

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## EDITORIAL

### ***"So Then Each of us shall Give Account of Himself to God"***

King David, at Psalm 119 and verse 105, prayerfully said to God, "Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." In other words, if God hadn't revealed His will, man would be in total darkness. He wouldn't know, who God is, where did man come from, what is his purpose on earth and where is he going from here. But, thank God that through His Bible He has dispelled all darkness. God sent His Word from heaven in the form of Jesus, who taught "God is Spirit." (John 4:24). He also taught that God is "Our Father," being the Creator of man. (Matthew 6:9; Genesis 1:27). Through His Holy Spirit our God inspired men to write in the Bible that to "Fear God and to keep His commandments... is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13). The same writer who wrote in the Bible that to fear God and to keep His commandments is the whole duty of man, also said that when man dies, "Then the dust", man's body which was originally created from the dust of the ground, "will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Whether man wants to accept these things or not, God's truth will not change. God has spoken and man must give heed to what God has said. Because His inspired writer informs us again by saying, "For God will bring every work

into judgment, including every secret thing, whether it is good or whether it is evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

Yes, there is going to be a day in which God will judge all people. The inspired Peter wrote, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). And His inspired Paul said, "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12). He also warned by saying, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7). Each one of us is sowing now, and we shall all reap on the day of judgment what we choose to sow in this life! We can choose to obey God and reap eternal life with Him in His heaven, or we can choose to reject His will and thus reap eternal condemnation in hell. (John 3:16; Mark 16:16).

Concerning judgment God has told us some very important things in the Bible. First of all we are told that God has appointed Christ to be the judge on that day. At Acts 17:30 & 31 we are told "Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." This then means that we cannot ignore Christ in this life. We must listen to Him and do what He says now, because He is the way and the truth and the life and without Him no one can go to the Father in heaven. (John 14:6). Secondly, God's Bible tells us that Christ will judge us all through His spoken or written word. He himself warned: "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that that judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day." (John 12:48). We cannot ignore what Christ personally or through His inspired Apostles has spoken and expect to be judged right when we face Him on that day. Didn't He say, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God," and "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned," and "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven?" (John 3:5; Mark 16:16; Matthew 7:21). Remember, the

words that Christ has already spoken and which are written for us in His New Testament will judge us right or wrong. Thirdly, we will be judged according to what we do in or through our bodies. The inspired writer informs: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10). God has given us wonderful bodies so that we through our good works might bring glory to Him (Matthew 5:16). We should, therefore, be very careful how we use members of our bodies; the tongue, hands, feet, eyes and the mind or the heart out of which springs the issues of life. In fact, to those who have, through Christ, reconciled themselves to God, the inspired Apostle said, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own. For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (2 Corinthians 5:19, 20). Remember, as we have already seen, we will reap on that day only what we are sowing now each day. And fourthly, the Bible very plainly teaches that all accountable being who ever lived or ever yet shall live on this earth will face the judgment seat of Christ. This is evident from reading John 5:28, 29 and Matthew 25:31-46, where Christ taught that all the dead will be made alive to stand before Him in the judgment, so that the unrighteous will go away into everlasting hell and the righteous will inherit the eternal life in heaven.

In Chapter fifteen of first Corinthians the Apostle Paul wrote that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God, so shall every one on the day of judgment will be made alive by the power of God. He also proved his point by saying, "But someone will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Foolish one" says he, "what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain--perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-44).

Through all of this our Creator has forewarned us that we should prepare ourselves in this life for the life to come. Being made in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26), man will live forever as God is eternal. And even though our bodies will decay and die and will return to the dust of the ground, He will raise us all up again in changed, spiritual and eternal bodies to be judged and to enter into our eternal abodes, as we choose in this life. In Christ He has provided for us a way of escape from sin and its wages in hell. And our God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). Let us then be wise, for how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

## ***Itching Ears***

**J.C. Choate**

The apostle Paul wrote to the young preacher, Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort-with all longsuffering and doctrine. For 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. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Although Paul was charging Timothy to preach the word, he said the time would come when the people would not want sound doctrine, that they would have itching ears, wanting to hear something new, and would therefore turn from the truth to fables.

On another occasion, Paul wrote to Timothy, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving need to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience

seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." (1 Timothy 4:1-5). Notice here that Paul said that the time would come when some would depart from the truth, turning to false doctrine, and promoting the teachings of men.

To the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul exhorted, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:28-31). In this case, Paul had taught the truth faithfully, and had encouraged his brethren to be faithful, but he said that in spite of that there were going to be those from without, not members of the church, that would come as wolves to devour the flock or to deceive the Lord's people. He also warned that there would be those from within, members of the church, that would rise up speaking error and would draw away disciples after them.

While Paul was in Athens, he preached to the people there about the resurrection of Christ. The record says, "Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? others said, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)" (Acts 17:18-21). Note that the people of Athens as a whole responded to Paul's preaching only out of an interest to hear something new and

different.

In all of the foregoing scripture references, certain facts seem to run through all of them. Both for unbelievers and believers, there were those who were not satisfied to accept the truths of God, but were ever interested in something they had not heard before. Having itching ears has reference to just that. Jesus often spoke of those who had ears to hear but they did not hear. He meant by that, that they did not want to accept it. Or having itching ears, that is, growing tired of sound doctrine and questioning the Lord's way, and now even being open to the teachings of men. We often wonder how this can happen, and yet it does happen in every generation. Even today we see those who are constantly moving about from one teaching to another. Regardless of how foreign to God's word, or how illogical it may be, there are always some who are ready to take it on.

Even in the church, some get tired of hearing of the old familiar basic truths of the Bible. They become restless and desirous of hearing something new and exciting. May be another preacher who will use a different style or approach will interest them. Or perhaps they would like to hear sermons on subjects they have never heard before. It is not that they want to grow in their knowledge and ability or to apply it to their lives and to be able to teach it to others. Rather, it is more like wanting to be entertained. This is dangerous. When they grow weary of hearing of the old Jerusalem gospel, and the great truths on which we are grounded, then they are open to false teaching, and can be easily led away into error. That has happened many times with disastrous results following.

My brethren and friends, let's take heed to warnings given in the scriptures. The Lord knows what is best for us. There is no substitute for the truth. Why would anyone ever give second thought to a teaching that is not supported by God's word? Remember that Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6).

**"Better is a handful with quietness than both hands full together with toil and grasping for the mind." Eccl.4:6.**

*Especially For Women*

## **"Especially Made"**

**Betty Burton Choate**

In today's world, there is a wide range of feelings about women. Sadly, some feel that a woman is little more than an unpaid servant, bound to obey her husband's wishes and to work endless hours every day taking care of his needs.

On the other extreme are the "modern" women who would prefer to enter the man's world, declaring themselves to be "equal" to men. Some even go as far as to demand all the "advantages" they believe men to have, yet at the same time they would expect consideration and concessions because they are women. What those women really want are the privileges of both groups and the responsibilities of neither.

Between these two extremes (neither of which is right) is woman as she was created to be. This section of "The Bible Teacher" will deal each month with some Biblical teaching especially concerning women.

Can you imagine the scene "in the beginnig"? God had prepared a perfect home--a literal paradise--for the crowning act of His creation: man. He formed man lovingly, perfectly, from the earth, in His own image. Then He breathed into him the breath of life and that first man--Adam--became a living, moving, thinking being.

Only one thing was wrong with this perfect scene. Every living thing was paired with another of its own kind, and all were empowered by God to ". . . Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. . . Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind. . ." Only Adam was alone. When he had seen all the creatures ". . . there was not found a helper comparable to him" (Genesis 1:22,24; Genesis 2:20).

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord had taken from man He

made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

"And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:21-24).

What do we learn from these verses?

- (1) That man, alone, was not and is not complete.
- (2) That God's intention in making woman was to design a helper who would be comparable to man; one who would soften his harshnesses and strengthen his weaknesses so that together they would be lacking in nothing.
- (3) That woman was not made from another lump of clay but she was made from man, so that both she and the man would realize the special oneness God wanted them to share.
- (4) That when a man and a woman marry, they are to devote themselves to each other.

So Eve, the mother of all living was especially made for Adam. And throughout history, a good wife has continued to be God's greatest gift to a husband and a home.

## ***Bible Preaching the Way it Should be***

**Eddie Whitten**

Some gospel preachers do not preach the gospel! However, some still preach the matchless love that motivated the Christ to give His life as a ransom for the sins of mankind. They still preach the consequences of sin, and the horror of Hell. They still preach against things that are wrong. And "knowing the terror of the Lord," they persuade men (2 Cor. 5:11).

Here are some things we must preach, if we truly preach the gospel. We must preach on love. Love of Christ, and love for Christ are central doctrines of the New Testament. Paul's



teaching in 1 Corinthians 13, if practised, makes us like Christ.

"For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man someone would even dare to die. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6-8).

As we contemplate the price paid for the church (Acts 20:28) we should be overwhelmed by the incomparable love Jesus demonstrated for the world. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). His love for us, and what that love drove him to do, should cause us to love him. The love of Jesus inspires a love for Jesus. Thinking of his great love should cause us to commit ourselves to Him.

It does not show weakness to preach the matchless love of God, or to emphasize the love Christians should have for Him, each other, and all men (Matt. 22:37-39). We cannot preach the gospel unless we preach love in love. "Speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

A second necessary aspect of gospel preaching is correction. Some say we should let every person live his life, in his way, by his rules, to his pleasure. This sounds good, and fits the mold of humanistic thought that is prominent today, but it is not Biblical.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:1-2).

"If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

Some among us despise correction, or rebuke. Paul admonished Timothy, his son in the gospel, to "preach the word, . . . reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2).

To lead people out of sin into salvation implicitly requires

correction of wrong--wrong values, wrong habits, wrong conduct, wrong associations, wrong practices. The Bible is the standard, and shows us what is right and wrong. The criterion is not felt needs, or what makes you feel good, or psychology (the science of dealing with emotional and mental processes).

A third aspect of gospel preaching is instruction. "It seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou was instructed" (Luke 1:3-4).

"This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus" (Acts 18:25). We receive instruction that we may give instruction.

"In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor. 14:19).

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

## ***The Promise to Christ***

**Stanley J. Crowley**

Jehovah made at least three promises to Abraham. He would be the father of a great nation. His heirs would be given a promised land. Through one of his descendants salvation would come to all nations (Gen. 26:4).

"Now to Abraham were the promises made and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Paul points out that, "seed" here is singular, and identifies it as Christ. The promises were made to Abraham and to Jesus. He also explains that God added the law of Moses because of transgression and was to

last until "the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). What was this promise made to Christ?

Jesus referred to the promise when, immediately before his ascension, he instructed his apostles to go back to Jerusalem, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Peter mentioned the promise when he said, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33).

The promise to Abraham and to Christ involved the power of the Holy Ghost. Jesus sent the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and through them to some first century disciples, to reveal all the truth of the gospel (John 16:13). The purpose of the power was also to enable Jehovah to confirm the message. "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will!" (Heb. 2:4). The gospel is the power of God to save (Rom. 1:16). It was fully revealed and confirmed in the first century and this promised power, having accomplished its mission, was removed from earth.

The Galatians were in danger of falling away from the gospel, and going back into Judaism. Paul marveled that they were "so soon removed" from the gospel. He emphasized that it is through "the faith in Christ" that salvation comes, and not through the works of the law of Moses. In the third chapter, he calls the Galatians "foolish" for reverting to the Law of Moses.

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:5). Paul gave to the Galatians a miraculous endowment of the Spirit, and worked miracles among them, not by the Law of Moses, but by the gospel of Christ. He is proving the surpassing glory of the gospel, and its superiority

over the old Sinai covenant.

Paul says because they were sons, God sent the Spirit into their hearts (Gal. 4:6). It is only by God's revelation to man through the Holy Spirit that man can recognize Jesus as Lord (1 Cor. 12:3), and Jehovah as the spiritual Father (Gal. 4:6).

The grand purpose of the apostle was to convince the Galatians of the greater value and power of the New Covenant over the Old Testament. "Knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16).

The apostle is not saying that obedience to law has nothing to do with justification, for this would contradict what he says in Romans 8:2. He is saying that we have the power of the gospel through the ministration of the Spirit, and because of promises made both to Abraham, and to Abraham's seed.

## *Are You Broad Minded?*

**Jerri Manasco**

Some say we must be broad-minded if we expect to get anywhere with converting the lost. To be more appealing to the public, we must rethink our "traditional interpretations" of the Bible, and realize we could be wrong about many things.

If the critic means that we must be open-minded, I agree! If confronted with a different teaching, we need to reflect upon it, and decide the truth or falsity of it. Test it by the word! Maybe the other fellow has uncovered something that is enlightening. Open-minded people will consider any rational presentation.

If the critic means that we must be willing to give credit to anything without analysis, then we have a problem. We cannot give credence to something just because we will be accused of being narrow minded if we don't. Open-mindedness is not gullibility! Open-minded people are willing to listen, but they are not

tolerant of what is wrong or inexpedient.

There is a narrow way, and strait gate that leads to life. There is a broad way, and wide gate that leads to destruction. There is the way of the few and the way of many. The way of the few is the right way (Matt. 7:13-14). "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

We can know truth (John 8:32). We can obey truth (1 Peter 1:22). We can err from truth (James 5:19). We can defend truth (Gal. 2:5). We can do the truth (1 John 1:6). The truth can be in us (1 John 1:8). The truth cannot be in us (1 John 2:4). We can be of the truth (1 John 3:19). The truth can dwell in us (2 John 1:2). We can walk in truth (3 John 1:3). We can fellowship the truth (3 John 1:8). We can have a good report of the truth (3 John 1:12).

To walk in the truth does not make one a legalist in any bad sense. To keep the rules is the way of truth, which is the way of God. How can professing Christians judge and condemn others who are only saying God's word must be obeyed? It is not wrong to contend for the once for all delivered faith (Jude 3).

The psalmist wrote:

I have chosen the way of faithfulness: Thine ordinances have I set before me. I cleave unto thy testimonies: O Jehovah, put me not to shame. I will run the way of thy commandments, When thou shalt enlarge my heart. Teach me, O Jehovah, the way of thy statutes; And I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; Yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; For therein do I delight (Psa. 119:30-35).

There are some things to which we must be glued. There are some things to which we must be inseparably attached, and concerning which we close our minds, and are intolerable of any attempt to divorce us from them.

Simply stated, we must go by the book. "Hold fast the form

of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13). There is a "form of sound words" to which we must stick. The "form of sound words" is what Paul preached. Paul says the "form of sound words" is to be taught to the now generation, and to future generations (2 Tim. 2:2).

If we must always be tolerant of every "divergent viewpoint," then we cannot be strictly right on anything. If it is wrong to be sure of anything, how could Paul be "set for the defence of the gospel"? (Phil. 1:17). Paul wrote, "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27).

In his emphasis on moral values Jesus was intolerant. "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Jesus did not say that people are weak and just can't help such things. He had an absolute standard, and expected it to be honored.

Jesus is intolerant when it comes to what is truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We will face the words of Christ at final judgment. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). It is obvious that if Christ's word is going to be the standard of final judgment, then we need to know and obey it. According to Christ :

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).

**"Soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Pro. 15:1).**

# *The Holiness of God And The Sinfulness of Man*

**Al Brown**

The holiness of God is a challenging subject. There are two aspects of God's holiness. The first has to do with His sovereignty and glory--His essential being. We see this facet of His holiness in His might and wisdom and knowledge. The second element of His holiness has to do with His infinite moral purity. Peter referred to this when he wrote, "Ye shall be holy; for I (Jehovah) am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

The holiness of God is the basis for His actions. Justice and righteousness are His essential nature, as one aspect of His holiness. God is always consistent with that principle of rightness. His actions are right. He cannot violate his standard of righteousness; His nature forbids it. God is true, and faithful, and just. "He cannot deny himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). Moses' song refers to God's holiness. "For I will proclaim the name of Jehovah: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice: a God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deut. 32:3-4).

"Just," as used concerning the nature of God, does not mean fairness as it often does when used of earthlings. This is a judicial term that means God maintains the integrity of His character as the moral sovereign of the universe. It also means that He does not say one thing and do something else--anything else. He is always consistent. He is the Great Judge. He demands obedience. He rewards or punishes. He cannot be indifferent to evil. Jehovah is "of purer eyes than to behold evil; and can't look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:13).

God respects the claims of his law. If he didn't do this, He would be acting contrary to righteousness. His law is the expression of what is right. God's justice demands punishment of sin (Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23).

We see the justice of God in the sacrifice of His Son. If sinners had been forgiven without adequate payment, God would

not be just. His law would not be respected. His name would not be feared.

Not only is God just and righteous--the Great Lawgiver--He is also infinite in love and mercy. Yet, there is no tension between these characteristics, though it may seem that way to men.

If a human judge pardons a criminal, he abandons the principles of justice and law. The judge is saying, "The law may be violated, and its penalty not inflicted." This encourages violation of law, and is unholy.

God is always just. It is part of His nature. He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim. 2:13). Therefore, He shows the same regard for His law when He pardons as he does when He destroys. If he shows mercy, it is because adequate payment was made for the offender's transgressions.

Liberal theology has so completely dominated sectarian seminaries for 150 years that few modern Bible scholars teach the truth about God's nature. Modern theologians assume a certain tension exists between God's love on the one hand and His justice on the other, as if one contradicted the other.

This causes many to rationalize the justice of God, and the scriptures that teach it. Most people in the denominational world, and a growing number in the body of Christ, have an entirely false idea of the nature of God.

The following quotation, written by a brother, is an example of how such heresy is affecting the church: "His sovereign love, breaking through the power of sin and setting aside the concept of legal justice embodied in law, has revealed itself as the free gift of grace in Jesus Christ . . . The sovereign love of God treats the sinner mercifully or unjustly and is thereby the demonstration of God's righteousness." (Richard Batey, *Romans. The Living Word Commentary*. Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press p. 53.)

It is difficult to imagine a more blatant denial of the Biblical doctrine of the justice and love of God. God's love does not "set aside" His law or His justice. God does not treat the sinner "unjustly" because He shows mercy. Christ's sacrifice satisfied the demands of divine justice so that God could show man His



love and mercy and remain just (Rom. 3:26). If there were no necessity to satisfy the requirements of justice, there was no reason for the Son of God to go to the cross at all!

God loves the world (man). He wills good for him. Yet, He hates man's sin, rebellion and hostility. If God did not love man, He would let him die in his sins. He would not be unjust in doing so, because death is the penalty stipulated by divine holiness. God wants to have fellowship with His creature, but His justice prohibits fellowship and demands his death (Rom. 6:23; 1:28-32). Sin incurs the penalty for sin (James 2:10), and severs all intimacy between the sinner and God (Isa. 59:1-2).

The cross is a demonstration of the love of God. It shows the length of which He is willing to go to reconcile man to Himself. What man could not do for himself. God did, by sending His only begotten Son into the world to pay the penalty heaven's justice demanded (Rom. 8:1-4). "That he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). God's love and justice complement each other.

If a person chooses sin, he does so against God's will (James 4:4). God cannot ignore him. The sinner has placed himself where he must either turn back, forsake his sin and accept God's offer and grace through the obedience of faith (Rom. 16:26), or suffer the consequences mandated by the justice of God. The only hope he has of escaping God's just wrath is by taking advantage of Christ's cleansing blood. There is no other foundation for salvation (Rom. 8:1-4).

## ***God's Supreme Book***

**Bill Dillon**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Bible towers above all other books as surely as Mt. Everest towers above all other mountains. The supremacy of God's great Book is seen in its formation, information, and in the

estimation that great men have had for it.

### **THE BIBLE IS SUPREME IN ITS FORMATION**

The Bible is a God-formed book. It is reasonable that if God created man and the world that God would teach man how to live in that world.

John Wesley said that the Bible must have been authored by good men or bad men, or angels or devils. But, bad men or devils would not have authored it because it condemns sin and pronounces judgment upon sinners. Good men or angels would not have authored it because they would not deceive men by saying God was the author, if He were not. Thus, the Bible must have been authored as its claims to have been, by God, Who used the Holy Spirit to inspire men to transcribe it (II Peter 1:21; II Timothy 3:16).

### **THE BIBLE IS SUPREME IN ITS INFORMATION**

The twentieth century is the "Information Age." Computerized technology has touched all levels of society bringing unbelievable amounts of data to our eyes at the touch of a button. Sadly, the most valuable and needed information, (the knowledge of spiritual things) is escaping the notice of modern man.

Only the Bible brings accurate information of spiritual matters. The Bible is a treasure chest of eternal truth that can free man's soul from sin and fill his heart with gladness. The Bible gives help for the soul; holiness for the life; happiness for the heart and hope for the future.

Man needs light; the Bible throws a bright beams of truth through the darkness of tribulation and heavy clouds of discouragement.

In his death-defying speech before the continental Congress, Patrick Henry said, "There is but one lamp to guide my feet. It is the lamp of experience." Years later, as the shadows of death hovered over him, he pressed a Bible to his bosom and admitted, "Blessed Book! The greatest of all books

which I have had no time to read, and now it is too late." If Mr. Henry had taken time to read that "Blessed Book," he would have found another lamp by which to live his life. In Psalm 119:105, we read, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway." How many other men have lived and died in ignorance of the blessed information the Bible brings?

Man's earthly journey is a crooked and treacherous path extending from the cradle to the grave. He needs a light to shine along the way. Man shall never have a brighter nor better light to guide him than the Bible.

### **THE BIBLE IS SUPREME IN THE ESTIMATION GREAT MEN HAVE GIVEN TO IT**

The Holy Scriptures are second to none in the high confidence great men have had in them. Although some men have rejected and ridiculed the Bible, yet a multitude of others have affirmed that not one shadow of doubt can be cast over God's supreme book. Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary who mastered more than 30 ancient and modern languages, applied his genius to the study of the Bible's origins, primarily the Old Testament. He set down his conclusions defending the total veracity of the Old Testament in the monumental work, *A SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT*, which destroyed and buried the critical liberal views of scholars who had attacked the Bible's trustworthiness. Dr. Wilson's conclusion was, after 45 years of study and writings, that no man knows enough to question the accuracy and veracity of the Bible.

Over a century ago, William Ramsey believed the history given by Luke in his gospel and Acts of the apostles was inaccurate. After thorough research, Ramsey found Luke's accounts were "first rank" history, accurate to the tiniest detail. Ramsey became one of the ripest Biblical scholars ever known. His books today are valued as classics in the history of the New Testament.

Many facts are known about Christopher Columbus and his

courageous voyages to the New World, but the least-known fact is the profound impact of the Bible on his life. Columbus was a devout believer in the Scriptures. The force that propelled him across the vast ocean is seen from his own words, from the BOOK OF PROPHECIES, the only book he ever wrote, "The fact the gospel still must be preached to so many lands in such a short time this is what convinces me." Robert Flood in MEN WHO SHAPED AMERICA wrote that, "Columbus saw the success of his voyage as a direct confirmation of God's will for his life. He saw his discovery as opening up new lands and tribes to the gospel." (page 15)

May men everywhere have in their thinking and living a greater appreciation for the Bible. May we all see it as God's supreme Book for all human kind.

## ***The Authority of Scripture***

**Tom Seals**

A matter of sincere concern among many Christians today is the apparent trend away from the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures within many circles. We applaud the emphasis on love, service and justice to mankind that is being advocated by many. There has been too much injustice in the past. We commend the desire to promote equality among all peoples, regardless of colour, sex, or social position. But, do we have to make such advances at the price of devaluing the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures? The emphasis of late is to serve mankind with very little attention being given to the importance of "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (II Timothy 2.15). It appears that in many cases, Christians are allowing new interpretations to contradict old and settled truth. This attitude says that man's needs in the twentieth century differ from his needs in the first century and that the Scriptures are a result of influences of different societies to fulfill these needs. The truth of the matter is, however, that when a Christian properly understands and applies God's Word, then he will fulfill his responsibilities toward humanity.

One of the most impressive things in the life of Jesus was the manner in which He used the Scripture. We find that He recognized and accepted Scripture as possessing a normative authority, as the Word of God, VALID FOR ALL TIME: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matthew 24:35). The apostle Paul likewise taught, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17). The Word of God perfects Christians by reproof, teaching, correcting, and training in righteousness. In II Timothy 4:2, Paul thought of bringing God's Word to bear upon people's lives in order to expose error in their lives, to correct what is wrong, and to establish the new way of life.

The Bible presupposes the authority of God. Its purpose is to foster love toward God and love toward one's neighbour. Keeping the law, says Jesus (Matthew 22:34-40), is summed up as love, and love is defined as a responsible observance of God's will as revealed in the Scriptures.

Thus far in history, man has given the type of loyalty that can be counted on, even in crisis situations only to those values and techniques that are related to the truthfulness of God. We see in our religious world today, however, many violations of the truth and precepts of God's Word. When such violations become prevalent enough, our society will disintegrate or change beyond recognition.

## ***Growing In Strength***

**John D. Henson**

How fascinating Jesus' Childhood must have been! Though we have little information about this period in our Saviour's life, we do have a very revealing statement in Luke 2:52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

In the life of our Lord, it is clear that He never grew great by reason of numbers or by taking great pride in the vast multitudes which followed Him. We never read of the Savior instructing His disciples in gimmickry, seeking to increase by trick or treat the numbers of disciples. Jesus never taught that emphasis should be put on mere numbers. In fact, one day all the crowds would desert Him and His own disciples, in fear, would flee away from Him.

The type of growth the Master seeks is growth in strength. This kind of growth is what Jesus exemplified. It is the kind of growth that Paul the apostle wanted for the Ephesian Christians (Ephesians 6:10-18).

**"FINALLY, MY BRETHREN, BE STRONG  
IN THE LORD. . ."**

Not only does Paul instruct the Ephesians to grow up (Ephesians 4:15), he teaches them to grow up strong in the Lord, "and in the power of His might." Christians are to grow up strong for a reason, just as Christ grew up strong physically and was thereby able to withstand the great physical trial of His life and death. In Ephesians 3:16-19, Paul told these children of God to be "rooted and grounded in the truth." with this Great foundation and with their base firmly planted in the nourishment of God's Word, they could grow up strong. This is much like the idea of the Psalmist who said that the godly man, "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:3). The tree which is planted in the right soil and takes root in the right soil and takes root in the right ground grows up strong, fulfills its function well, and thrives.

The growth of the Christian is to be "in the Lord" Lasting growth cannot take place any where else! The world has grown a crop of "wise men" known as philosophers, Men Like Hume, Sartre, and others taught that God was either dead, or that He does not exist. The great skeptic Hume thought that man could never really know anything. He even doubted the law of gravity since he felt there must be some way that he could doubt it or

prove it wrong. Immanuel Kant taught that since every belief man might have about God could be challenged, there could be no God. Such is the extent of man's wisdom; it is speculation and supposition at its best!

The children of Israel made the mistake of placing too much importance on their own wisdom. During Hezekiah's day, due to their fear of Assyria, they thought it would be wiser to make alliances with Egypt than to trust in the eternal God. God's concern for His people can be heard as he said, "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My spirit, that they may add sin to sin" (Isaiah 30:1). These children of Israel did not want to be strong in the Lord.

There are many in the world who claim to be religious but are really taking counsel of others than the Lord. The denominations cling to their creed books and "confessions of faith," which are no more than the philosophies of men. To accept such doctrines and commandments of men is to refuse to be strong in the Lord and is doomed to ultimate failure!

We must be strong in the Lord! We must depend upon the strength which comes only from that which is from God! time and again we have seen in human history how fatal it is to take the first step away from God's Word toward man's wisdom. Paul's advice is sound reasoning which we must heed.

### **WHY BE STRONG?**

We should take heed to Paul's advice to be strong because the opposition is strong. Satan is capable of many things, even to the extent that he can transform his evil servants into ministers of light (II Corinthians 11:14). He is an enemy that is not flesh and blood which makes him a formidable foe. We might be able to overcome satan easily if he were mortal. One can kill or capture a flesh and blood enemy. But, satan is not like this! How can we approach this vicious and vile adversary? By being in a position of strength.

Ronald Reagan made famous the doctrine of "negotiating

from a Position of Strength." He sought to handle the Russians by first making the country strong and resolved once more. He began by building up the armed forces and instilling pride in them. He felt he could approach his adversaries better from a position of strength.

Though we know that we must never negotiate with satan, the valid principle of approaching satan from a position of strength is one we should follow, and is why we must Be STRONG! How can we fight the evil of satan from a position of weakness? To try to do so would be to court disaster!

But, this is the very thing that hundreds of Christians do who do not study the Word of God daily and refuse to take advantage of spiritual growth! So many members of the Lord's church think, "I'll do only that which the Lord requires, and then I'll be in good enough shape." These brethren and sisters are courting disaster as weaklings against a mighty adversary which "walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

How simple it is to make the decision to grow up strong in the Lord! All that is needed to do so is the commitment of the child of God to apply his mind to the truth of God's Word. This involves faithful study. We can understand God's Word with a little effort and there is everything to gain by becoming a strong discernor of God's truth. We should never be contented with doing only the minimum, but ever seeking to grow in strength in the Lord, May each of us start today on the road of growing in strength.

**"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Pro. 1:7)**