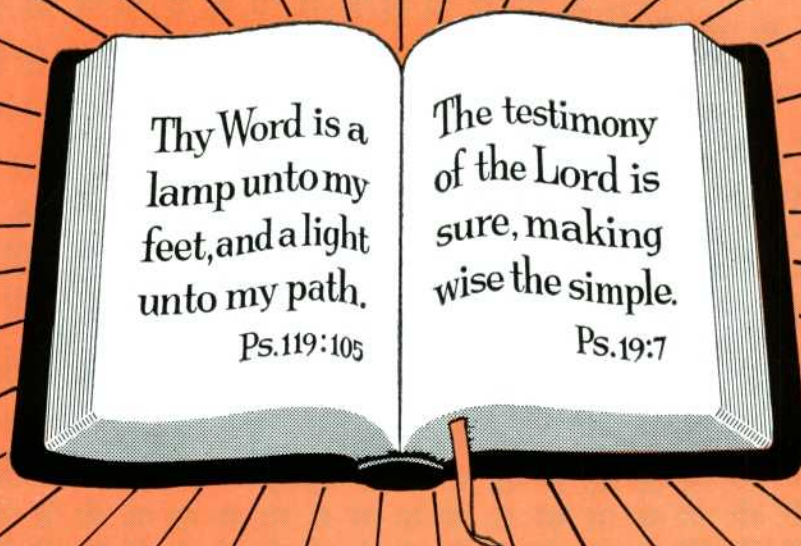


# Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



**We Believe the Bible**

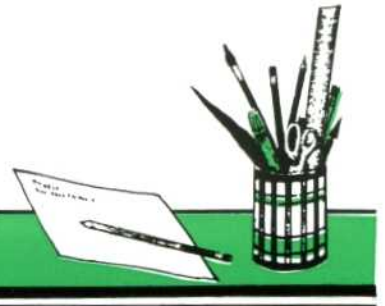
**Preparedness**

**What Is Truth? The Great Infidel Discussion**

**The Virtue of Fortitude**



# EDITORIAL



## Oh, that Worldly Mind!

TIME and again it perplexes us. We do things we know we really should not, and we leave undone some of the very things we know we *should* do. Again, we find ourselves in a quiet moment dwelling in a world of thought where we know we have no legitimate interest, or a petty world where there is nothing to gain. We find ourselves longing for things we would not want if we had, and dreaming ourselves into even greater longings. Oh, that worldly mind!

The apostle Paul describes it in these words: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). It is not subject to the law of God—and *cannot* be, hence we call it a *worldly* mind.

How can we identify this worldly mind? It is self-centered, egotistical, wrapped around the big "I". Filled with selfish independence, it wants its own way at any price. This attitude or mental framework tries to corral all circumstances within its heart's desires. Those with this human bent of mind incline to think the world revolves around them. It is a way of thinking totally centered about the desires of the fleshly human nature, that which is "low, sensual, devilish." It is a warped viewpoint which displeases God and brings its owner to eternal death. "For to be carnally minded is death" (Rom. 8:6).

Oh, that worldly mind! Self comes first. Christ may be Lord *occasionally*; but when that is not convenient, paganism, traditionalism, and conventionalism replace His will; and the life so conducted belies *any* profession of faith.

It is a mind that is deceptive, dark, even conniving. As oil refuses to cooperate with water, so it refuses to cooperate with the ways of God. It battles truth, repentance and faith with its self-seeking, even though it may appear quite sincere and zealous for the faith. What it lacks is inner conviction and heart-commitment. It is a friend of the world—and therefore the enemy

of God. Inwardly it loves the world, the things of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life.

Oh, that worldly mind! Can you honestly deny that you have *any* connections with it? Can you say in truth that you are *done* with it and all of its devisings? that you have had a complete change of heart? That is what the apostle Paul advised: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Here is the *only* solution. ●●

---

*What if I went to sleep tonight  
And never waked again?  
How would I look before my God  
And to my fellowmen?  
How could I answer for my life  
To those I called my friends  
As death would overtake me with  
No time to make amends?  
These are the questions serious  
I all too seldom ask  
As carelessly from day to day  
I go about my tasks;*

*I only think of life in terms  
Of income and expense;  
Without regard to any sin  
And its great consequence.  
Oh, let me kneel before my God  
And say this prayer tonight,  
Forgive me for my failures, Lord,  
And help me to do the right!  
Help me to change my ways before  
It ever is too late  
And I am left outside of Zion,  
Outside the city gate!*

## Megiddo means

"a place of troops" (*Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon*); "a place of God" (*Young's Analytical Concordance*). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (II Cor. 10:4-5).

### *We believe*

—in God the Creator of all things, all men, and all life.

### *We believe*

—in the Bible as containing the genuine revelation of God and His purposes for men, and as being our only source of divine knowledge today.

### *We believe*

—in Christ the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was born of a Virgin, ministered among men, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven, and who shall shortly return to be King of the whole earth.

### *We believe*

—in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.

### *We believe*

—in all mankind as providing the nucleus from which a superior, God-honoring people shall be chosen to receive the blessings of immortal life.

### *We believe*

—in ourselves as capable of fulfilling the demands and disciplines given us in the law of God, thus perfecting that high quality of character which God has promised to reward with life everlasting in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

### *We believe*

—in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth will be filled with His glory, His people, and His will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

## Bible Quotations in this issue:

Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version.

Other versions are identified as follows:

NEB—*New English Bible*

NIV—*New International Version*

NAS—*New American Standard*

RSV—*Revised Standard Version*

TLB—*The Living Bible*

TEV—*Today's English Version*

Phillips—*The New Testament in Modern English*

Berkeley—*The Modern Language New Testament*

Weymouth—*The New Testament in Modern Speech*

Moffatt—*The Bible, A New Translation*

The use of selected references from various versions of the Bible does not necessarily imply publisher endorsement of the versions in their entirety.

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September, 1980

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# We Believe the Bible!

A QUOTATION from an editorial in the March 3rd, 1980, issue of the *U. S. News and World Report* by Marvin Stone reads as follows:

"The road just ahead runs straight uphill. It doesn't take occult powers to realize that. But to predict the more distant future requires a combination of statistical drudgery, intuition and faith. The most important of these is faith." While Mr. Stone seems confident of his faith in the human race, we believe his faith is misplaced.

During the early 1900s, faith in mankind and his institutions, including the church, was widespread. Science and advancing technology promised countless temporal blessings and the church was working eagerly to convert the world to Christ. While this optimism still prevails in many circles, there is no denying that our modern world faces serious problems in all areas of life. The church has failed to deliver on its promise; our social and moral problems have multiplied; and a basic lack of willingness to serve, sacrifice and give, along with misgovernment, misplaced values, and misappropriation of earth's resources both human and mineral—all are borrowing heavily from the welfare of future generations. At the same time, science with all its brilliant achievements has created fully as many problems as it has solved. Indeed, to believe that the future of man's efforts in earth management will be any better than his past requires more faith in man's ability than is possible to muster on the basis of his past performance.

Does this mean that there is nothing better in sight for the human family? Does this mean that there is no help or hope for the human family, that there is no better time coming, that we will continue to confront problems that are beyond our power to solve? The answer is NO. Faith is the key to the future—faith in Almighty God. There is a better day coming. There is a *new world* coming, and we have every reason to have abundant faith in *that* future. Why? Because it does not depend on the power of mankind for its reality. Human efforts alone

can never bring about one world government that will exist for the betterment and benefit of all its people. The uniting of the world in righteousness will take the power of God, and God has promised that it *shall be*. "As truly as I live," is the immortal promise of the Almighty Himself, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Numbers 14:21).

How do we know about the plans and decrees of the Creator? We have never seen Him, we have never heard His voice, nor have we received any revelation of knowledge direct from Him. For our knowledge of Him we are dependent upon one Book, the Bible.

How is it that we trust the Bible, that we go to it as an unquestioned source of dependable instruction and true authority?

In many intellectual circles today the Bible has been downgraded to the status of a strictly human production. It is seen and judged as common literature, or even worse, as a legend or myth. This is most regrettable as it destroys faith in the only communication we today have with the Divine Mind. It should be obvious to the serious-minded that we are not self-sufficient beings. We cannot create our own environment; we cannot create the water that we drink or the food that we eat. We cannot prolong our lives beyond a limited span. We are dependent creatures, dependent upon our Creator. In no area are we *more* dependent than in the area of future existence. When life ends, we are powerless to continue it. We have no power to perpetuate our consciousness.

## One Guide—the Bible

The Bible is our only guide to future life. Any reliable information about the future must come from the Bible. Any other source is pure speculation, tradition, or superstition, without verification, without fact.

How do we know the Bible is reliable? Infidels for 1800 years have been refuting and overthrow-

ing this Book, yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Infidels with all their assaults make about as much impression on this Book as a man with a tack hammer could make on the pyramids of Egypt.

The Bible is not a book of unfounded feelings and philosophies of men. It is not fantasy or fiction. The Bible is the real record of men and women who actually lived. It tells of events that actually happened. It was written in and about places that actually existed. And it tells of a plan that is slowly and steadily working toward completion.

### The Evidence

How can we be sure? How can we know that the Bible is not just another book by another group of ordinary men? How can we know that its writing was directed by the God of heaven? The Buddhists have their sacred scriptures, and they give glowing testimonies of what their religion does for them. The Hindus have their sacred Vedas, the writings of *their* holy men. And the Moslems have the writings of Mohammed, and so on and on. How can we know that the Bible is not the same as all these other writings, just the words of some more men who had more ideas?

Let us look at the Book. The Bible is composed of sixty-six different books, written over a period of 1600 years. The authors of these books were men human as we are, and they came from all walks of life. Some were kings, some fishermen, some herdsmen, statesmen, doctors, scholars. These different men wrote in three different languages, and on three continents. Yet they all wrote *one* message of salvation. How could this be possible, unless all were moved and guided by *one* supreme God?

Second, the Bible has been preserved. It has had the fiercest of enemies. It has been burned and its advocates have been persecuted and tortured, to say nothing of the ridicule it has suffered in the hands of intellectuals. Yet it has survived these thousands of years and still has the largest circulation by far of any book ever written.

### Prophecies . . . and More Prophecies

Then, too, the Bible is the only volume ever produced by any group of men in which is to be found so large a body of prophecies relating to individual nations, to Israel, to all the peoples of the earth, to certain cities, and to the coming of One who would be the Messiah. The ancient world had many different devices for deter-

mining the future, known as divinations; but not in the entire gamut of Greek and Latin literature can we find any really specific prophecy of a great historic event to come in the distant future, nor any prophecies focussing without question on the life of a person who would live in the future. Mohammedanism cannot point to any prophecies uttered hundreds of years before Mohammed's birth; nor can the founders of any other cult rightly identify any ancient text specifically foretelling their appearance.

The Old Testament of the Bible contains several hundred references to the coming of the Messiah. The writers, guided by divine inspiration, predicted where He would be born, when He would be born, and that He would be born of a virgin. His life, His ministry, His betrayal, His death, His resurrection—all were precisely foretold. Someone has calculated the probabilities of even *eight* of the prophecies of the Messiah being fulfilled in one man—according to the laws of normal possibilities—as one in one hundred quadrillion (100,000,000,000,000,000), and there are literally dozens of prophecies all precisely fulfilled in Christ.

Then let us consider a few other predictions from the Bible. The prophet Daniel, who lived during the time of the Babylonian Empire, received information from a heavenly visitor about four world kingdoms which should rise and wane. The dream was King Nebuchadnezzar's and Daniel's interpretation is found in chapter 2, verses 37-45. Of the great metallic image which the king saw, Nebuchadnezzar himself was the head of gold. Second was the breast and arms of silver (fulfilled in the Medo-Persian empire); the mid-section of brass was fulfilled in the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great. The fourth was the Roman Empire, represented by the iron legs; its eventual twofold split into eastern, and western divisions, with capitals at Rome and Constantinople, was pictured by the two legs. There was not to be another worldwide power until Christ should come to set up His kingdom. And just as certain as the first four kingdoms rose and fell, so surely shall the fifth—the Kingdom of Christ—become a reality. In the dream it was represented by a little stone which smote the image on the feet, and then grew until it filled the whole earth. Just so will the Kingdom of Christ, a kingdom of peace and righteousness, grow and fill the earth.

If this prophetic evidence in support of the Bible does not seem conclusive, there is still more—*much* more. Consider the following: In

the 26th chapter of Ezekiel are seven specific prophecies regarding the city of Tyre. The 14th verse reads (NAS), "I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I the Lord have spoken." The great ancient city of Tyre suffered the fate predicted and remains today a bare rock where a few fishermen live and spread their nets to dry, exactly fulfilling the divine prediction. The ancient city was literally scraped into the midst of the sea—just as was prophesied—the event occurred quite naturally when the conquering Nebuchadnezzar, wishing to conquer a nearby island stronghold, used the remains of the desolate city to build a causeway through the water. The city of Babylon was also the subject of prophetic utterances, all of which foretold her downfall and utter destruction, which can be verified today.

Many of the prophecies of the Bible are fulfilled in the pages of history. Many others await

fulfillment. And if we can see the one group fulfilled exactly as predicted, does this not give us faith that the God who stood behind the first stands also behind the second, those yet unfulfilled, so that we may depend upon His word in the future?

This is the purpose for which the Bible has been given us: to tell us of God's plans for this earth, and also how we may have part in those plans when they become reality.

What are some Bible prophecies yet unfulfilled? First, the prophecies of the coming King: "A King shall reign in righteousness," there "shall . . . be one Lord, and his name one"; "he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Isa. 32:1; Zech. 14:9; Ps. 72:8). Jesus Christ *will* come back to earth, just as the angels who watched Him ascend, foretold. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall

*(Continued on page 20)*

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## Let Us Pray . . .

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. May Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as now it is done in heaven.

We thank Thee for the glorious prospect pictured in Thy Word, the Bible. May we believe it, build upon its glowing promises, and spend our entire life striving to elevate our daily living to a point where we will be fit to become a part of Thy new Kingdom when it is set up on the earth.

We thank Thee for Thy Word, our only connection with Thy exalted Mind, our only source of divine wisdom, and a knowledge of Thy exalted plan for the earth and mankind. May we with shining faces and rejoicing hearts look forward with joyful expectancy to that happy day when at the return of Christ to earth our officers shall be peace and our exactors righteousness; when the great King will judge the people righteously, and the poor with judgment.

In that coming Day righteousness and peace will be the stability of the times, and the benediction of peace will rest upon all peoples who submit to Thy new order as the rain upon the mown grass, as the showers that water the earth.

In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. International wars will no longer be possible for one King shall be king over the whole earth and civil wars will be absolutely taboo.

Father, alert us to the need of haste in our preparation for that better day. To live in an age when we shall see evil no more we ourselves will have to banish evil from our lives or we too shall be excluded. Thou wilt not accept into Thy new world any sub-standard material. Only the righteous shall remain after Thy cleansing judgments have swept over the earth.

May we take seriously Thy demand for a complete transformation from the life pattern according to man's faulty conception of right and wrong, taking the exalted principles demanded in the Bible and instilling them into our own everyday living. May we take seriously Thy Word as relayed to us through Thy holy prophet Jeremiah, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his [own] steps," and gladly surrender ourselves.

To be carnally-minded is death, only to be spiritually-minded is life and peace. May our desire for that perfect peace that passes understanding prompt us to transform our lives, to surrender wholly to Thy leading, that we may merit endless life in Thy soon-coming Kingdom. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

# Preparedness

**A**BOUT twelve centuries before Christ, there lived in the land of Israel a young man named Gideon.

In those days the Midianite tribes—wealthy Arabians from the desert, a people delighting in finery and living by plunder—swarmed in vast hordes over the land of Israel, foraging through the fertile countryside. Before them the Israelites retreated in fear, storing in dens and caves of the mountains such of their possessions as they were able to retain. When they came out and sowed a little grain in the pockets of the land, the Midianites would come up and seize it as soon as it was ripe. They also carried away the Israelites' sheep and cattle.

This was the condition of things at the opening of one of the grandest stories of Bible history. We find it in the sixth chapter of the Book of Judges. "And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash, the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. . . . Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" (vs. 11-14).

We are immediately shown an angel watching with kindly interest a young giant threshing wheat in the pit by the winepress, and we mean threshing it! Watch this stirring drama for a moment. The man unconscious of the observing angel; the staccato, fiery thuds of the swiftly falling flail; the thin cloud of dust over the pit like a puff of punky gnats over a road in Maine; and then, the next thing you know, the angel commissions this dust-bowl farmer as a judge in Israel!

Here was the youngest son of an undistinguished family, living in an oppressed and down-trodden nation, suddenly picked by a messenger from God for great deeds. And what was his answer? Gideon was ready for the work of the

Lord! He was prepared! For God never appoints dullards, sluggards, nor ne'er-do-wells to positions of responsibility and honor. Long before the angel came to elevate him to the rank of judge, this humble laborer Gideon had been growing up to judicial stature by exercising his mind on a higher level while he performed his farm duties. Son of an oppressed nation he might be, and his body a captive to labor; but his soul was unfettered. This man's soul aspired to something better. He prepared. Then his opportunity came, as opportunities do to those who are ready.

That was long ago. We today are Israelites of another age. And where are the Gideons now with souls fearless and unfettered, prepared to go forth at the command of the angel into the dark night and drive back the enemy of sin and evil, back into his own territory, and instill such fear into him that he will never again dare to return? Where are the staunch three hundred who will stand by this man of valor?

Nay, say not where! Shake off your terror, O ye Israelites! Come forth from your hidings among the rocks and answer, "Here am I!" ●●

---

*Though all my heart should be condemned,  
For want of some sweet token,  
There is One greater than my heart,  
Whose word cannot be broken.*

*For feelings come and feelings go,  
And feelings are deceiving;  
My warrant is the Word of God,  
Nought else is worth believing.*

*I'll trust in God's unchanging Word,  
Nought me from it shall sever;  
For, though all things should pass away,  
His Word shall stand forever.*





# What Is Truth?

## The Great Infidel Discussion



Reverend L. T. Nichols vs. Professor W. F. Jamieson

### Part Eight

**I**N THE YEAR 1890, our founder Rev. L. T. Nichols engaged in a series of debates with the great infidel debater Professor W. F. Jamieson.

The following articles are extracts from addresses by both speakers in the debates, which reflect the opposition our founder encountered and his sincere desire to discover fully the true teachings of the Word of God.

### Mr. Jamieson's Address

Mr. Nichols in his last speech showed a faculty which the Scotch say is making "a muckle out of a mickle." I admit that he has a lively imagination. It is my habit to be cool in discussion. If my opponent, instead of trying to run a race with our lightning reporters, and saying he is not afraid of me, that he is here to defend that blessed Bible, if instead of all this he would take up my affirmative arguments and answer them, it would be far better. But he is welcome to shoot as he pleases on this question as on the next also.

I must say, though, that some of Mr. Nichols' paragraphs are so incoherent that even a Methodist minister gets puzzled; he (the minister) said yesterday afternoon that Mr. Nichols in his sermon called him a horse. I heard the same sermon, and Mr. Nichols said nothing of the kind. I think those who read the verbatim report of this debate will be worse puzzled to know what he was driving at. My brother, in his great anxiety to get out the largest possible number of words in a given time, seems to think a multiplicity of words will settle the debate in his favor. For fear that there might be any uncertainty in your minds that he is the victor already, he modestly asserts that I have not grappled with a single argument of his. How could I? As soon as one becomes visible, like his woman

on the moon, I will pay all proper respect to it; but it was his place to note my affirmations, and show wherein they are defective. I have given him a chance to follow me into biblical history. In that direction he is silent as the grave. I have asked him where is the Divine Bible, the Holy, Divine Bible. Mark his answer. "Strictly speaking," he says, "this book is not the Bible; I must confess it; and every individual is driven to the same conclusion, for you all know that it is the King James translation of the Bible," said he. If a translation is not the Bible, then how can a copy be the Bible? If translations are not wholly Divine, how can a copy be wholly Divine? How do you know that your copy is correct? What is it a copy from? Was that from which it was copied wholly Divine, the original? A book that is partly Divine and partly human will not do. Where is the original, God-inspired volume? Did God give a book to man, and ever since neglect it, as if it were of no account? First, when I asked Mr. Nichols, "Where are the originals?" he manfully says, "I frankly say I never saw one." There is a very good reason for it—there are no originals. God gave revelation to the race, did He, upon which He placed so little value that He did not preserve it, and His chosen children, the Jews, also, with all their care, failed to keep the precious legacy? And so we have a counterfeit that is so full of mistakes, absurdities, inconsistencies, contradictions, that the wonder grows how any intelligent man can be imposed upon by it. And my



worthy opponent is an intelligent man.

Reverend Dr. John Dick, conceded to have been one of the ablest advocates Christianity ever had, makes these admissions in his *Theology*, Volume I, page 122, "We do not possess the original copies of the sacred writings. The autographs of the apostles and prophets have long since disappeared. The copy of the law, which was written by the hand of Moses himself, seems to have been preserved for many ages, and it was that copy which was found by Hilkiah, the High Priest, and read in the ears of Josiah; but it perished, we may presume, in the destruction of the Temple. Modern times can boast only of transcripts, removed from the originals, by more or fewer steps, according to the age in which they were written."

Again, says Dr. Dick, "Without a miracle, every transcript could not have been a faultless representation of the original; and that no such supernatural influence was exerted upon their minds, may be confidently inferred from the different readings which appear upon a collection of the manuscripts. It is certain that they cannot all be right, and it is probable that not one of them is correct" (Dick's *Theology*, page 124).

This knocks my friend's Hebrew Bible out of countenance. I don't question that my friend honestly supposed when he placed that Hebrew Bible before me that he was presenting me the only true, infallible word of God, that that would clinch the matter beyond all successful dispute. My friend has intimated several times that he was going to have such an easy time with me. I hope I will do my duty so thoroughly in this debate that Colonel Ingersoll, who wrote Mr. Nichols that he, the Colonel, would trust his principles in the hands of Mr. Jamieson of Minnesota, will have no reason whatever to feel dissatisfied with the results, as the Colonel is an excellent judge of work in this line—teachings which I have been proclaiming up and down the land for more than thirty years.

You remember how my friend ridiculed me for having a Bible without a margin. I inquired of him if the margin was inspired. He was so busy with his own thoughts that he found no time to answer. This eminent Christian scholar, Dick, says some of these margins "have been attributed to wilful corruption, with a view of serving the purpose of a party. This crime has been charged upon the Jews, upon heretics, and even upon those who were called orthodox."

A large share of the Bible is lost, some of the lost books mentioned by the Bible itself. Where is "The book of the Wars of the Lord"? Lost. "The book of Jasher"? Lost. "The Acts of Solomon"?

Lost. "The book of Gad the Seer"? Lost. "Prophecy of Ahijah"? "The Visions of Iddo"? "The book of Shemaiah, the prophet"? All lost! and twice as many more. Several centuries before what is called the Christian Era, there was no proper canon, or collection of the books of the Old Testament. The holy books were scattered about, subject to alterations and interpretation of unscrupulous priests and prophets. The book which one priest rejected another would accept.

It is claimed by able Christian writers that during the period of 800 years, from Moses to king Josiah, the Book of the Law seems to have reposed safely in its place by the side of the Ark. But those writers admit that the very knowledge of the existence of a single Temple copy "appears to have become traditional." They also admit that there is no trace of any book which is supposed to have been Moses' own autograph copy. Supposed! Again do they admit, Horne, Stowe, Smith and many other Christian authors, "it is totally unknown how or where the historical books, and other additions to the Bible, were preserved, but it was probably either in the Temple, or in the schools of the prophets." Christians and others in their study of Bible history ought to observe more closely how flimsy a foundation of probability and supposition they have to build upon. If the foundation is on the shifting sands of conjecture, can the superstructure be pronounced firm and safe? How can any logician start from the premises of mere supposition, and arrive at an absolutely certain conclusion? But this is just what the Christian world does with reference to the Bible.

The next epoch in the history of the Bible is about 400 years after Josiah, the time of Ezra, and Christian authors have this to say about Ezra: "He is believed to have collected the Old Testament into its present form, all but the Book of Malachi. But this account is only tradition. Another tradition makes Malachi to have been a final reviser and editor of the Scriptures some 40 years later, adding his own book."

There you have it: tradition, suppose, probably, and guess, fizz!

Dr. Adam Clarke says, "All antiquity is nearly unanimous in giving Ezra the honor of collecting the different writings of Moses and the prophets, and reducing them to the form in which they are now found in the Holy Bible." Scaliger says, "The fathers put into their scriptures whatever they thought would serve their purpose." No wonder St. Jerome, in his preface to the Gospels, exclaims, "no one copy resembles another."

Dr. Mosheim, as regards the 5th century says, "The simplicity and ignorance of the generality

in those times furnished the most favorable occasion for the exercise of fraud; and the impudence of imposters in contriving false miracles, was artfully proportioned to the credulity of the vulgar—while the sagacious and the wise who perceived these cheats were awed into silence by the dangers that threatened their lives and fortunes, if they should expose the artifice” (Vol. I, Mosheim, MacLane’s translation, page 133).\*

Mosheim declares it was an “almost universally adopted maxim, that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie when by such means the interests of the church might be promoted” (Vol. I, Mosheim, page 116). Yet this same Mosheim, the great Church historian of modern times, has been quoted to prove the opposite of all this;† but as a general rule, those portions only are quoted that favor the purity of the early Christians.

Mosheim’s history says also, “That it was not only lawful but commendable to deceive and lie for the sake of truth and piety early spread among the Christians of the second century. Numerous forgeries of books under the names of eminent men, sublime verses and a large mass of similar trash appeared in this and the following centuries.” “Thus,” he says, “those who wished to surpass all others in piety, deemed it a pious act to employ deception and fraud in support of piety.”\*

In speaking of the controversies of the 4th century, he says: “Their new methods of disputing furnished innumerable occasions for fraud and imposture,” and further says that the “authors who have treated of the innocence and sanctity of primitive Christians, have fallen into the error of supposing them to have been unspotted models of piety and virtue,” and a gross error indeed it is, as the strongest testimonies too evidently prove. In Volume I, page 109, he says, “For not long after Christ’s ascension into heaven several histories of his life and doctrine, full of pious frauds and fabulous wonders were composed by persons whose intentions perhaps were not bad.” No, they were not bad, if to lie for the sake of religion is good.

Now, coming down to the later time, we find that the Bible was divided into chapters, and was the work of man. The division of the Bible into chapters was the work of Cardinal Hugo, who lived

in the year 1240. The division into verses was the work of Robert Stevens who lived as late as 1551.

I am sometimes informed that the whole Bible is Divine. I find not the least evidence of any part of it being Divine. Noah Webster has this to say concerning the Bible: “Many words in the present version fail to give the true idea of the Word of God.” He calls this an evil. He points out inaccuracies in grammar and then says “the English scriptures cannot be uttered in company without a violation of decorum or the rules of good breeding.” There you have a man that was the master of 22 or 23 languages, and nobody can call in question that he was not a devout Christian. No one can charge Mr. Webster with not being a Christian, for he was a Christian, a Bible believer. He was so strongly wedded to the opinions of his time that he said the “Bible is the only book that can serve as an infallible guide to future felicity.”

In the time of Constantine the Great, there was a great deal done in regard to deciding about Holy Writings. Constantine was converted to the Christian religion on the night of October 16, 312; he became sole emperor of the East and West in 324, and died in 348 at 66 years of age. Now these items of history are valuable to every Bible student, I care not what his religious or irreligious belief may be.

We do not consider Constantine as an immoral or bad man. “He was,” says Dr. Lardner, “a sincere believer of the Christian religion, of which he first of all the Roman emperors made an open profession.” But this noble Christian, who had so much to do with the early documents of the Bible, drowned his unoffending wife Fausta in a bath of boiling water; he murdered the two husbands of his sisters; murdered his nephew, murdered his former friend Sopater; murdered his wife’s father; murdered his own son. And this man, remember, was a believer of the Christian religion.

How was the New Testament part of the Bible brought together? It has never been claimed that any portion of it was written during the lifetime of the reputed founder of Christianity. Of course, it is nowhere claimed that Christ Himself ever wrote one word of the Bible. It would take me not less than two weeks to go over the amount of history which I have collected, and which would be of value and interest to every community. It could scarcely be discussed in a brief debate, for this is a brief debate, of eight nights.

Who were they who were determining what writings were genuine and what spurious? I will bring that up a little later. I have confined myself almost entirely to Christian authors so that no Christian can have the least excuse to find fault.

\* There is one basic fact reflected here which Mr. Jamieson is not aware of: during this period those who called themselves “Christians” and followers of Christ’s apostles were in reality not. This was the time of the great apostasy, or turning away from true religion.

† The history recorded of different periods of time does differ—which is understandable as the teachers of religion turned slowly from the truth to fables.

## Mr. Nichols' Reply

It is with pleasure that I stand before you once more to faithfully defend the Bible which I hold so near and dear. We have been listening to a lecture or speech from my opponent. He has been going over the same ground for two or three times previous to this in search of the Bible. Certain books are immaterial to me. I have no inclination whatever to search after books which are mentioned in the Bible but which we do not have. The question I am interested in is, Is this book that we have reliable and of Divine authority? Is it such a production that I can place my confidence in it?

Mr. Jamieson made a remark in reference to the margin, and said that I ridiculed him. I am sorry if I did. I remarked in reference to his Bible, because I thought it could not have a margin. When I referred to the margin, it was with this view, that if friend Jamieson had a marginal Bible, and had seen and noticed the marginal reading it would have caused a doubt to have arisen in his mind, so much so that before he came out against this holy Record, he would have gone back to the original to see whether or not it would bear him out in his conclusions. That was my position. I never referred to the margin as being Divine, or inspired. Not at all.

Mr. Jamieson has gone over a great deal of ground this evening, which if I were to lecture to you, I would go over too. I do not believe that those people that he has referred you to understood and had the doctrine of Christ; or that they had the teachings of the Scriptures of truth; therefore their words have no weight.

The question comes up in your mind, and the one that we are interested in: Has Mr. Jamieson shown any contradictions, absurdities or inconsistencies in that Book? I believe we can say in every instance that when we went back to the original language where he found a discrepancy in King James, it swept the deck clear of the discrepancy or inconsistency.

Tonight I shall resume my argument; for as I remarked to you, it is immaterial to me whether we have some books that were Divine and that have been lost. That is not the question with me. We have what we style the Bible. We have something that we rely upon for our salvation. We hold, when properly examined and compared with the original, allowing the original to furnish us definitions of the words, that all of these contradictions and absurdities will fade away like snow before the noon-day sun. They will melt into nonentity, as they have melted

in this discussion, by being submitted to a fair straightforward test.

I do not believe in Constantine's religion any more than I believe in friend Jamieson's religion, nor half as much. No. There is a wide difference between my religion, which I claim to be the religion of the Bible, and the Christianity of today. Let me say here that I would rather believe as Mr. Jamieson does, and be a Free Thinker, in preference to being a member of the so-called Christian churches. Why? Because I had rather believe that every individual that ever lived or died should be locked up in eternal slumber than to believe that individual creatures, for what little evil and sin they could do in three score years and ten, should suffer throughout the endless ages of eternity; and consequently, you see Mr. Jamieson's doctrine would be preferable. I say to you, though, there is no such teaching in the Scripture of truth. I answered that in my former argument, and shall not stop tonight to answer it again.

We were calling your attention to some reasons why we believed the book to be Divine; why we could place our confidence in it, and why we went to the original to get rid of those contradictions. Suppose that Mr. Jamieson and myself had never traveled from here to a certain distant city, and we were inquiring the way and one of you gentlemen told us, "There is a way I can direct you that will be impossible for you to make a mistake, if you follow my directions." We start out with his directions, which are these: "Travel along in that direction until you come to a corner where you find erected a lion with eagle's wings. Turn to the right and travel in that direction until you come to a bear with three ribs in his mouth, and turn to the left; travel along until you come to a leopard with four heads and four wings, and turn to the right again. Travel in that direction until you come to a great and dreadful and terrible beast, with seven heads and ten horns, and turn to the left again. Travel in that direction until you come to the same beast with a little horn arising. After you see this little horn pluck up the other three horns, travel along that way 1260 miles, and then you may begin to look for the city you seek."

Now I would like to know when we travel over the road, and come to the lion with eagle's wings, if our confidence would not be increased in that man's story or his guide. It certainly would. We travel along until we come to the next mark, the bear with three ribs in his mouth, and our faith is still increased. Travel along a little further until we come to the leopard with four heads, and our faith is still increased. We travel along until we get to the great and dreadful monster, and our faith is still increased.



And when we come to this same beast again, where one horn has plucked up three horns, our faith is unlimited. And when we measure off from the time that the little horn plucked up three, and travel along 1260 miles, and see all come to pass to the very letter we have no doubt but will then begin to look for the city. I would like to know if any man in the universe could make us believe that that man was not a safe and proper guide.

That is just what we have in the Bible account. Here is something that Mr. Jamieson and all the world cannot overthrow, and it gives me faith and confidence in this Book.

Now go back to Daniel, 7th chapter. We told you that these four beasts represented four world kingdoms. I want to know now, what four world kingdoms were they? Daniel tells you this fourth beast represented a fourth great kingdom of the earth. Now, then, go with me for a moment to the second chapter of Daniel, and we will endeavor to get the description, that our faith may be increased. In Daniel 2:31, we commence: "Thou, O King, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." Now if you turn to Josephus, you can read what he has said. It is in book ten, chapter eleven entire. We will simply say he tells us this Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and all the wise men and magicians and astrologers could not make known the dream; there was none beside Daniel that could interpret this dream. The God of Heaven interpreted it to him. Josephus says this: "So that by the forementioned predictions of Daniel, those men seem to me to be far from the truth who determine that God exercises no providence over human affairs; for if that were the case, that the world went on by mechanical necessity, we should not see that all things would come to pass according to this prophecy. Now as to myself. I have so described these matters, as I have found them and read them. But if any one inclines to another opinion about them, let him enjoy his different sentiments without any blame from me."

In this interpretation, Daniel declares unto Nebuchadnezzar: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image

became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34-35).

Now we wish to look into this matter a little and see if there is any reality, anything to rely upon. Friend Jamieson has his tactics and his ways, and he is welcome to them. Although I have found some fault with him, tried to get him loaded up with the absurdities and contradictions of the Bible, in order that I might show the fallacy of them, he can dodge around just as many times as he pleases, and I have the right, and shall find fault with his dodging. My friend does not grapple with my arguments, as you know. You know well enough he has not gone back to the original in a single instance, not a single identical once, and you know it, and it will come out in that report. He has not attempted to show that we have been wrong in a single argument, but spends his time telling you of some history in reference to some books that we don't have, and of some history as to how we got the books we do have. The question with me is not how we came by them, but having them, are they authority and Divine? Consequently, we shall call your attention further to this subject.

You are all acquainted with the history of the rise and fall of the four world kingdoms. We read of this in Daniel 2:36-45. The two arms of this image represented the Medo-Persian Kingdom, "and after thee shall arise a third kingdom of brass which shall rule over all the earth." This represented the Grecian kingdom. Alexander the great when he was but twenty years old became general of the army, and in the short period of twelve years conquered the world.

Now we have passed the third kingdom and our faith has increased. The fourth kingdom, as we all know, was the Roman. Of this there can be no dispute. Friend Jamieson cannot find any history to overthrow this. If he can, let him produce it. Let him grapple with this and show by history that we are mistaken. He will not even attempt to do so, he knows he cannot.

You are all acquainted with these four kingdoms, Babylon, the Median-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. Now what? Here is this image, we have followed down, and in the days of Josephus, he tells you it was fulfilled, or fulfilled to such an extent that it was a wonder to him that men would not place confidence in it; and so say I. Let me say further that at that time Rome was in its consolidated form, and had not been divided into Eastern and Western Rome, represented by the two limbs of this image.

Mr. Jamieson asked me in his speech before how I knew that the seven-headed and ten-horned monster spoken of in Revelation was the Roman kingdom.

Because Daniel tells me it is the Roman kingdom, and the Bible is to be its own expositor of its own hieroglyphics or symbols, or any language it uses.

We find then, when the Bible tells you such a symbol represented such a thing, we are to abide by it. Consequently the fourth kingdom and the seven headed and ten horned monster of Revelation are the same. We find in the days of Christ this kingdom existed in its consolidated form. It was not until the fourth century divided up into Eastern and Western Rome.

Do you suppose any man on the face of the earth could have predicted such a thing unless he had Divine guidance? I tell you, Nay. It was divided up into ten kingdoms after this. Then he says the little horn arose and plucked up three horns. Now, we find after the division into ten kingdoms the little horn was to rise, and that little horn was to continue for 1260 years; and then in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed—the city is in sight.

We have traveled down, and come to all these signs, and they have come to pass to the very letter without any deviation right along down to our own day and age. And still Mr. Jamieson says "Where is there one thing in the Bible that is Divine? Where is there one thing that is not human?" My friends, I leave it with you to decide whether there is anything here to prove the Bible Divine. We find in comparing testimony with the real, literal facts of history, the fulfillment of the rise and fall of the four world kingdoms of our earth; you have evidence here sufficient to prove, it seems to me, to every intelligent mind, that we have something to rely on. Mr. Jamieson would not be the man to start out with me to Minneapolis and when we had passed the second and third signs and go along to the fourth and then find the fourth, to stop and say, "I won't go any further. This guide is not safe. He knows nothing about it, let us turn back." You can turn back if you want to; and so when friend Jamieson gets down here to the last sign, he turns back. I am going to keep on. Come on, Friends! We have found our way down to the fifth sign. The city is just ahead. Having passed these four world kingdoms, it becomes apparent that there can be no mistake.

I am frank to admit, if it will do Mr. Jamieson any good, that King James does contain contradictions and absurdities; I will say impossibilities also; I will go a little further if it will do him any good. But because King James' translation contains them, that is no evidence but that King James' contains also the Scriptural truth necessary to salvation. I started out as I told you Sunday to see if I could find any contradictions in its pages. Friend Jamieson started

out on the same errand. But he has landed in one direction, and I right in the other. What is the matter? Because there was no doubt aroused in his mind that there might be something wrong with King James' and not with the original writings, and because he accepted the general teachings of the prevailing Christianity as being a representation of what the Bible really taught. I did not, but went to the original to see if it would help me out of these discrepancies. Thank God it did help me, and now I can see it all as one grand harmony. ••

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## Determined to Achieve

I WAS READING the Bible Friday evening, and I read and reread the first Psalm. How true it is. If we were to look for overnight successes and immediate results, then we would be greatly disappointed, because it just doesn't work that way. But we must have patience and keep adding. A single grain of sand daily will eventually amount to a large accumulation; but to try and do it all at once is difficult if not impossible.

I can look back over my life, and it seems that about 99-plus percent of the time I have been engaged in silly nonsense and selfish pursuits and the sum total of this personal endeavor has resulted in nothing. But to have the wisdom and knowledge that leads to eternal life, now that is the pearl of great price and the treasure hid in a field!

If Christ were to duplicate His ministry here again, the majority of those hearing Him would do as those who heard Him for the first time years ago. I am trying diligently not to have ears that won't hear and eyes that won't see, or a mind so hard that nothing will alter it. The promises of God the Father are real; in fact, they are more tangible and have more substance than this present life. In time I, too, will age and die, and the record of my life will remain unchanged; and at that day my life will be exposed for its real worth. I fully intend that my life and achievements as a follower of Christ and one who loves God with all his heart and soul and mind will be acceptable to Christ and He will likewise confess me before the great and powerful and mighty angels. I am determined to be a good and faithful servant of the Lord, and nothing less.

—D. K., Louisiana

# Six Be-Attitudes

**W**HAT IS the atmosphere?

Did you ever work with a person who said little but whose countenance seemed to radiate a friendly, buoyant good cheer? On the other hand, we have all known persons with whom we desired the minimum of association. Perhaps they hadn't much to say, but every word they dropped was derogatory, and their presence seemed to charge the atmosphere with a mysterious feeling of oppression.

This intangible something that pervades our world—what is it? Words do not create it, though they may strengthen it; neither is it the direct result of conduct. Yet it is an inescapable part of every person's being. We might call it *attitude*.

Not what you do, but *how* you do it; not what you say but *how* you say it; not what you think but *how* you show it—these are the basis of attitude. Around these basic attitudes we mold our lives, and the lives of others as well. By changing our attitudes from negative to positive, from bitter to sanguine, from wrong to right, we can change our whole lives. How is this possible?

Here are six be-attitudes which might be helpful:

*Be Cheerful.* God loves "the cheerful giver." Reluctant, grudging service benefits neither the giver nor the receiver, and it certainly does nothing to glorify God. Only a cheerful attitude can win His acceptance.

When work must come first, be cheerful. Give cheerfully of your time and effort to help others. Your cheer may lighten their tasks and inspire mutual courage and hope.

*Be Generous.* The apostle Paul wrote, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (II Cor. 9:6). This will take time, effort, and money, but it must be done. What we do not share we lose. We must spend ourselves encouraging and helping one another. Thoughts, ideals, motives and resolutions which lie idle in the mind soon die.

Opportunities for generous giving surround us. We have been called to call; blessed to bless; invited to invite; helped to help; brought to life from death in sin to bring others to life. Let

us have a generous attitude.

*Be Happy.* Why? or rather, Why not? With everything beyond of life and peace and pleasure and everlasting joy, how can we be otherwise than happy?

"Happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Happiness is an attitude that should be inseparable from us.

*Be Kind.* As a "soft answer turneth away wrath," so a kind deed ameliorates hatred. "Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (Prov. 16:24).

The greatest kindness is to be shown where we have been wrong, so that we may correct it before it stands against us permanently. "If the righteous smite me, it is a kindness; and if he rebuke me, it is the finest oil; let not my head refuse it" (Ps. 141:5, American).

To a man or woman living for the pleasures of this life, reproof would seem a strange, wry sort of kindness. But to the one aiming at perfection of character and ultimate salvation, it is the greatest favor. A true Christian spirit, a humble disposition, and merciful attitude—these are the components of brotherly kindness.

*Be Honest.* "The eyes of the Lord" being in every place, "beholding the evil and the good," how carefully and circumspectly we should live. We cannot hide from God. Only the strictest honesty can judge and criticize constructively and evaluate personal conduct squarely.

Honesty is a heart quality of the new man. "Don't tell one another lies any more, for you have finished with the old man and all he did," admonished Paul (Col. 3:9, Phillips). Honesty of purpose, honesty of appraisal, truthfulness in telling, honesty in service—all combine in fulfilling the command: "Walk honestly, as in the day" (Rom. 13:13).

*Be Loyal.* Jesus promised the crown of life to those who would remain "faithful unto death." And, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things"—it is the reward for loyalty and faithful service.

Loyalty to God means giving Him our undivided interest. God and His cause must be first in our lives; all else must be secondary. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways," but a pure heart, a mind set toward God alone, will be His choicest treasure.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." They shall, because they had, along with everything else, the right attitude. ●●



# Concerning the Nature of Christ

WE RECEIVE numerous letters from persons who disagree with our position as to the nature of Christ. As one friend writes,

*"It is still difficult for me to understand your reasoning concerning the nature of Christ. Could you please elaborate."*

We can well appreciate the difficulty in understanding our reasoning on the nature of Jesus Christ. The nature of Christ has been the subject of controversy, often violent controversy, for eighteen centuries. It will continue until Christ returns.

The cause of the confusion is basically the false concepts which have been held for so long and assumed to be truth. Cæsar said, "Men freely believe that which they desire"; and John Dreyden said, "Errors, like straws upon the surface flow; he who would search for pearls must dive below." Jesus Himself said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." The truth of God's Word is not on the surface and it is *not* found among the popular teachings of men.

The real problem, however, is not the nature of Christ but certain fundamental assumptions of popular religious teaching. It is virtually impossible to convince anyone that Jesus was not a God who pre-existed in heaven as long as that person believes in 1) the doctrine of the fall of man in the garden of Eden, 2) the literal death of Christ on the cross to atone for that transgression, and 3) the inherent guilt of every believer since that fatal fall. The question we must answer, then, is what is the solution to man's sin? How do we become acceptable to God? If our foundation of faith is wrong or faulty, then the entire structure is in peril.

We readily admit that there are texts in the Bible which when they are not properly understood, could be used to support the false concepts. However, please consider the following: In the New Testament alone there are over four times as many texts which state that we have something to do or a commandment to be kept as

there are references to the death or blood of Christ.

Consider the book of Revelation alone. If after Christ had gone to heaven and had received the reward of immortality and had been seated on His Father's throne He found it necessary to send one last message back to mankind, would He not try in such a message to correct any misconception He or His apostles might have left? He most certainly would. The apostle John bears record of that message, and the very first of that message is, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein" (Rev. 1:3). And again we read, "To him that overcometh"—this message is repeated again and again. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (2:26). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne" (3:21). Notice that Christ overcame and He expects us to do the same. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. . . . As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (3:15-16, 19).

Consider Christ's message to the church of Pergamos: "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith. . . ." Is not this exactly what is being proclaimed today as the way to salvation? From nearly every pulpit in the land we hear that if we accept Christ as our personal saviour, believe that He died for our sins, we will be saved—not only *will be* but *are* saved. But Jesus said that even though you have done these things, holding "fast my name and hast not denied my faith. . . . Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee. . . . Repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that over-

cometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:2-7).

The very last of this final message from heaven contains the following: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. 22:11). "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. . . . Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (vs. 12, 14). Is not the "right to the tree of life" what we are looking for? Either the theologians have their priorities backwards, or Jesus had His backwards. We prefer to think that it is the theologians. The concept that we can say the words "I believe in Jesus as my Savior" and accept His atoning death on the cross to relieve us from the guilt of our sins without keeping every commandment which Jesus gave us is false. It is not the teaching of the Bible. It is the greatest fallacy ever perpetrated upon an unsuspecting public. The doctrine springs largely from a misunderstanding of Paul's references to "works." He was referring in many instances to the "works" of the Mosaic law which his Jewish contemporaries were keeping so scrupulously and which Jesus had brought to an end. These were works that could never bring eternal salvation. The "blood" of Jesus which will bring salvation is His life and the words that He proclaimed and the example He left us in sacrificing His own will so completely to doing the will of His Father. John 6:63 is explicit concerning the efficacy of literal flesh and blood: "The flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

If Jesus is not needed, then, as our sacrifice or as one God appointed to assume the penalty for our sins, why do we need to believe that He was God? And if He was not the eternal God, why believe that He existed before He was born? And if He was not God, why believe He was divine in nature as well as human? Why not accept what the Scriptures say about Him, that He was "made like unto his brethren," that He was "tempted in all points" like His brethren, that He was the "man Jesus Christ"? (Heb. 2:17; 4:15; I Tim. 2:5).

We urge you to consider very seriously what the Bible teaches in regard to salvation. In Jesus'

parable of the Sower, some seed fell by the way-side, some fell on stony places, some fell among thorns, and some fell into good ground. And the good ground are "they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). If the popular teaching of Christendom today were true, the type of ground and its ability to bear fruit should not be nearly so important as Jesus made it.

You surely believe the words of Paul to Timothy, that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4). Is it obvious which side the "heap" of teachers are on?

We are a very small minority, but that is just where we want to be. ●●

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## He Is Coming!

*Will Jesus come back again?*

Yes! Gloriously and triumphantly! "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time" (Heb. 9:28).

This last age will not end by the explosion of hydrogen bombs but by the second coming of Christ in glorious, celestial splendor.

*How will He come?*

Visibly. "Every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7).

Bodily. In his "glorious body" (Phil. 3:20-21).

With all His saints (I Thess. 3:13).

With the redeemed (Zech. 14:3).

With the holy angels (Matt. 16:27).

Taking "vengeance on them that know not God" (II Thess. 1:7-8).

Suddenly. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (I Cor. 15:52).

Unexpectedly. As the flood (Luke 17:26-30). As a thief in the night (II Pet. 3:10).

*What will happen when He comes?*

A great supersonic announcement, "for the trumpet shall sound" (I Cor. 15:52).

Then the "Lord himself shall descend from heaven" (I Thess. 4:16).

Convocation. "Before him shall be gathered [out of] all nations" (Matt. 25:32).

Judgment. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Cor. 5:10).

*Why know about His coming?* So we can be ready. "Therefore be ye also ready" (Matt. 24:44).

—J. H., Three Oaks, Michigan

# BIBLE STUDY HOUR



## The Virtue of Fortitude

**O**UR SUBJECT today concerns a quality very necessary to the Christian life. Is it an attribute that we just naturally possess?

A. No, we are naturally inclined to be lazy, to take the path of least resistance.

Q. *That is just the opposite of fortitude. Christian fortitude is spiritual strength and firmness, a firm resolve to do right. How else might we define fortitude?*

A. Fortitude is moral strength or courage. In the Christian life, it is the mind set to do God's bidding, come what may. It is the ability to "screw our courage to the sticking-place" and go through with anything God requires of us.

Q. *A dictionary definition may help us expand our understanding of fortitude in several directions. One definition is, "Strength of mind in the face of adversity, peril or pain; patient and constant courage." Incorporating both resolution and endurance, fortitude has mighty potential, for "Resolution implies a determination to be firm in conviction, faithful in allegiance, unswerving in course, while endurance refers to the strength to display these qualities in the face of adversity."*

Let us think further about the various points in this definition. What is the meaning of "strength of mind"?

A. "Strength of mind" implies a mind set to do right even if everyone else is doing wrong. A strong-minded person is one whose mind is not easily changed from his chosen course. There is a good verse for that in Exodus: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (23:2).

Q. *Yes. We would be safe in following a multitude to do good, but that is an unlikely possibility, especially in matters of religion. What did Jesus say that would confirm this?*

A. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because

strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

Q. *What else could we say about "strength of mind in the face of adversity"?*

A. It is the ability to make a decision and make that decision stick. The apostle Paul was a wonderful example of this type of strength. After his encounter with the Lord on the Damascus road, he never once faltered. So strong was his mind that his steps were all in one direction—toward the Kingdom. "If by any means I might attain"—this was his whole ambition.

A statement in Philippians 3 shows his Christian fortitude: "Forgetting what is behind me, and reaching out for that which lies ahead, I press towards the goal to win the prize which is God's call to the life above, in Christ Jesus" (vs. 13-14, NEB).

Q. *How did Jesus answer those who tempted Him to do wrong?*

A. "It is written." Frequently He referred to the Scriptures to reinforce His answers. Even when facing the ordeal of the cross He said, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Q. *That took great moral strength and courage—probably more than most of us have ever had to have. But Jesus had something to fortify His courage that we do not have. What was that?*

A. He enjoyed the visible presence of angels. When He prayed in the Garden the night before His crucifixion, His Father sent an angel to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43).

However, the promise of angelic protection is a promise without time limit. We, too, may be strengthened by angels. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Ps. 34:7)—in Jesus' day, in Paul's day, in our day. The difference is that we do not see them or hear them speak.

Q. *Our founder used to say that angels might be right here in the room. But since we today cannot see*



them, we cannot use them to bolster our fortitude or courage as much as we can rely on what other means?

A. Reading and studying God's Word is the best way for us to fortify our courage.

Q. There can be no better way.

What examples of courage have been left for us to follow? We have already mentioned Jesus and Paul.

A. In Old Testament times, Queen Esther showed great courage when she went before the king to make an appeal in behalf of her people.

Elijah the prophet was very courageous on several occasions. Probably his best known act of courage was his encounter with the 450 prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. He was surely outnumbered—450 to one! But one with God is always a majority. Having God on his side was all that he needed.

Q. Our definition of fortitude described it as "patient and constant courage." That is the kind of courage required by what particular profession?

A. A soldier's. A good soldier does not stand up to the fight one minute and then back away afraid the next.

Paul compared the Christian life to warfare in I Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." This very special fighting requires constant courage, Christian fortitude.

Q. Are there any other examples of this type of courage in Scripture?

A. Hebrews 10:23 describes the patient, constant type of courage, also: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." It is courage that never wavers.

James also speaks about not wavering. He compares the man that wavers to the waves of the sea—unstable.

Q. How is patience associated with courage?

A. Constant courage requires patience. We may think we have waited for the Lord long enough; but since He has not come, we must exercise patience, build up our faith and wait patiently.

Q. Patient waiting is endurance—which was also part of our definition of fortitude. What did Jesus say about enduring?

A. Jesus said, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13). Salvation does not come at the beginning of the race, but at the end. To endure requires Christian fortitude.

Q. What did Paul advise Timothy about endurance?

A. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3). To endure "hardness" (hardship, suffering, affliction) requires Christian fortitude.

Q. Resolution is part of endurance also. According to the definition we had earlier, "Resolution implies a determination to be firm in conviction, faithful in allegiance, unswerving in course." What could we say about determination?

A. Without determination we could never endure to the end.

Determination is a firm resolve which we must have if we would be faithful to God and achieve our goal of salvation. It will take great determination to keep going on and on against all obstacles.

Q. What about being "firm in conviction"?

A. If a person is convicted of sin, he has become aware of it. More than that, he is convinced of its sinfulness and dire consequences. As Christians we need to maintain such an attitude so we will be alert to our weaknesses and fortify ourselves against them. Until we are convinced of our sin, we will never get rid of it.

Q. How might we associate this conviction with courage?

A. It requires courage to see ourselves as we are, courage to admit that what we see is not what it should be, and still more courage to change ourselves. We naturally do all we can to bolster our self-esteem and so we want to appear as though we were already all right and not in any need of change.

Q. That is a good point. Can we have some thoughts on allegiance as a part of Christian fortitude?

A. Our allegiance can be to God only. To maintain this requires courage and fortitude in us just as it did in Peter and John when they said firmly, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Q. Does that mean that we can ignore the laws of our land?

A. Not at all, for we are commanded to obey the laws. Wrote the apostle Paul, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1).

Q. Our first allegiance must be to God, but that does not excuse us from obeying the laws of the

land—unless the two are in conflict. When that happens we have to go with Peter and John and say, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

To be “unswerving in course” is Christian fortitude in action. Could we have a few examples of this type of fortitude from the Bible?

A. Joseph was an outstanding example. Rather than yield to the advances of a wicked woman, he went to prison. That was displaying Christian fortitude.

Moses followed the leadings of the Lord in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt. He might have given up on the way—they were so ungrateful and did so much murmuring and complaining. It required much fortitude for him to hold to his God-appointed course.

In the days of the Judges, Jephthah was an example of fortitude that is unswerving in its course. After he had made a vow to the Lord, he did not back away, even though it meant dedicating his daughter to the service of the Lord.

Q. We are sure that Jephthah did not offer his daughter as a burnt offering, for that would have been against God’s laws. But it was a sacrifice that took courage or fortitude to fulfill without flinching.

We have a song that fits well with our lesson on fortitude, “Anything, Lord, for Thee.” Does someone recall the words?

A. What would’st Thou have me to do, Lord?

Whatever it may be,  
Tho’ mine is a weak and trembling hand,  
I’m willing to do at Thy command,  
Anything, Lord, for Thee.

Where would’st Thou have me to go, Lord,  
Wherever it may be,  
My feet Thou hast placed on the King’s high-  
way,

Thy truth doth enable me to say,  
“Anywhere, Lord, for Thee.”

What would’st Thou have me to yield, Lord?

Whatever it may be,  
All, all that I have and am is Thine,  
And willingly, gladly I resign  
Ev’rything, Lord, for Thee.

What is Thy will for me now, Lord?

Whatever it may be,  
Tho’ worldlings may seek what the world  
can give,  
I covenant here henceforth to live  
Ev’ry day Lord, for Thee.

Q. These words contain some very serious thoughts. In them we affirm our covenant with God. We express our willingness to do whatever He commands and whenever He commands it.

Do you think that everyone who sings this song really means what he or she is singing?

A. No. It is always easier to promise than to fulfill.

Q. We might divide those who sing such a song into three classes: those who just say words without thinking about them, those who think about them to a degree but avoid any application of the words to themselves, and those who truly mean what they say. To whom might we compare the first group?

A. They are like the people who “draweth nigh . . . with their mouth, but their heart is far” from God (Matt. 15:8).

Q. What about those who have no idea of carrying out what they sing? They may take part in some outward religion, because it is the respectable thing to do. What do we call them—one word?

A. Hypocrites—and the Bible says that “the hypocrite’s hope shall perish” (Job 8:13).

Q. Why do the second class fail?

A. They say the words with good intentions, but are not willing to put forth the effort necessary to improve themselves; they lack the resolve to carry them out.

Q. What else do they lack?

A. Christian fortitude. They say “Lord, Lord,” but fail to do. They lack the ability to say “no” to the things of this world that would distract them from following God and His way.

Q. What about the third class?

A. They say and DO. They are the “little flock” Jesus spoke of, the ones Moses described as the “fewest of all people.”

Q. They are determined to keep God’s commandments regardless of circumstances or hindrances. What special virtue do they demonstrate?

A. What the others lacked: Christian fortitude.

Q. Yes. If we possess this Christian grace, we will be determined to do; we will say it and mean it: “Anything, Lord, for Thee.” And we know that we will not be asked to do what we are not able to.

There is an old saying that is good advice for the Christian in attaining his goal: “Hitch your

wagon to a star." What thought do we get from this?

A. We should aim high.

Q. Yes. It is our natural tendency to aim too low; why should we aim high?

A. We will never accomplish anything above or beyond our aim.

Q. What should our aim as Christians be?

A. Perfection of character, the full stature of Christ. If we are aiming at anything lower, we may reach our aim, but what will we have? Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). That is the ultimate that we can attain.

Q. That doesn't sound like the popular theory of "nothing to do." We might like to think that we had nothing to do to gain salvation, that Christ did it for us, that we could just relax and everything would turn out all right. But what is wrong with that philosophy?

A. Just that it doesn't work. Nothing in this life—or the next—comes without effort, whether it be in business or religion. To reach a goal such as perfection will take work, all the effort we can muster; and spasmodic work will never suffice.

Q. If perfection is our aim and we persistently work toward it, we will reach that goal; but this will require a great measure of Christian fortitude. It will also require something else. What is that?

A. Alertness. The writer to the Hebrews cautioned about letting the Word go unheeded. "Therefore

we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. . . . Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of [us] should seem to come short of it" (Heb. 2:1; 4:1).

Q. There is another text in Hebrews on endurance that we should have.

A. Hebrews 10:36: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Q. Endurance is an essential part of Christian fortitude if we would reach the full stature of Christ. We should have Ephesians 4:13.

A. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

This is an achievement that will require a full measure of Christian fortitude, fortitude that is strength of mind in the face of adversity, that is patient and constant courage, and that is determination to be firm in conviction, faithful in allegiance, unswerving in course, and enduring unto the end. ••

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## We Believe the Bible!

*Continued from page 6*

so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

With Christ will come a multitude of blessings for all who will submit to His righteous rule. There shall be:

*No more war.* "Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Mic. 4:3-4). "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth" (Ps. 46:9).

*No more injustice, oppression, or suffering.* "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5). "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations" (Ps. 72:4-5).

*No more poverty.* "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to

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eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing" (Isa. 23:18).

*No more open sin and violence.* "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise" (Isa. 60:18). "Thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zeph. 3:15).

*No more sickness.* "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isa. 33:24).

There will be *universal prosperity*. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isa. 65:21-22).

There will be *universal peace*. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isa. 32:17-18).

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## A Giant Man--Paul

THE APOSTLE Paul is certainly one for us to pattern our lives after. He was a giant of a man. John Chrysostom wrote a memorable sentence when he said of Paul, "Three cubits in stature, he touched the sky."

Across many a reporter's copy when returned to him from the editorial office of a great newspaper is scrawled in blue pencil the letters "H I," which stand for "Human Interest." "Your copy lacks human interest—put it in," the letters mean. The human interest can never be lacking in our lessons from the Acts. Peter was a very human apostle, and the struggle through which he passed before he became convinced that God would accept Gentiles as well as Jews grips the heart. The most human of all the apostles, though, was Paul, and thrilling is the story of his missionary journey, whereby he made Christianity travel. It has been said, "The greatest man that ever sailed the Mediterranean Sea was not Alexander, nor Hannibal, nor Cæsar, but Paul." Although Paul was the ablest, most brilliant and most forceful of all the apostles, yet those are not the qualities which have made him so real a personality to all who have known him during the centuries that have intervened

God has plans for our earth. It did not come about by chance; it was designed and created by a great and far-seeing Creator, and with a definite purpose in mind. "He created it not in vain," wrote the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 45:18), "he formed it to be inhabited." Inhabited by whom? by men and women who live some in poverty and some in wealth; some in hunger and want and others in abundance; some in constant misery and sickness and some in abounding health; some in constant mischief and some in respectable community life? *No!* God is going to have a world where *all* people will be able to enjoy a good life, a healthy life, where all will have opportunity for education, fulfillment, and prosperity within the will of God. All will be taught of God, all will know God, and all will have opportunity to live for God, and for the good of each other.

All this is the message of the Bible. Should we not believe it, and act upon it today, so that we can be part of the New Age when it arrives? For—it is coming. ●●

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between his life and ours. Rather, it is the fact that in the Acts and in his letters we see an eager, strenuous, toiling man, beset with temptations and facing difficulties such as men today have to meet who, like Paul, are persistently led by high ideals.

That Paul was an extraordinary personality is proved by the commotion he stirred up in his own lifetime. The Thessalonians said of him that he "turned the world upside down." He filled synagogues with commotion and set cities blazing. He stirred up riots and drove mobs frantic. By the vigor of his faith, the intensity of his devotion, the fullness of his sacrifice, the passion of his enthusiasm, and the scope of his achievements, he cast all other apostles and prophets and pastors and teachers into the shade, and became the central figure of the Christian world.

Great in his character, he was equally great in his achievements. He is the Christian Hercules, and his labours are so varied and wonderful that we sometimes lose the man in the blaze of the glory of the things he accomplished. It was he who broke down the wall of separation between the Jew and the Gentile, and gathered all men into one family of God.

What a giant of a man! and certainly one for us to try to emulate. ●●



# SCRIPTURAL SPOTLIGHT

“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, rejoice”  
—*Philippians 4:4*

THE BIBLE is pre-eminently a practical book, and the Epistles of Paul are no exception. In this Epistle of Paul to the brethren at Philippi, the Apostle lays much stress upon gladness. In the first chapter of the letter he speaks of “your furtherance and *joy* of faith.” In the same chapter he writes, “that your *rejoicing* may be more abundant.” Again in the second chapter, “Do you *joy* and *rejoice*.” Speaking of some messenger who had been sent he exhorts, “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all *gladness*.” Again in the third chapter he writes, “My brethren, *rejoice* in the Lord.” In the same chapter, “For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and *rejoice* in Christ Jesus.” Then follows our text in chapter four, “*Rejoice* in the Lord alway, and again I say, *rejoice*.”

At first thought, all this emphasis on joy may seem strange. Is not joy a natural result of pleasing circumstances and freedom from distress, misery or pain? When something makes us glad, we do not have to think about the fact that we should be glad and then go about to manufacture gladness. It is a spontaneous emotion. But the gladness that Paul speaks of is something even more than this; it is a fruit of the spirit-life that is deep rooted and needs cultivation. It is more than a gladness for pleasing circumstances and happy occasions; it is a rejoicing that can be with us *always*—rain or shine, pleasure or pain, grief or happiness. “Rejoice in the Lord *alway*.”

There are three points in this text which we want to note. First, we are told to “Rejoice”; second, that rejoicing must be “in the Lord,” and third, that rejoicing in the Lord must be a continuous part of our lives: “*alway*.”

What is joy? It is a feeling that cannot be adequately represented in words. No poet, philos-

opher or writer could give an idea of joy to a man who had never felt it. And the man who has felt it defines it *to* himself and *for* himself. He thinks of joy in terms of his own experiences, wishes and desires. “Joy” will evoke different feelings in different people in different degrees.

Our text, however, is a special kind of joy. We might say that to “rejoice in the Lord alway” is like saying, Strive, through all the resources you have as a disciple of Christ, to be habitually, permanently, and piously cheerful.

What if I am not naturally a cheerful person? What if gloom and dejection are natural to me, or are fostered by my circumstances? Still comes the command; rejoice. If rejoicing is not part of your nature, *change* your nature. As a disciple of Christ you must *rejoice*, just as you must obey any other command. If I have a natural propensity to steal, or to lie, or to do any other type of transgression, my natural propensity does not justify the transgression. Likewise, a gloomy tendency does not justify my being gloomy. If I am tempted to be dishonest, or to lie, I must fight the temptation and conquer it; in like manner, I am required to fight the tendency to dejection or gloom.

Should we not be able to rejoice? We are not walking through the world as fugitives and vagabonds, without friend, hope or solace. We have heard the call of God and have real purpose and direction to our lives. As Christians, we have the promise that all our needs will be supplied if we do on our part, and that God’s angel will encamp around us to protect us if we are striving earnestly to please God. So we may triumphantly sing with the prophet Habakkuk: “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there



shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." What Habakkuk did, and what he said he would strive always to do, we also can do. As the book of James tells us distinctly, "My brethren count it all *joy* when ye fall into divers temptations."

Our cheerfulness must be habitual. There is no allowance for any spells of gloom or depression. Cheerfulness is required of us in working. Cheerfulness is required of us in serving. Cheerfulness is required of us in living. Cheerfulness is required of us in giving. "God loveth a cheerful giver." Cheerfulness is required of us all the time—"always."

What is the source of this cheer, and how can it be a constant part of us? We know that we can never be truly happy in or of ourselves. Separated from God and faith, there is no lasting happiness. There may be a bubble for a moment, but it cannot endure. True abiding joy does not come from pleasure; nor does it spring from wealth; nor does it come from having great possessions. It does not come from any temporal condition. Nothing that this world can give or take away is a source of true, abiding joy.

Throughout the Scriptures, several sources of cheerfulness are noteworthy, and all of them are divine. All have their beginning in God or His law or the hope that He provides. We read these words of the Psalmist: "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord" (Ps. 104:34). These are the words of Isaiah, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God" (Isa. 61:10). These are words of the apostle Peter, "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" (I Pet. 1:8). Even reproof and correction become sources of joy: "Happy is the man whom God correcteth" (Job 5:17). Again, the fear of the Lord brings happiness: "Happy is the man that feareth always" (Prov. 28:14). The wisdom of the Lord brings happiness: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" (Prov. 3:13). Trusting in the Lord brings happiness: "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he" (Prov. 16:20). Simply having God as the Lord our God is a source of true happiness: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps. 146:5).

And when a person has—or can have—all of these, is it any wonder that Paul admonished, "Rejoice in the Lord always"?

The Christian has every reason to rejoice, indeed, the greatest possible reasons. Whatever his lot in this world, whatever his fortunes or misfortunes, it is for only a moment; he is on the way to a better life. If the old nature in him is being crucified and the new nature is growing; if he is indeed becoming "new," can he not rejoice? It is quite true that as Christians we are racers, and that running is at times exhausting; but it is also true that the goal and crown we seek are sure if we continue to the end. It is quite true, using another illustration of Paul's, that as Christians we are soldiers, and that the fighting is sometimes hard; but it is equally true that the victory is sure. It is true that we are pilgrims, that "here we have no continuing city," and at times the journey is wearisome; but it is equally true that "there's home at the end of the road," a home filled with abiding joy and peace and happiness forever. So why shouldn't we "rejoice . . . always"? If only we are true to our calling, we have hope. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope" (I Pet. 1:3).

As Christians, we have no cause for grumbling. Never! There are some people, it is said, who grumble in the morning; see them at noon, and they are still grumbling. Find them at night, and they are weary, but the grumbling spirit is not wearied; they are still grumbling. What is the problem? They lack the spirit, the hope, the trust, the confidence in God that all things are working together for their good.

Let us rejoice, we who seek a better life, a fairer land, a heavenly home on a re-made, glorified earth. Let us take our text as directions from heaven, and come what may, let us obey it. Let us rejoice whatever comes to test our faith and to produce in us the quality of endurance. Let us begin now, and make a habit of rejoicing, and so turn our text into resolution, saying, "My soul shall be joyful in my God." ●●

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*I am waiting for the coming  
Of earth's long-expected Lord;  
For the signs are now fulfilling  
That He gave us in His Word.*

*I am watching, I am waiting,  
For that promised happy day;  
Yet I do not cease my working;  
I must work as well as pray.*

## Handsome Is That Handsome Does

*It matters not how fair the vow,  
How eloquent the spoken creed,  
Their glory is a tinsel show  
Beside the grandeur of the deed.*

ONCE read a story about people who went to church regularly and made a great show of their religion, but when they presented themselves at heaven's gate (they believed they would go to heaven at death), there was no admittance for them. Christ said He did not even know them. Who were they? They were people who had week by week heard God's will, but had never done it.

On the other hand, I read about a number of people coming up to the gate and being saluted in this way: "Come, ye blessed of my Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Who were these people? Well, they were people who had tried to do God's will every day in all the little things of life. They were the doers of the Word. So that old proverb is true for Christians, also: "Handsome is that handsome does."

It is nice to have a pleasant face, and I know some people who get inordinately proud of their good looks, and they spend any amount of time before the mirror admiring themselves. But a beautiful face is not given to every one, and some people will be plain all their days. But there is something infinitely better than a beautiful face, and that is a beautiful heart. There is something infinitely better than fine features, and that is a gracious and kindly character; there is something infinitely better than having the admiration of men, and that is to get the "Well done!" of God. And this heavenly beauty is within the reach of every one of us—yes, the plainest of us can become beautiful in God's sight by just being kind and gentle and obedient, and thoughtful, and useful. For it is not beautiful appearance that God cares about, but beautiful deeds.

It does not matter very much whether men and women think us pretty or plain, but it matters very much what God thinks of us. So let us entreat each other to be doers of the Word, by letter, by word of mouth, by action. Let us be so kind and helpful and loving that we may be God's well-beloved children, for with Him it is always, "Handsome is that handsome does." ●●

Honor great our God befitteth;  
Who His majesty can reach?  
Age to age His works transmitteth,  
Age to age His pow'r shall teach,

They shall talk of all Thy glory,  
On Thy might and greatness dwell,  
Speak of Thy dread acts the story,  
And Thy deeds of wonder tell.

Full of kindness and compassion,  
Slow to anger, vast in love,  
God is good to all creation;  
All His works His goodness prove.

All Thy works, O Lord, shall bless Thee;  
Thee shall all Thy saints adore:  
King supreme shall they confess Thee.  
And proclaim Thy sov'reign pow'r.

—from Psalm 145

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## Long-Term Testing

A SALESMAN called on Steinway Sons to show them a new piano-key pin. "My company believes this aluminum pin is greatly superior to the pin you have been using," he said.

Mr. Steinway deliberated for some moments. "Well, young man," he said at last, "we are an old firm, slow and cautious about making changes. But we will install your pins in one of our pianos and give them a trial."

The salesman was delighted. "That's good enough for me!" he said. "How long a trial will you need?"

Mr. Steinway thought for a minute, then said thoughtfully, "I'd say about fifty years."

To prove their worth, things and people have to be tried and sometimes for long periods of time and under severe conditions. Good manufacturers who have been in business for years and have a name for quality cannot afford to put something on the market that has not been proven.

God is cautious, too. In His wisdom, He knew many people would start out on the road to life, putting in a few years of service, and find the going too taxing and turn aside.

Like the piano firm and the pins, God wants people who will be able to stand many years of service, if need be, and come through with flying colors.

The only way to do this is to stand on the firm foundation, to have a faith that has been tried in the fire (I Pet. 1:7). ●●

# Questions

**"Will Judas be one of the twelve disciples to sit upon 'twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Luke 22:29-30)?"**

No, Judas Iscariot will not be among the Twelve apostles in the Kingdom of Christ. In the 28th verse of Matthew 19, Jesus states the qualifications: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:27-28). He spoke to *"ye which have followed me."* Judas started to follow Jesus, but he did not continue to the end. He betrayed his Master and then compounded his sin by taking his own life. Jesus appointed Paul to take the place of Judas (see I Tim. 2:7, II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Gal. 1:1).

In Revelation 21:14, we read that "the wall of the city [the spiritual city composed of all the saints who reign with Christ] had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." The twelfth apostle will be Paul, not Judas.

**"Do you believe there is a 'heaven' and a 'hell'? From reading your article on the wages of sin, I wonder. My understanding is that you don't.**

**"I disagree with your statement on God never condemning anyone to an eternal fire. You also state that a God whose attributes include love, mercy, justice and judgment would never condemn the worst criminal to such punishment. Well, men earn their own hell.**

**"I believe every poor, wicked, Christ-rejecting, hell-deserving sinner will come to the place of torment, reserved for those who will not 'repent,' who will not 'trust' Christ, and will not be 'saved.' People go to hell because they are sinners. The torments of hell are the fruits of their sin. People go to hell because they ought to go, because it is right. Hell is the place for sinners."**

In reply to your first statement, we do certainly believe that there is a heaven and a hell. But we cannot accept the meaning of these terms as commonly accepted by theology. We do not

believe that the "good" all go to "heaven" at death, nor do we believe that the "bad" go to a place of torment called "hell" where they burn to all eternity. Jesus said in His first sermon, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). And He said also that the broad road leads to "destruction" (Matt. 7:13), not a burning hell.

Would you as a father ever think of hiring some dope peddler to try to lure your children into becoming addicts and then consigning them to a place of torment if they succumbed? I can't believe you would. Yet you would accuse God, who is so much wiser than any human being, of doing this very thing to His helpless, mortal children.

The word "hell" used in the Old Testament is simply the Hebrew word *sheol*, which is rendered 31 times "grave" and 31 times "hell." It is the very same Hebrew word translated two ways, but the meaning is the same. It is "the unseen state," the "pit," the grave.

The New Testament states plainly the punishment of deserving sinners: "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thess. 1:8-9). "Destruction" can in no way be construed to mean life in misery; the "wages of sin is death," and in death, a man's thoughts "perish" (Ps. 146:4).

**"How does Jesus forgive sin if He isn't God?"**

What is there in the Bible which says that whoever forgives sin must be God? Cannot a person who possesses power from God to read the heart of man also forgive sin? The apostles were given power to forgive sin, as we are told in John 20:23, but this does not suggest that they were God. We are repeatedly told that Jesus is the Son of God (Luke 1:32-33), that His Father is greater (John 14:28), and that He lived to please His Father (John 8:29). These statements would be wholly incongruous with any idea that Jesus is God. No, Jesus was born of a virgin, a man sent from God to be the Savior to this planet. He is "Emmanuel," which being interpreted is "God with us" (Matt. 1:23), but He is no part of a trinity of Gods as is popularly believed. Christ as the Son of God and the great Judge and future King of the earth has been given power to forgive sins, and He gave this same power to His apostles while still on earth (John 20:23). He could do this because He had power from God to know what was "in man," to read men's thoughts (John 2:25).

**"In John 5:18, John informs us that by claiming to be the Son of God, Jesus made Himself equal with God. Is John's testimony here true or false?"**

John's testimony is certainly true, but let us be careful what we claim that testimony to be. Neither Jesus or John said that Jesus "by claiming to be the Son of God, made Himself equal with God." Read John 5:18 carefully: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." The wicked Jews said that He made Himself equal with God. Jesus did not say it; John did not say it. John simply repeated the accusation of the Jews. It is unfair to attribute the statement to John.

In studying the Scriptures, we must take all that a writer has to say on a subject, not try to build a theory on an isolated text. Jesus said in John 14:28, "My Father is greater than I." If John said in chapter 5, verse 18, that Jesus is equal with God, we would immediately have a contradiction. One text could be saying that Jesus is equal with God, the other that God is greater than Jesus, hence unequal. But John did not say Jesus is equal with God.

If we read the verse preceding the one you question, we find Jesus saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Does that statement in any way make Jesus equal with God the Father? No, they are as separate as you and your father, or I and mine.

**"If the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was not God, or equal with God, how was it possible for Jesus to raise up his own body from the dead? See John 2:19."**

If Jesus were the eternal God, the Creator of the universe, then when He was placed on the cross and died, the universe was without a head. This is unthinkable. The Psalmist wrote, "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep," speaking of the sustaining providence of God. There is no question but that Jesus died and was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb. Therefore, the eternal God could not possibly be equal with Jesus Christ the Son, or the Son equal with the Father. Furthermore, if Jesus was God and lay lifeless in the tomb, what power could possibly have raised Him from the dead?

No, Jesus is not God, and Jesus did not raise

Himself from the dead. Peter in Acts 2:22-24, tells exactly what happened. "Jesus of Nazareth," he says, "a man approved of God"—note that Jesus is a "man" and He was "approved of God," a being apart from Himself. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

The New Testament shows clearly that God raised Jesus from the dead (see Acts 4:10; 5:30; I Cor. 15:15; I Thess. 1:10; II Tim. 2:8).

Why then did Jesus say, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"? (John 2:19). The Jews immediately thought of the temple building, how it was forty and six years being built; but Jesus "spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said" (vs. 20-22). As we know from the statements of other New Testament writers that Jesus did not raise Himself from the dead, we cannot believe this was Jesus' point here. By saying "I will raise it up" He may have been speaking for His Father, as He said He spoke only the words He received of His Father: "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:50). Again He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30). Any power Jesus possessed came from God. Even if the concept of the trinity were true and Jesus was the eternal God the Father, if He was dead in the tomb He could not raise Himself.

**"If man didn't inherit original sin, why do men die? Since God's work is perfect, why would He create a being just to die?"**

We might ask also in reply, if God created men perfect in a perfect world, how did man ever sin?

When we speak of God's work being "perfect," we are thinking of the overall plan and its ultimate conclusion. When that plan is finished, His finished work will be perfect. It is not at this "perfect" state at the present time, nor has it been on this planet in any time past. God gives man this present life in which to live as he

pleases. He may use it as he desires, and when his short span is over he dies and that is the end of his existence. However, God has provided a way for mankind to live above his naturally evil inclinations and qualify for a higher, eternal life in the world to come. The choice is entirely up to the individual.

It certainly is not worthy of the justice of God to think that He would saddle all mankind with the sin of Adam, and the Bible does not teach this. "Every man shall be put to death for his own sins; . . . the soul that sinneth, it shall die." "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin" (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:20; Prov. 5:22). Man dies natural death because he is mortal; this physical body was not designed to live forever in its present state. The most righteous man or the most wicked man dies natural death. They who covenant to serve God are accountable for their deeds, and will receive a resurrection, a restoration to natural life. They shall then be judged and rewarded, and the righteous shall inherit everlasting life; the wicked shall die eternally. It is only then that God's work will be perfect.

**"What exactly is the resurrected body like?"**

We know that Jesus after He was resurrected was a being still flesh and blood as He had been

before. He urged His disciples, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39). Here, then, is one fact about a resurrected body: it is not a spirit, specter or ghost.

The physical resurrection merely restores to mortal life; it does not change one and make him glorious or immortal, else all who are resurrected would be "saved," and there would be no need for judgment or condemnation; but we read that two classes of people shall "come forth" (from the grave): "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29). Both classes will be among the resurrected.

After the Judgment, the faithful will be rewarded with a new, glorified body like unto that of Christ, as Paul states in Philippians 3:21, "The Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, . . . shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." In I Cor. 15:50 we are told that "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," so we may assume that immortal substance is different in nature; we are not told exactly what it will be like, but we know that it is not corruptible. It would seem from what we are told that the immortal being's general appearance is similar to that of mortal men, because angels were called "men" and looked like men. ●●

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## **SO WHAT DO YOU KNOW?**

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### **BIBLE BLACK SHEEP**

"And he shall separate them one from another." In each group of Bible names there is at least one bad one. Circle the black sheep in each group.

1. Samuel, Solomon, Sisera
2. Achan, Aaron, Amram
3. Boaz, Barnabas, Barabbas
4. Jeroboam, Jerubbaal, Joshua
5. Dorcas, Deborah, Delilah
6. Mordecai, Moses, Simon Magus
7. Herod, Hur, Hophni, Hosea

8. Belteshazzar, Belshazzar, Barak
9. Annas, Abner, Asa
10. Gideon, Goliath, Gaius
11. Jehu, Jonathan, Jehoiada
12. Herodias, Hadassah, Huldah, Hannah
13. Nathan, Nabal, Nadab, Nehemiah
14. Ahimelech, Abihu, Agrippa, Ahab
15. Sapphira, Sarah, Susanna
16. Elisha, Elimelech, Eleazar
17. Anna, Abigail, Athaliah
18. Peter, Pilate, Phinehas, Philip
19. Rachel, Rebecca, Ruth, Rehoboam

### **Answers:**

1. Solomon, Sisera; 2. Achan; 3. Barabbas; 4. Jeroboam;
5. Delilah; 6. Simon Magus; 7. Herod, Hophni;
8. Belshazzar; 9. Annas, Abner; 10. Goliath; 11. Jehu;
12. Herodias; 13. Nabal, Nadab; 14. Abihu, Agrippa, Ahab;
15. Sapphira; 16. Elimelech; 17. Athaliah
18. Pilate, Phinehas; 19. Rehoboam.





# Worship the Lord

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Bow down before Him, His glory proclaim;  
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,  
Kneel and adore Him, the Lord is His Name!

Low at His feet lay thy burden of carefulness,  
High on His heart He will bear it for thee,  
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,  
Guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter His courts in the slenderness  
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;  
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness—  
These are the offerings to lay on His shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,  
He will accept for the Name that is dear;  
Mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,  
Trust for our trembling, and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Bow down before Him, His glory proclaim;  
With gold of obedience, and incense of holiness,  
Kneel and adore Him, the Lord is His Name!

—*Selected.*