

THE BIBLE TEACHER

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EDITORIAL

What Does The Bible Teach?

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

Christ quoted these words from the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy 8:3, when He was tempted in the wilderness by the devil. (Matt. 4:4). In Matthew 3:13-17 we read that Christ was baptized in river Jordan by John the baptizer. John knew that Jesus didn't need to be baptized, because baptism is for those who have sin and they need to repent from sin and then be baptized. (Matthew 3:5-6). So John, at first, refused to baptize Christ, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are you coming to me?” But Jesus told him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” In Psalm 119:172, the Psalmist had said, “My tongue shall speak of Your word, For all Your commandments are righteousness.” Jesus knew that He didn't need to be baptized, but yet He told John to baptize Him, because He also knew that all commandments of God are righteousness, and it is fitting for us to fulfill the righteousness of God. He lived under the Old Testament law of Moses, and whatever was commanded under the law He fulfilled it by doing it.

Man is a dual being. He is both physical and spiritual. His physical needs are met with the physical food that God has

created. But man also need the spiritual food for his spirit or soul, the inner personality. Therefore, said Christ, that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. There was a time when God spoke to man through angels and prophets, in the beginning. But today He speaks to all through the Bible. When there were no written commandments of God available to man, God communicated to man directly or through the prophets. Later, He gave the Old Testament law through Moses. But when Christ came God spoke to man through Christ and by His apostles. (Hebrews 1:1,2). Today we live under the New Testament law of Christ. This means then that whatever we need to know about the will of God for us today we must turn to the New Testament.

God is not speaking today through any person or any other medium. If a preacher does not speak what is written in the Bible, we must not believe Him. And, in fact, we must abide in the New Testament teaching of Christ today as 2 John 9-11 says. We are also warned in the New Testament that even if an angel comes and speaks to us some thing different, which is not already written in the New Testament, then we must not believe him. (Galatians 1:6-9).

"All Scripture" says the Bible at 2 Timothy 3:16,17, "is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Do not neglect reading and studying your Bible. Read it discerningly, believe it and obey it. Because it is the only source of life eternal in heaven. Write to us for obtaining a Bible correspondence course. It is sent free to all who would like to study the Bible in their homes.

Personal Contact

J.C. CHOATE

There are many methods of teaching God's word. Among these would be pulpit preaching, the use of literature and radio to

reach the masses, Bible correspondence courses to teach those who live at a distance, advertisements, and other mass media tools.

While all of these are good for making the *initial* contact, in the end *personal* contact must be made if souls are to be converted to the Lord. There must be personal visitation, home Bible studies, individual invitations to our friends to attend worship with us, opening our homes in hospitality to those we are befriending and teaching, and helping the needy. We must show love for those we want to reach, take personal interest in them, be willing to invest the time to get acquainted, and to arrange occasions to study with them. We must have patience and continue to work with them over a period of time if the desired results are to follow.

Christ is our great example in reaching souls. He went to people, mixed with them, showed a personal interest in them, listened to their problems, and talked to them about their needs. As a result, His following continued to grow throughout His personal ministry.

The Lord taught that His disciples—we—also must go to the lost. He said *"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"* (Matthew 28:19,20). Please note that Jesus did not teach that we should wait for people to come to us but rather that we should go to them. When we take the initiative to meet people and to teach them, we will be surprised to see how many doors of opportunity open to us, making it possible for us to teach. Mark related that Christ said, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:15,16). Notice that Christ not only told the apostles to go to the people of the world but, on going, He instructed that they should preach the good news of salvation and tell them what the Lord would have them to do to be saved. Then He said to the Apostles that after they had received the power of the Holy Spirit, they should be His witnesses *"in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). As you can see, Jesus had a plan for taking the

gospel to the world. The apostles would begin at home and then continue to go forth until all the world was covered. We have the same commission today. It worked then, and it will work now if we will follow the Lord's directions.

Look at the Book of Acts and see what the Apostles, as well as Christians in general, did. The Lord commanded them to go and teach, to go and preach, and in eleven cases of conversion in Acts, that is what they did. This resulted in souls being saved. Without that personal contact they could not have accomplished what they did.

Do you want to be a soul winner for Christ? It is possible for you to do that. The only requirement is that you BEGIN! You can't win souls by saying that you can't, or by sitting at home and making excuses. If people don't seem to be interested, it is your opportunity to find one way or another to get them interested. You have family members, friends, people you work with, and numerous others that you know. Show an interest in them, visit with them, encourage them to study the Bible with you, or to go to worship with you. If one approach doesn't work, try another, and another, and another. Don't give up and quit. The Lord will bless your efforts.

Especially For Women

Training Our Children To Worship

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

The word "teach" brings to mind verbal explanation, lectures, reasoning. The word "train" carries with it the necessity of practicing a thing until it is learned.

We have the privilege of training our children in the awe-inspiring experience of worship. If we do our work well, their heritage will be a sweet closeness with God all their lives; if we train them in only a lifeless form we will have robbed them of their greatest treasure.

It is possible to take a vaccination and, thus, to be protected from a particular disease. It is true that often the dead vaccine will cause a mild reaction in the body, perhaps a rash or a fever. But the vaccination and the mild reaction create an immunity to that disease for life.

In unawareness, we can vaccinate our children spiritually, exposing them to an empty form of Christianity that cannot beget spiritual life in them. Perhaps we take them to worship; perhaps we sometimes read the Scriptures to them; perhaps we say a form of a prayer at times. As a result, they may think that they have really tried Christianity, but because it wasn't an all-pervading approach to life, it didn't work for them—and now they are immune. They read just enough that there is no hunger now to really study; they were dulled by form-prayers so that they have no words from the heart they want to say to God; they dozed or played through worship, so there is no longing in their hearts to enter into God's presence in abject worship.

How do we train our children to worship whole-heartedly?

1. First, while they are still too young to really understand, we begin to talk to them on weekdays and nights about the occasion of worship that is coming on the Lord's Day, letting our facial expressions and our voices convey our own joy over the privilege of worship.
2. Second, we engage in times of family worship at home, and train them in respectful behaviour even during those informal times.
3. We teach by our example and by words of explanation that we prepare ourselves beforehand for public worship. We clean our minds and bodies, and we wear clothes that show our respect for God. When we are properly prepared, physically, for worship it is easier to make the needed spiritual preparations.
4. In worship itself, again we train by our own behaviour. If we sing wholeheartedly, if we listen reverently, if we pray in faith, if we give freely and generously to support God's work—and if we talk and plan and explain all of these things during the week, as an integral part of daily life—they will become a part of daily life as well as public worship, for our children.

5. In worship itself, if we want our children to participate in the singing, we will give them a book, help them find the pages, and help them follow the words, long before they can do these things on their own.
6. From an early age children need to have their own copy of the Scriptures. They should be taught to take care of the Book properly, with respect and love, and to take it with them to worship without fail.
7. Parents should be conscious, during the service, of what their children are doing. I have seen eight- and ten-year-olds, again, talking and laughing with each other during the time of the memorial supper; I've seen them playing instead of singing; sleeping instead of being awake to glean what they could understand from the prayers and lesson.

Children are like adults: we learn many things before we are fully able to comprehend, simply through repeated exposure which creates a familiarity. At an early age children can "grow into" worship that is fully understood and meaningful, provided all of their foundation years of exposure to worship have not been spent sleeping, playing and being entertained—or left at home "until they are old enough to understand." It is our responsibility to train rightly so that children will grow into responsible and worshipful adults.

Don't Quit

FRANCIS DAVID

One of the finest examples we find in the Scriptures is of apostle Paul who was a courageous man, and was so bold that he never thought of quitting his job, in spite of hardships and trials. We read in 2 Cor. 4:8-10 his experience while working for the Lord, he says: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted; but not forsaken; cast down; but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. Paul was faithful and

diligent in preaching the gospel. Paul's sufferings did not stop him to do the preaching or to quit working for the Lord. In 2 Cor. 6:4-10, as he talks about his patience. "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

As a Christian, you maybe facing some problems. Do not give up. Don't get discouraged. Many lose heart and get discouraged and leave their faith. Timothy was told that: "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (2 Tim. 2:12). In the congregation, where you worship, you may have had some bad experiences but it doesn't mean that you have to leave and stop worshipping there. You must continue to be faithful to the Lord and do your job, and the victory will be yours. Keep pressing on. Writing to the Christians at Phillippi, Paul says: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13,14). Let us forget, all the bad past experiences and go forward in order to get the prize that Christ has promised to us.

Sometime, preachers get discourage and want to quit. May be some might go against you, but it doesn't mean that you have to quit. You may suffer hardship, but you should be glad because you can say we are counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Lord (Acts 5:4). We must learn from apostle Paul, inspite of trials, he did not quit and he advised to his fellow Christians by saying these words: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." So, let us fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12), if we do this we would be able to say this with Paul: "I have fought a good

fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

Let The Bible Answer

ROBERT MEREDITH

Does man have to do anything to access God's grace? Yes! The Bible is abundant in proof that one must obey to access God's grace. On the day of Pentecost when Peter and the other apostles were proclaiming the gospel, they preached Christ and many were pricked in their hearts (Acts 2:37) and asked what they had to do. Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, did not tell them to pray and ask God to forgive them. He told them what they had to do to access God's grace. *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:38). Then the writer, Luke, informs us, *"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying. Save yourselves from this untoward generation"* (Acts 2:40). Today, some claim that one does not have to do anything, and if he does he is somehow taking away from God's grace. Peter did not know this because he told them to *"save yourselves."* God's grace had been provided, Jesus had shed His precious blood for the sins of the world, and now man could take advantage of this gift through gospel obedience. Saul of Tarsus, later known as the apostle Paul, was told by our Lord, *"Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do"* (Acts 9:6). Many religious people would have told Saul that if he did anything he would be trying to earn his salvation. Fortunately for Saul an inspired gospel preacher, Ananias, was there to tell him what God required. Ananias said, *"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (Acts 22:16). To call upon the name of the Lord in this context means to obey what the Lord commands. If one refuses to do what God says, how could he be calling on the name of the

Lord. Note also that Saul was still in his sins before obeying the Lord.

In the Old Testament there are several examples of people accessing God's grace through obedience. In Joshua 6:2, one reads, *"And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the King thereof, and the mighty men of valour."* The city of Jericho was given to the Israelites by the grace of God. The Israelites possessed the city when they did what God instructed them to do. They were told to march around it and blow their horns and shout. The Israelites did not earn the city, God gave it to them after they had accessed God's grace by an obedient faith. They could not boast and say, "We did it!"

Likewise today, salvation can not be earned. God's grace is accessed when one obeys. (Read James 2:21-23) Abraham was called the friend of God when he obeyed God. How is one earning salvation when he hears God's word (Rom. 10:17), believes it (Heb. 11:6), repents of sins (Acts 17:30), confessed Christ (Mt. 10:32), and is baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). He is not working his way to heaven, because if he were, he could boast (Eph. 2:9). He is simply obeying what God commands one to do to be saved by His matchless grace. A faith that will not do what God says is the working kind of faith.

The source of our salvation is God's grace (John 3:16; Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8, and many others). God was not obligated to save man, but has developed a system of salvation which involves works of faith or righteousness (Ps. 119:172). The source of our salvation is not these works (Titus 3:5), but we can access His mercy by these works of faith (similar to the Israelites with Jericho). Paul declared, *"According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost"* (Titus 3:5). Man is saved by mercy when he is born of water and the Spirit, not before. Works of merit, or works that a person could boast of and say God owes me salvation, are condemned in the Bible (Rom. 11:6). However, works of righteousness, or faith (works which God developed) are involved in salvation (Heb. 5:8-9; Acts 2:40; Acts 2:38; Rev. 2:10; James 2:24).

Put On The Lord Jesus Christ - 2

THOMAS R. DOHLING

Putting on Jesus' nature affects our priorities.

- When we have the mind of Christ, He begins to re-order our life. First things will really become first.
- Jesus said in **Matthew 6:33** "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." But the order will be reversed in your life without the mind of Christ.
- Right here is why so many Christians have such distorted priorities and you find Christian men and women:
 - Sacrificing their marriages and children on the altar of career success.
 - Consumed with personal debt and living in bondage to their lifestyle and creditors.
 - Living lives that are busy, but spiritually barren.
- Many, maybe most of us, desperately need the Lord Jesus to re-order our priorities by renewing our minds.
- We have accepted as natural, values, ideals, and thought patterns that are imposed on us by an evil world system, and not the Lord Jesus.

c. Being clothed with the Lord affects our Praying.

- Do you know that we cannot pray effectively without having the mind and Spirit of Christ?
 - This is exactly why much of our praying is powerless.
 - This is why many of our prayers go unanswered.
- "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).
- Much of our praying is not praying with the mind of Christ, but it is flesh-driven praying.
- Do you know how you can have every prayer answered exactly as you pray it? Pray with the mind of Christ, under the direction of His Spirit. (Rom. 8:26,27).
- When you pray with the mind of Christ, you pray:

- With God's glory as your ultimate desire.
 - From an eternal perspective, rather than temporal.
 - With spiritual priorities; rather than material.
- By the way, this is exactly what it means to pray in Jesus' name.
- The name of Jesus is not just a super password to get what you want from God.
 - Praying in Jesus' name means praying in accordance with Christ's character and perfect will.
 - Praying in Jesus' name means praying from a position of unity, love and agreement with Jesus.
 - Praying in Jesus' name means praying with the mind of Christ, as you stand still in a relationship of union, love, and harmony with Jesus Christ.

"And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it" (John 14:13,14).

Let us be fully clothed with Christ and so be willing wholly to serve the Lord our God, and "make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). Let us believe in the love and power of God to keep us clothed with Christ day by day, and put "no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3).

Perhaps being outside of Christ, you have realized your spiritual nakedness. Then you need to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, believe in His cleansing, healing power, repent of your sins, confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and be baptized [immersed] in water for the forgiveness of sin and rise up to walk in the new Christ-like life. You will be glad to do so. Your burden will fall away; your guilt gone. God will make you His child and add you to His family, the church of Christ.

Perhaps, as a Christian, *you have also realized your spiritual nakedness!* Perhaps, you do not believe that God will fulfill His word. You do not believe in the possibility of unbroken fellowship with Him, and unlimited partnership. On account of that, you become disobedient, and did not live like a child doing God's will, because you did not believe that God could give you the victory over sin. Are you willing now to leave that wilderness life? Sometimes you are, perhaps, enjoying fellowship with God,

and sometimes you are separated from Him; sometimes you have nearness to Him, and at other times great distance from Him; sometimes you have a willingness to walk closely with Him, but sometimes there is even unwillingness. Are you now going to give up your whole life to Him? Jesus did. He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mark 14:36).

Armageddon

BOBBY DOCKERY

The contemporary religious world has been gripped with excitement concerning the Second Coming of Christ. In many instances this excitement has been whipped into near hysteria by the speculations of some religious agitators. In connection with the end of the present order of things many people expect to shortly witness a colossal outbreak of hostilities between world powers which will culminate in a grand and terrible 'Battle of Armageddon.' By giving full rein to their imaginations, some have even produced detailed descriptions of when, where, and how the battle will be fought and who will be involved.

When imagination is separated from fact, however, there is little or no Biblical basis for most of the current claims being made about Armageddon. The word 'Armageddon' itself is used only once in the Bible. (Rev. 16:16). This should immediately caution us against any wild theorizing about its meaning. Note the following conclusions based on a careful study of what the Bible actually says:

(1) ARMAGEDDON IS NOT A BATTLE BETWEEN EARTHLY ARMIES

The word 'Armageddon' comes from the Hebrew words 'Har' meaning 'mountain' and 'Megiddo' which is the name of a significant place in Jewish history. Megiddo was the site of a number of devastating battles. (II Kings 23:29; Judges 5:19; I

Samuel 31.) Hence, Megiddo represents simply a battleground. The word 'mountain' is used by the Old Testament prophets as a symbol for the church.(Daniel 2:45; Isaiah 2:2; Cf. **McClintock and Strong, Vol. I, p. 405**). Armageddon, therefore, refers to the warfare which the church wages. As such it is a spiritual fight and not a physical one. This explains Paul's statement that we **'wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. 6:12.)**

(2) ARMAGEDDON IS NOT FOUGHT WITH CARNAL WEAPONS

The weaponry of Armageddon does not consist of guns, tanks, planes, and nuclear warheads. Rather the opposing forces are armed with the **'sword of the spirit'** on one side and the **'firey darts of the wicked one'** on the other. (Eph. 6:16,17.) To survive Armageddon, the Christian must be equipped with the **'whole armour of God.'** (Eph. 6:13-17.) That our weapon is the word of God is clearly seen in the vivid description of the conquering Christ in Revelation 19 which depicts Him as smiting His enemies with the sharp sword that **'goeth out of his mouth.'**

(3) ARMAGEDDON IS NOT A BATTLE FOUGHT AT THE END OF TIME

As a spiritual conflict between the forces of good and evil, Armageddon goes on all the time! It is fought whenever and wherever the church confronts her enemies. It rages within the heart and within the nation! As Christians we must be fighters! (I Tim. 1:18; 6:12; II Tim. 2:3; 4:7.) When the Bible says Christ **'gathered them together'** at Armageddon it means that the faithful warriors of the Lord were assembled to fight unrighteousness. (Rev. 16:16.) It is a mistake to think that we will be exempted from Armageddon! The battle rages continually and the Christian must fight!

(4) ARMAGEDDON IS NOT A BATTLE WITH AN UNCERTAIN OUTCOME

Armageddon is a fight which the faithful will win. **'But thanks to be God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'** (I Cor. 15:57.) Under the leadership of Christ we are 'more than conquerors.' (Rom. 8:37.) That is not to say that our foe is not a dangerous one—many will be deceived and devoured by Satan. (Rev. 12:9; I Pe. 5:8). But it is to say that those who are faithful to the 'captain of our salvation' have the assurance of victory. Our weapons are 'mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.' (II Cor. 10:4.) But only the Bible will do! The broken swords of human wisdom will not avail in Armageddon. In the great spiritual struggle which engulfs us we must rely upon 'the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God' as the all sufficient guide for every item of our religious faith and practice.

Even now the forces of God and Satan are drawn up on the plains of Armageddon. The struggle has already begun. The bugle which must never call retreat has sounded. The Christian's battle cry must be:

Onward Christian Soldiers;
Marching as to war
With the cross of Jesus,
Going on before,
Christ the royal Master,
Leads against the foe
Forward into battle,
See His banners go.

Living Below Cloud Nine

J.K. GOSSETT

There is a notion that one should live every day on cloud nine, in a state of perpetual ecstasy. This view of life is often projected by so-called motivational speakers and others whose

life is an emotional cart-wheel. In reality most of life for most Christians is somewhere below cloud nine. The Christian is to live and walk by faith, faith which is based upon the word of God (Romans 10:17).

The Christian may be afflicted one day, merry the next day, and sick on the third day. Is there anything about this which should cause one to hurry to a counselor? No! James wrote: "Is any among you AFFLICTED? let him pray. Is any MERRY? let him sing psalms. Is any SICK among you? let him call for the elders of the church. . . ." (James 5:13-14). Variety is truly the spice of life and there is plenty of it to go around.

Without a doubt, the Bible is the only book which sets forth a way of life by which man can live successfully, productively and happily. Paul wrote: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:6-10).

There are countless problems in the world and the Christian is not immuned to them. In fact, it is quite possible to have more problems in living for Christ than were experienced while in the world. The peerless apostle Paul wrote: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Corinthians 4:8-10).

The highest aspirations known to man may be realized by following this admonition: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

The First Adam and Second Adam

CLEM THURMAN

"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. . . . But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. . . . so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; 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. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written: The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:20-22; 42-45).

The apostle Paul was teaching about the resurrection, and answered questions about the kind of body we will have. In the process of answering that, he speaks of *"the first Adam"* and *"the second Adam."* The *"first Adam"* is clearly the first man of the human race, who was in the Garden of Eden. That Jesus Christ is the *"second Adam"* or the *"last Adam"* is evident throughout 1 Cor. 15. Adam was a *"figure"* or *"type"* of our Savior. That the inspired apostle used Adam as a *"type"* or *"figure"* of Christ shows that they were, in many respects, similar. The things that happened to the first Adam were very similar to the things that happened to the second Adam.

COMPARISON OF ADAM AND JESUS

God placed both the first Adam and second Adam upon this earth. I do not understand how God could take *"dust of the ground"* and make the form of the first Adam. Neither do I know how He could *"breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul"* (Gen. 2:7). This, of course, was miraculous, a deviation from what we know as the laws of

nature. But this I accept, by faith. God said it, I believe it. I can explain it by faith, for *"faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10:17).

That God placed *"the second Adam"* on this earth is also a matter of faith. In that way I can account for Jesus being conceived by a virgin (Matt. 1:21-23) and thus being *"the Son of God"* and *"the seed"* of woman (Gen. 3:15; Luke 1:35). Some find this premise difficult to understand, but we are not supposed to know as much as God does! We are to *"walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Cor. 5:7). Let's face it: we accept many things we don't really understand. Who really understands gravity, and how it holds the earth in the proper orbit around the sun? Who really understands how any baby is conceived and becomes a new life in this world!? But we accept these things and act on our acceptance of them. That is the way we accept the birth of Jesus.

THE PHYSICAL ADAM AND THE SPIRITUAL ADAM

"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:1-2). God named the first man, "Adam," which means "ground," because he was formed from the dust of the ground.

In a similar way, God named the second Adam: *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel. . . . And she shall bring forth a Son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. . . . wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow"* (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:21; Phil. 2:9-10). Yes, the Son of God was named by His Father. When you think of Him as the Savior, call Him "Jesus." When you think of Him as our ruler, call Him "Lord." When you think of Him as being God, call Him "Immanuel." When you think of Him as the anointed one of God, call Him the "Christ."

BOTH ADAMS WERE GIVEN WIVES

After God created the first man, He said, *"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him. . . . God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man"* (Gen. 2:18-22). The Woman God made for the man was his bosom companion: *"Bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh,"* they became *"one flesh"* (Gen. 2:23).

Similar to that first marriage, when the *"second Adam"* got married, he had to sleep the sleep of death upon the cross so that he might receive His bride: *"I will build my church . . . the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood . . . Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it"* (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25). Christ and His church are *"one"* (Eph. 5:31-32; Col. 1:18), just as husband and wife are one. So many claim that the church is not important. But try telling that to her Husband! Jesus loved the church, and died for her. If we love Christ, we will also love His bride and rejoice to be able, by His grace, to be part of that bride.

THE BRIDE WEARS HER HUSBAND'S NAME

Notice the reading again in Gen. 5:2, *"God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam"* (Gen. 5:1-2). God called both the man and woman, *"Adam."* That was the family name. Adam then called his wife, *"Eve"* (Gen. 3:20), so that (as we would say today) she was *"Eve Adam."* She honoured her husband by wearing His name.

In the same way, the bride of Christ should honour Him by wearing His name: *"The churches of Christ salute you"* (Rom. 16:16), *"The church of God"* (Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:15). In calling the church after His name, *"Jesus Christ, the Son of God,"* we honour Him. Many will say that there is nothing in a name. But Scripture plainly says that is not true: *"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

Those *individuals* who are in the church, the bride of Christ, also honour Him by wearing His name: *"The disciples were called Christians . . . If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name"* (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16). By wearing His name, we honour Christ, *"the second Adam,"* and glorify God. Why, if we want to honour Christ, would we wear any other name than His?

ADAM WAS THE HEAD OF HIS FAMILY

God told Eve, *"Thy desire shall be to thy husband,, and he shall rule over thee"* (Gen. 3:16). God's decree for order in the human family has not changed: *"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church"* (Eph. 5:22-23). The husband should be kind, loving and caring, but he is still given the responsibility to be the head of the family which God has given him.

But notice that passage above: *"Christ also is the head of the church."* Paul writes of this in Col. 1:18, *"He is the head of the body, the church."* As Peter declared to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, *"God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified"* (Acts 2:36). We submit to Christ as *"Lord"* because He has been given *"all authority"* (Matt. 28:18). He is the head of the church, and we submit to Him.

ADDITIONS TO THE FAMILY OF ADAM

The family of the first Adam grew. There was Cain, then Abel, then Seth. All of the children came into this family in the same way: they were born into it. As John told the Jews, *"God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham"* (Matt. 3:9). But God did not choose to add people to Adam's family in any way except by a birth into it.

The family of the *"second Adam"* also grew. And the process in the spiritual family was the same as that of the physical. Jesus said, *"Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God!"* (John 3:3-5). That is the reason Jesus told the apostles, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"* (Mark 16:16).

"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38).

In order to be *"born of water and the Spirit,"* one must be *"begotten"* by the word of God which the Spirit gave us (1 Cor. 2:11-13; 4:15; James 1:18), we then must repent (determine to quit sin), and be *"baptized into Christ"* (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4). No one enters the family of *"the first Adam"* except by being born into it. And no one enters the family of *"the second Adam"* except by being born into it: *"Born of water and the Spirit."*

Friend, the disobedience of the first Adam lost the earthly Eden (Gen. 3:6,24; Rom. 5:12). But the obedience of the second Adam makes it possible for us to gain the heavenly Eden (Heb. 5:8-9). As Paul wrote, *"The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly . . . thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Cor. 15:45-49,57).

When Man "Thinks"

SYLVESTER A. IMOGOH

Man is a bio-psychosocial being with biological, psychological, and social characteristics. This tripartite nature of man elevates him far above other creatures of God. Man is also a homo-sapien—a free thinker, with the freedom and ability to reason. Man in his ingenuity often craves for absolute freedom—from direction, control and reproach. Often he does not stop to consider the fact that though created to be superior to all animals, he is far inferior to God in thought, wisdom, and intellect. David asked God, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8:4).

Whether man recognizes and accepts this fact or not does not alter it. For the prophet Isaiah wrote, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9.) Therefore in things divine, man must seek and accept God's guidance and

direction. Many years ago, Jeremiah recognized this need and wrote, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment." (Jeremiah 10:23-24.) Also there is some warning in the wise man's statement. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12.)

ANOINTING OF ONE OF JESSE'S SONS

There are many Bible examples of man's most sincere thoughts and judgments that are far below divine judgments, and God regards such as deviations or disobedience. In First Samuel chapter sixteen, the prophet Samuel was instructed by God to anoint one of Jesse's sons to succeed the disobedient Saul. Samuel, though a prophet and seer was human, and therefore thought and reasoned as man. For as soon as he saw Eliah, Jesse's first son, probably lanky and handsome, he voiced his thought and judgment by saying, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." (Samuel 16:6.) But hear the Lord's judgment. "I have refused him for the Lord seeth not as man seeth. (16:7.) Jesse then made all other sons of his (save David) pass before Samuel. Obviously even Jesse himself must have thought David insignificant, for not until Samuel asked him, "Are here all thy children?" did he remember him (David) tending the flock. And contrary to their thoughts and judgments he was the Lord's anointed.

THE WRONG FIRE

The two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, cared little about what God thought in the discharge of their priestly duties. For they offered strange (unholy, unauthorized) fire on God's altar. (Leviticus 10:1-3.) They must have reasoned after all "fire is fire" in that they presumed to know better than God and maybe to "think" faster too. Awful? Yes! so it is today. Many people "think" that "church is church," not minding foundation, creed, or name. Others say "baptism is baptism," whether sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. They do not care what the scripture means when baptism is described as "a burial." (Romans 6:3,4), and "a going into and coming up out of the water." (Acts 8:38,39.) Let us be

warned, for we read “. . . And Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord when they offered strange fire before the Lord.”

THE CASE OF UZZAH

It is sad that man never stops thinking and acting presumptuously. We read in 1 Chronicles 13:1-14 how Uzzah met his untimely death while trying to restore the balance of the ark. Maybe he thought “the oxen stumble, the ark loses balance. At least I would be doing service to God and man restoring it's balance. No harm is it?” Man says “yes.” And God says “no.” But why no, God? Here again, man thinks that God is too hard to please. But is that right? Man's thinking and judgments are lopsided, seeking to please God but forgetting that God is better pleased by obedience than by service. (1 Samuel 15:22.) “and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah and he smote him.” Why? Because he put his hand to the ark. Uzzah being a Jew knew that it was a sacrilege for a non-Levite to touch the ark of God. He was killed not because of his service, but because of his deviation and disobedience. It has always been interesting, to me, that following the Lord's judgment on Uzzah that the Bible says, “And David was displeased because the Lord has made a breach upon Uzzah.” (2 Samuel 6:8.) Again in the following verse we read, “And David was afraid of the Lord that day.” We must take a cue and be warned therefore that there will be disappointment at the judgment. Jesus has given us a foreknowledge of it, that many will perform religious services which they think are right and yet be rejected. (Matthew 7:21,22.) Disobedience to God's laws and disregards to His commands have always produced fear. (Matthew 25:25.)

What is obtained in religious scenes today is closely akin to the unwholesome and unsolicited service Uzzah rendered to God for which he died. For example, God commands and accepts singing for worship in the New Testament (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), but some religious people seem to be wiser and think that instrumental music would be more melodious and pleasing to God and man. Also they reason that instruments would serve to attract more members into the church. In this, their reasoning is not different from that of Nadab and Abihu. Let us be warned, because some supposed services

to God are abominable sacrilege. (Proverbs 14:12.)

THE CASE OF TWO LIARS

During the early days of the Jerusalem church, the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira caused them to connive to tell a lie. Man would have thought that was not much of an offense to warrant a death sentence. After all, it was their property. Left for mortals (including the author) one would reason that it was "negligible" sin. But that is where we miss the mark. For allowing Satan to fill their hearts to lie to the Holy Spirit, they both died. (Acts 5:1-11.)

CONCLUSION

There are people who think like Samuel who accept and judge religious matters at face value. Such people think that the commands to believe, repent and be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38) are too simple to be obeyed. They would rather look beyond these simple steps for salvation. They dwell on "feelings" and "experience." But is man ever as wise as God?

There are many who by their presumption are like Nadab, Abihu and Uzzah. Where God placed salvation in the one body, the church of Christ, (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18,24) they say "You can be saved in the church of your choice." Where God commands that worship must be in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) some go ahead thinking themselves wise to add the traditions of men. (Matthew 15:9.) For such "all are to perish." (Colossians 2:22.) It is frightening, to say the least, to find once respected members of the Lord's church drifting in the direction of presumption and will worship. We must apply the brakes!!! There is no doubt but that there are many today with the desire and zeal to worship God. That is noble, yet it would be by far nobler (Acts 17:11) for all such to pursue such divine aspiration as men while "thinking" less and obeying more.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13.)

It is Level At the Foot of the Cross

BRANDON MAYFIELD

Before the crucifixion of the Saviour, all of mankind had sinned. (Romans 3:23.) Throughout the Bible, it is shown that Israel was rebellious; they murdered the prophets and eventually they even murdered the Son of Man. God would have accepted them had they repented, but they chose not to. Matthew 23:37 records, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stone those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"

As a result of Christ's death on the cross, salvation was offered to all. The Old covenant was abolished, the sacrifice of animals no longer provided an atonement for sin. Hebrews 9:12 states, "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

Much of this world is filled with prejudice and hatred towards others with different skin colour, but Christ shows no partiality, all are equal in his sight. Acts 10:34-35 says, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28.)

The priests had to slay the animal in the Old Testament to gain access to the blood. How do we gain access to Christ's blood that was shed in his death? "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4.)

There is no room for prejudice among God's people. Peter was raised to be prejudiced. Maybe you were too, but the love of Jesus overcomes prejudice. It is therefore true that all stand level at the foot of the Cross!

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