leaned at the supper, and whom you saw dying on the cross?" John will answer, "He is the same!" I will go to Paul, and I will ask him, "Is the Christ in whom I put my trust the Christ who appeared to you at the gates of Damascus, and for whose sake you endured prison and sickness and exile and scourging and shipwreck and loneliness and death itself?" And Paul will answer, "He is the same!" I will go to the thief who repented on the cross, and I will say to him, "Penitent thief, is the Christ in whom I trust the same who said to thee from the Cross, "To day, shalt thou be with me in paradise?" And with the voice of the redeemed, the thief will answer, "He is the same!"

Where else can I go? I will see behind me all the ages of holy faith, and standing before the throne of God, I will ask the whole company of the redeemed, those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, "Is the Christ in whom I trust the same to whom now you sign your praise and adoration?" And with the heavenly chorus they will answer, "**He is the same!**"

He is the same!



Luke 15 records three parables that Jesus told. They are The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and The Prodigal Son.

The parable of the prodigal son, found in verses 11-32, tells an interesting story which may have been true in the experience of many throughout the years. A man of means had two sons who would inherit their father's estate. The younger of these two sons said to his father, "...Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me..." The father granted the son's request. A short time later, "...the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living" (verses 12-13).

Difficulties then began to pass: "...there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine" (verses 14-15). However, this was far from satisfactory. "And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him" (verse 16).

In this dire situation of need, this younger son finally "came to himself". He realized that he had acted very foolishly, and he became repentant. He reflected upon the good situation at home, where even his father's hired servants had plenty to eat. He was now very humbled and he decided he would gladly return to his father as merely a servant. He did not feel worthy to be called a son any longer.

With his repentant attitude, this younger son said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants" (verses 18-19). Upon arriving home,

he offered himself to his father as a servant.

Next comes the important lesson of this parable. The father forgave his son and received him back into his family. A feast was arranged to celebrate the occasion of the prodigal son's return. This included the killing of a "fatted calf" (verse 23). The feast was in progress when the elder son came in from the field. When he learned what had happened, he was not at all pleased!

The elder son refused to take part in the celebration. He complained to his father that although he had served him faithfully throughout the years that his brother had been wasting his life. No celebration had been planned for him. No "fatted calf" had ever been killed and no opportunity was given to make merry with his friends (see verses 28-30).

This parable illustrates the sin of jealousy in connection with a matter of no less importance than life itself. Unlike his elder son, who was jealous, the father looked upon the homecoming of his wayward son as though he had received him back from the dead (see verse 24). His sin had not destroyed the father's love for him.

Let us note that the prodigal son had repented of his wrongdoing, and he had returned humbly to his father. He did not even ask to be reinstated as a son, but merely that he might become one of his servants. Therefore, we have illustrated an important principle in God's dealings with mankind. The humble realization of one's mistakes and true heart repentance are essential in order to receive God's forgiveness.

God's love for sin-cursed mankind motivated Him to send His beloved Son to be man's Redeemer and Savior. By doing this, He made provision for the reconciliation of mankind. However, as individuals, no one receives any lasting benefit from this except upon the basis of repentance and real dedication to do the Father's will. This fact points out that there are two aspects of a sinner's return to God. There is God's part in providing the atoning blood, and there is the sinner's part of repentance and consecration.

Let us rejoice when a sinner repents and faithfully endeavors to do God's will. Our attitude toward those who repent of their wrongdoing is to be based upon what they are today, rather than upon their wayward conduct of yesterday.



Rejoice in the Lord

Sometimes we are so concerned about living righteously for the Lord and fulfilling our obligations of service to others, that we may forget to have joy in our hearts for just being a child of God. The Apostle Paul wanted to emphasize to the Church in Philippi to rejoice because the disciple's names were written in the book of life. He wrote: "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:3-4). The Lord Jesus also emphasized this point to the seventy men whom He had sent out before Him. Jesus said to them: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

In fact, so important is this concept of rejoicing in the Lord that Nehemiah said it is the source of strength for God's people. The Israelites wept when they heard the Word of God being read to them. "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:8-10).

The joy of the Lord should also be our strength. All throughout the day we should pray to, and praise, the Lord for His wonderfulness to us. We have several cats in our home, and I enjoy all of them. But this one kitty seems to enjoy just spending time with my wife and me. He comes into our bedroom in the morning and jumps up on the bed. He rubs his head on our hands as we pet him. He seems to be in no hurry to leave us. The other cats are also affectionate to a point, but it seems that they come around me, especially, when they want something from me such as a snack. Guess which cat is the closest to my heart?

Do we enjoy just spending time with the Lord, rather than coming to Him only when we have a need or want? The Lord is very willing to grant our needs and some of our wants, but don't you think that He enjoys our spending time with Him in prayer and praise? We know that the Lord is no arbitrary respecter of persons, but the Scriptures do seem to show a special relationship between Him and those who want to spend time in His presence (remember the "beloved" disciple John who leaned on Jesus' bosom at the Lord's Supper; see John 13:23).

What a source of strength it is for us to, "Rejoice in the Lord always..." In fact, I Thessalonians 5:16 encourages us to, "Rejoice evermore." I love the Bible story found in II Chronicles chapter 20. Let's begin with verses 1-3. "It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi. And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." God's Spirit then spoke through the Prophet Jahaziel: "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you...And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had con-

sulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much" (verses 17, 20-25).

The Lord actually dwells with, or inhabits, the praises of His people, as we can infer from Psalm 22:3: "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." Great things He will do for His people who are continually rejoicing in Him and praising Him. Can we say with the Psalmist, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God" (Psalm 43:4). We may not play the harp like David did, but we can praise the Lord with all our heart.

Of course, great joy in the Lord only comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in us, because joy is a part of the fruit of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22). The Apostle Paul also makes this plain in Romans 15:13: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." To be filled with joy also entails abiding in Jesus and being obedient to Him. Jesus taught: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye

shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:7-11).

There are so many blessings of the Lord to give us a joyful heart that we couldn't list them all in this article. However, we shall list some of them as given to us in the Scriptures. First, let us be joyful in salvation. David wrote in Psalm 13:5: "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation." What a wonderful blessing in which to rejoice. Having our sins forgiven and the hope of living with the Lord for eternity should make us burst forth with joy. Also, the Lord gives us His mercy, not only for the eternal life to come, but in our everyday circumstances. David rejoiced in this as well. He said: "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities" (Psalm 31:7).

Also, we should rejoice in the Word of God. The Psalmist exulted: "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Psalm 119:162). Shouldn't the Scriptures be as precious to us as it was to him? The whole of Psalm 119 expresses the proper desire towards keeping God's Word, His law, statutes, precepts, commandments, judgments, and testimonies. They delighted the Psalmist's soul.

Joy is doubled when it is shared with another person. This is especially true when the joy is shared with one's family. Proverbs 5:18 reads: "Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth." Ecclesiastes reinforces this thought. "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

One should also take pleasure in his or her work. Ecclesiastes 3:22 informs us: "Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" Especially this should be so with our work for the Lord. And we should rejoice in the fact that we can work for the Lord as a team. Jesus said in John 4:35-36: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth

wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

This "team mentality" should be so strong in us that we enter into both the rejoicing and mourning of our fellow brethren. Listen to Romans 12:15,16: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another..." Even God, the Lord Jesus, and the angels, who are on our team, rejoice with us. Jesus taught: "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:4-7).

The Scriptures make it plain that our goal should be to rejoice even in adverse circumstances. James wrote: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2-3). And our great Example, the Lord Jesus Christ, said: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets" (Luke 6:22-23). Having a great reward in heaven is truly something for which to leap for joy.

Even when we go through those times of great sorrow, we know that the Lord will eventually bring back joy into our lives. We can expect what David wrote in Psalm 30:5: "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." And in Psalm 126:5-6 we are assured: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

This situation is true because: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11). In fact, even through great trials come into our lives, at times,

we believe: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I Peter 1:7-9).

What a wonderful time it will be when that day of salvation finally comes. We read in Revelation 19:7: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Until then, what the Lord told Israel has much truth for us today as well. "And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you" (Deuteronomy 26:11).

When the Lord's people are rejoicing in the Lord, and living fully for Him, the great Father, God will actually rejoice over His people. Notice what He proclaims in Deuteronomy 30:8-9: "And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers". No greater rejoicing will ever be than when we hear the wonderful words of the Lord: "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:20-21).

The Heart

By David DeLong

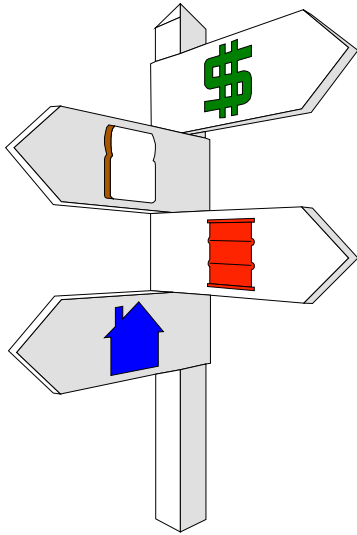
The heart, in the Scriptures, often refers to the feelings, the will, and even the intellect of a person. In an unconverted person, we learn that the heart is very deceitful. Even when a person is living for the Lord, he or

she cannot trust the heart, but must rely upon the Word of the Lord to direct them. Jeremiah 17:9-10 informs us: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

Therefore, one must keep his heart very diligently. Proverbs 4:23 teaches us: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Jesus taught the very same thing. When some scribes and Pharisees confronted the Lord about their traditions, Jesus used the situation to teach an important lesson to them and to His disciples. "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Matthew 15:15-20).

Even the Lord's feelings, will, and intellect are given as coming from His "heart". After the great Flood of Noah's day, we read: "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done" (Genesis 8:20-21).

To a certain degree, as a person thinks in his heart he becomes that way. For instance we learn in Proverbs 23:6-7: "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee." Therefore, we must commune with our own heart (Psalm 4:4); speak the truth in our heart (Psalm 15:2); trust in the Lord with all our heart (Proverbs 3:5); keep His commandments with our heart (Proverbs 3:1); have a merry heart (Proverbs 17:22); and, most important, give the Lord our heart and observe His ways (Proverbs 23:26).



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

WAL – MART AND EARNINGS

A headline in a newspaper read “Though earnings down, Wal – Mart sees more traffic.” It was in the news not so long ago that Wal – Mart gave their workers a raise. Perhaps that is one reason that Wal – Mart’s earnings are down. It would be nice if more corporations would share their earnings with the workers.

Of course, there are other reasons why Wal – Mart’s earnings are down. One is the increasing competition from online retailers like Amazon.com and dollar stores.

OPEN SEASON ON POLICE OFFICERS

Through early November 2015, 34 police officers were slain. Seven police officers gave their lives in the line of duty during September of that year. One official said “War has been declared on America’s police officers.” The police feel themselves that they are under fire and that their role in society is maligned, and their safety is threatened. The growing disrespect and hatred of police officers and other authority figures is impossible to ignore.

SIX CHOICES OF GENDER

Consider the following article called *Six Choices Of Gender* taken from the publication **Does God Exist?**

Incoming freshmen at the University of California are being offered six different genders from which to choose: Male, Female, Trans Male/Trans man, Trans Female/Trans Woman, Different identity, and Gender Queer/Gender Non-conforming. One would need an explanation of many of those titles, but the confusion of sexual roles has left a great deal of collateral damage in our culture. God’s creation with well defined roles gives stability that all of us need.

COMPUTER DRIVEN CARS?

The following are the first four paragraphs of an article entitled *Regulators say computers can qualify as drivers* by Tom Krisher and Justin Pritchard of the Associated Press. It appeared in the **Houston Chronicle**:

DETROIT – Computers that control cars of the future can be considered drivers just like humans, the federal government’s highway safety agency has decided.

The redefinition of “driver” by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is an important break for Google, which is developing self-driving cars that get around without steering wheels, pedals or even the need for a person to be inside.

Though treating a computer like a driver for regulatory purposes helps Google, its cars have miles to go before they get on the road in great numbers. While the agency agreed with Google’s “driver” reinterpretation in a recent letter, it didn’t allow other concessions and said many rules would have to be changed to permit the cars.

Google, a subsidiary of Alphabet, is testing dozens of prototypes in California, Texas and Washington. The company has suggested they could be ready for the public in a few years.

Comment

I am certain that for most people it is difficult to imagine a computer driving a car that has no pedals, wheels or a person inside. This is real artificial intelligence! But we can be sure that these human-driverless cars will become a reality. Nothing in man’s imagination is impossible to do.

These days are like the days when Babylon and the tower was being built. Listen to Genesis 11:6, “And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to

do.” We now have a global connection to everyone around the world in one way or another. Now it is a global economy! There continues to be many languages. However translation techniques greatly ease the language barrier.

THINK ABOUT THIS

I heard one presidential candidate speaking on CNN. He brought up the subject of what is happening in America. He quoted Isaiah 5:20 which reads, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

This is the situation in America now. It really has excelled in the last few years. It seems like churches are being threatened for practicing their beliefs and denouncing sin, and wickedness is rampant.

Comment

Children of God do not take part in the sins of the world, no matter what country they may be in. They follow the example of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:13-14: “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

THE NUCLEAR THREAT

Last spring the leaders of more than 50 countries gathered in Washington at the request of President Obama to try to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons. It was the fourth and perhaps the last of these gatherings.

Comment

No real agreement came out of that meeting. Russian President Putin boycotted that meeting. The whole world is concerned and fearful of things like nuclear weapons that they could destroy everyone. The prophecy that Jesus gave in Matthew 24 tells us that everyone is not going to be destroyed. There is cause for fear because of great tribulation, but not all flesh will die. The nuclear weapon threat is only one part of that tribulation.

In Matthew 24:21-22 Jesus tells us, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

ISIS RECRUITMENT

When ISIS, the Islamic State, lost territory in Iraq and

Syria, it turned to expanding its terrorism ability. It caused much terror in France and in Belgium. It also extended its recruitment efforts. It is recruiting far and wide in many countries.

I read that they recently posted a digital recording of a new chant in Mandarin Chinese. It calls for Muslims to wake up and take up weapons to fight. The chant is typical of many other chants released by ISIS.

BELIEVERS DECLINE

There was a headline in a newspaper which said that there is no way to label decline in believers. It said that a study found 22 percent of respondents expressed doubts in their belief of God. It said that figure rose from just 13 percent in the late 1980’s.

There were some readers who posted what they thought were the reasons for the decline in believing in God on facebook. The following is the reason that one person gave:

“I would say that the decline in religion can be contributed to more and more Christians supporting philosophies that go directly against what the Bible teaches us. It’s no secret that many devoted Christians pick’n choose parts of the Bible they agree with, but yet ignore the parts they don’t agree with. Openly supporting racism, singling out other faiths as 'evil' or 'bad,' it’s no wonder that the younger generation is being turned off.”

Comment

The reader’s reason is right on! Also we read the following in I Timothy 4:1, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

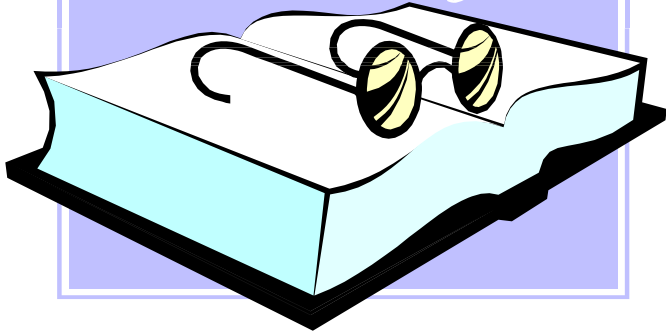
THE REAL REASON

You have heard that the Russian president has withdrawn Russia’s war planes from Syria. The reason for the air attacks was to help fight ISIS, or at least that is what was understood. The Russian president said that the mission was accomplished. Just what was accomplished?

Russia is one of the backers of the present regime in Syria that is also fighting ISIS. According to the news, most of the Russian airstrikes were in areas where no ISIS troops or holdings were. Only those rebels fighting the Syrian regime were attacked. This gives us reason to believe that supporting the Syrian regime was the real reason for the Russian involvement.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is wrong with prejudice?

ANSWER: Prejudice is a judgment or opinion formed before the facts are known.

Was Jesus out of God's will in Nazareth? Had He lost His power with God? Was He lax in His prayer life? To all these questions, we must answer No, or make ourselves ridiculous. Yet, we are told in a positive statement that He was unable to do in Nazareth the mighty works that customarily followed in the wake of His ministry.

This lull in His potent ministry was very brief, for soon the deaf heard the music of His voice, the blind saw the radiance of His smile, the dumb shouted aloud His praise, the lame leaped with joy at His touch, the sinners were loosed at His command, and again the multitudes clamored for the word of life as it fell with love from His lips. No, Jesus was the same as He had always been, but the people were different. It was they who were out of God's will. It was they who knew no power with God, and it was they who were lax in prayer. Christ was shackled with the shackles of their unbelief.

The people of Nazareth refused to accept Jesus. They refused to believe in Him. He was not the man they wanted. From the beginning, their minds were warped against Him. Regardless of what He wrought in their midst, they found some reason to hold fast to their prejudices. They refused Him their cooperation and confidence and met His every approach to their hearts

with a cynical sneer or a stinging slur. How absurdly foolish they were! Theirs was the prejudice that shackles.

Leaders can do little or nothing without the full cooperation and confidence of their followers. Military officers, therefore, ask for the "blind faith" of their men. Regardless of what energies and potentialities they possess, it takes belief in them and love for them to make great leaders great.

In the church, prejudice toward any leader or minister is an unwelcome intruder. It will deter progress, hinder the work of the Lord, break hearts, and cause damnation of souls. To do the great work of which he is capable, every official and every minister must be free from prejudice in either his followers or his fellow workmen.

"But he is not the man we wanted. He is not the man for us," people often say of their pastor, teacher, or overseer. What responsibility they assume, what judgment they pass, what folly they display, what hearts they break! Any person who would say that is saying also, in his attitude, that he is more in knowledge of God's will than the subject of his scorn or of the person, or persons, who placed him there. Such responsibility before God!

Were not the Corinthians childish in their contentions which brought the sharp rebuke of Paul upon their ears when some said, "I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ?" Then are not we childish when we refuse one minister merely because we like another more? Of course, all pastors are not alike.

Certainly they are vastly different in many ways, and thank God for it. The grace of God is not a steam roller to press from man his individuality and make every minister a duplicate of some other. Did it make impulsive Peter like methodical Paul? Far from it! Did it make their methods alike; their temperaments; their personalities? Certainly not. Yet none dare say one was a better person than the other, or that one did a better work than the other. How pitifully inadequate the grace of God would be if one man could rise so far above all others that no one could ever replace him. How woefully small the heart must be that has only the capacity to love and trust one man alone. The Nazarenes were prejudiced because they thought Jesus could not be as great as Moses. But He was.

Men have often been rejected because of their backgrounds. Their works are often brought in disregard because they were once perhaps dumb and foolish and not believers. And some, because they are cultured and refined, are rejected on the grounds that they are “above us.” What if all the people had rejected Christ because He was a carpenter? Do not be vain enough to judge a man for what he once was.

If you are displeased with your pastor, your overseer, your Sabbath School teacher, your official, do not refuse him your cooperation, which is definitely unchristian, but work hard with him until time for a change comes. Then when the time for a change comes your works together will have created such a love for him and so much will have been accomplished that you will not want to change after all. Sit down on him, and it will hurt him for a short time, but it will hurt you forever.

Never say a man is out of God’s will until you are in God’s will in saying it. Never say his preaching is inferior until you have prayed and encouraged and helped to make it superior. Never criticize his methods until you are prepared to give concrete evidence of better ones. Never refuse him your full cooperation until you have proved him a false prophet and an exhorter of a lie. Otherwise, he, with his work for God, may become shackled by your prejudice. And when he is shackled, you are shackled too.

QUESTION: What are some of the things that Jesus taught concerning the tenth commandment?

ANSWER: Commandment number ten of the Ten Commandments states, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s” (Exodus 20:17).

Jesus Christ taught that man should never defraud (cheat) his neighbor, i.e., never covet anything belonging to his neighbor. “Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother” (Mark 10:19).

Jesus Christ taught that man should beware of covetousness because man’s life is more than accumulating material things. “And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).

Jesus Christ taught that a man who covets (lusts, craves) after beauty in his heart has committed adultery and sexual immorality. “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:28).

Jesus Christ taught that we must not seek the things of this earth, but rather seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

Jesus Christ taught that we must not lay up treasure upon earth, but rather lay up treasure in heaven. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matthew 6:19-20).

QUESTION: What is typology?

ANSWER: Typology is the study of the various types in the Bible which foreshadowed, later, more developed revelations of characters or figures (the antitypes), whether positive or negative. A positive example is David as a type of Christ (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46). A negative example is Antiochus as a type of Antichrist (see Daniel 11:21-35, 36-45).



Philippines, Part II

A meeting of Church of God (7th Day) brothers and sisters.





Candidates for baptism (above); some of the brethren posing for a photo (below).



LESSON I

PAUL AT EPHESUS (PART II)

Scripture Reading: Acts 19:13-22.

Golden Text: Acts 19:20.

"So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

1. Who tried to copy Paul's deeds by using the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts 19:13.
2. Who was Sceva, and how many sons did he have? Acts 19:14.
3. What did the man with the evil spirit say and do to Sceva and his sons? Acts 19:15-16.
4. What did this event cause to happen in Ephesus? Acts 19:17-18.
5. What did many of the people do to show their faith in God? Acts 19:19.
6. Did the word of God grow and prevail? Acts 19:20.
7. What did Paul next purpose to do? Acts 19:21.
8. What two men did Paul send to Macedonia? Acts 19:22.

LESSON II

SILVERSMITHS AT EPHESUS

Scripture Reading: Acts 19:23-41.

Golden Text: I Peter 2:2.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby".

1. Who was Demetrius? Acts 19:24.
2. From what did the silversmiths get most of their wealth? Acts 19:25.

3. Who did the Ephesians worship? Acts 19:26-27.
4. Were Demetrius and the other silversmiths happy to learn of God's Word? Acts 19:28.
5. What took place in Acts 19:29?
6. Did Paul enter into the theatre? Why? Acts 19:30-32.
7. Who was going to speak to the multitude, and why did he not speak? Acts 19:35-41.
8. Explain in your own words what happened in Acts 19:35-41.
9. What did Paul do when this uproar was over? Acts 20:1.

LESSON III

PAUL IN TROAS

Scripture Reading: Acts 20:1-16.

Golden Text: Acts 20:12.

"And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."

1. After the uproar in Ephesus, to where did Paul travel? Acts 20:1-2.
2. Paul returned to Macedonia. Name the disciples that accompanied him into Asia, and tell what country they were from? Acts 20:3-4.
3. How long did it take them to go to Troas, and how long did they stay there? Acts 20:6.
4. Where do we find Paul speaking, and what time of the day is it? Acts 20:7-8.
5. What happened to the young man, Eutychus, while Paul was preaching? Acts 20:9.

DO YOU KNOW THAT JESUS IS ALIVE?

6. What did Paul do to help this young man? Acts 20:10.
7. After bringing the young man back to life, through Christ, what did Paul do? Acts 20:11.
8. Name the different places where Paul stopped each day. Acts 20:13-15.

LESSON IV

PAUL IN MILETUS

Scripture Reading: Acts 20:17-38.

Golden Text: Acts 20:35 (last part).

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

1. When Paul entered Miletus, for whom did he send? Acts 20:17.
2. As Paul talked to the elders, what did he tell them about his manner of preaching the gospel? Acts 20:18-20.
3. To whom did Paul testify? Acts 20:21.
4. Where did Paul say he was going, and did he know what to expect there? Acts 20:22-24.
5. Paul told the leaders to take heed. What two things did he say would happen after he left? Acts 20:28-30.
6. In whose hands, or care, did Paul put the brethren? Acts 20:32.
7. What very important words did Paul leave with the brethren? Acts 20:35.
8. When Paul finished speaking, what did they all do? Acts 20:36-38.

You have heard how the Son of God, Jesus, once lived in this world and how He was killed by wicked men and nailed to a cross of wood.

The third day, after He died, some of His friends were in a room together. They were talking about Him. Some said with beaming faces, "He is alive again for we have seen Him." But others said, "Oh, how could that be?" And there was such a great big longing in their hearts to see Him.

All in a moment Jesus stood there with them.

The doors were locked. No door had been opened or closed. How did He get in?

But that made no difference to the Son of God, who was risen from the dead. Before He was crucified, He walked upon the water and raised the dead. What would a closed door mean to Him when those who loved Him were on the other side of the door?

Jesus spoke so sweetly to His friends, "Peace be unto you," meaning "My loved ones, be happy and rest in My love, for I love you dearly and give My peace unto you." What more could He say? Still these friends seemed frightened. This was all so strange to them because they had seen Him die on that awful cross. They knew He had been dead.

But Jesus told them not to fear. They looked at His hands and the marks of the nails that fastened them to the cross which were there. They looked at His feet and the marks which were there also. And, even more, they saw the hole in His side; for a soldier had pierced His side with a spear, and that made the blood and water flow out upon the ground.

When they saw these marks, they knew that it was Jesus. They were so glad that their precious Lord was alive and that He loved them still. They scarcely knew how to act. Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. "With His breath, He gave the Holy Spirit of God to them. But God raised Jesus through the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit was still with Him.

Jesus is now in Heaven, but He will come again, and then we who love Him shall see Him and hear Him speak and see those marks in his hands and in His feet.

--Author Unknown



PATIENCE IN A BUCKET

"Did you bring a kitty home tonight, Daddy? Did you?" asked Danny, as he met his Daddy at the door.

Night after night Danny asked his Daddy that same question. Night after night Daddy replied, "Not tonight, Danny. But I'll find a kitty for you soon. You must be patient."

Every night after supper Danny sat beside Daddy in the big chair while Daddy read the ads about kittens in the newspaper. Danny listened quietly. Sometimes there were kitties for sale. Sometimes the kitties were free. And Danny wanted the kitty in every ad.

Danny got excited each evening when Daddy read the ads in the newspaper. "Maybe tomorrow night, Daddy? Maybe tomorrow you'll bring home a kitty?" he would ask.

"I'll try, Danny, but you must be patient," Daddy always answered.

Each day Danny waited and hoped that Daddy would bring a kitty home that night. Sometimes Daddy said, "Not tonight, Danny. The kitties cost too much money. You must be patient." Other times Daddy said, "Not tonight, Danny. The kitties were free, but when I got there they were all gone."

Danny and Mother often talked about the new kitty while Daddy was at work. Mother tried to help Danny find a name for the kitty. But Danny always thought more about wanting the kitty than he did about naming the kitty.

Finally, one night when Daddy came home again without a kitty, Danny started to cry. "I want a little, baby kitty so-o-o ba-a-aad. I've asked everyone for a kitty. I've even prayed for a kitty. But no-o-o one gives me a kitty. Even Jesus didn't hear my prayers." And Danny put his arms around Daddy's neck and cried.

Poor Danny! He was really unhappy.

Daddy patted Danny's back and gave him a big squeeze. When Danny stopped crying, Daddy kissed away the tears. "Danny," Daddy said softly, "one of these days we will find the right kitty for you. But you must be patient

and be happy while you wait. Jesus will help us find a kitty. Jesus wants you to have a kitty. Jesus always hears and answers our prayers."

"Come and eat," called Mother from the kitchen. While they were eating, Mother said. "Danny, I have an idea! I think we should name your kitty 'Patience' because you have waited so long to get it."

"And that would remind us always to wait happily, too, wouldn't it?" said Daddy with a smile.

After supper Danny climbed up beside Daddy in the big chair, and Daddy opened the newspaper and looked on the ad page. "I'm sorry," said Daddy, "but there aren't any ads for kitties in the paper tonight." Danny was having a hard time waiting happily. His lip quivered. He blinked his eyes. He put his head down on Daddy's shoulder.

"Well, now here is something," Daddy continued. "Listen to this, Danny. It says here in the paper that the firemen found a little kitty. It was stuffed in an old blanket and hidden under some bushes. Let's take a ride down to the fire station right now. Maybe you will have a kitty tonight."

Danny held Daddy's hand tightly as they walked into the big fire station. There in a box on the fire chief's desk was a little kitten.

"So you want a kitten, do you, young man?" boomed the big fireman. "Well, here you are!" And he put a soft little black-and-white kitty into Danny's open hands.

Danny gently snuggled the kitty up under his chin. Danny's eyes were big and shiny. He was smiling. He was so happy.

"What are you going to call your kitten?" asked the fireman.

"I'm going to name my kitty 'Patience' cause I've waited so long for my Daddy to get it. The fireman laughed. "That's a good name for this kitten," he said. "It has been waiting, too, you know. It has been waiting for a good home."

On the way home Daddy told Danny that sometimes Jesus does not answer our prayers right away. Sometimes Jesus has a reason for waiting a little while. Maybe Jesus has something special for us. Or maybe Jesus is teaching us a lesson. When we pray we must have patience. That means we must wait happily, knowing that Jesus always hears and answers our prayers.

USING THE KEY BELOW, SEE IF YOU CAN DECODE THESE VERSES.

USING THE KEY BELOW,
SEE IF YOU CAN DECODE THESE VERSES.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
m n o p z y x w v t s q r j k l h g f e d c b a l u

1." _____ f w m q q o m q q d l k j
_____ j m r z k y e w z q k g p f w m q q
_____ " (Romans 10:13)
n z f m c z p

2." _____ i z m g z e w z
_____ m n v p z e w
_____ w v r e w z
_____ y k g e w r d o w
_____ " (John 15:5)
y g d v e

3." _____ m j p
_____ e w k d
_____ f w m q q f m l
_____ " (Isaiah 58:9)
w z g z v m r

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THE GREATEST GIFT

*We are given many wonderful blessings,
And their worth is not often heard;
The greatest of which is faith freely given
For which we depend on His Word.*

*Faith can conquer all problems
That Satan seeks to ruin the while;
Only faith will hinder his purpose,
Giving courage for that one, extra mile.*

*The faith that has been there all ages
Has always been faithful and true;
This greatest gift we've been given,
God planned it especially for you.*

*This wonderful gift of faith
To help you hold on every day;
So, remember, all things worth keeping
Are the ones you have given away.*

Betty Whetstone

