

THE BIBLE TEACHER

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Editorial

What Does the Bible Teach?

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"

These were the words of Christ spoken to His disciples just before His going back into heaven to be with the Father from where He had come on earth some thirty-three years ago. (Mark 16:15). Christ wanted His followers to go and preach the gospel. What is the gospel? The apostle Paul said this: "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

The gospel message, which Christ commanded His followers to go and preach, therefore, contains three facts, that is, according to the Scriptures, Christ died for our sins, and that He was buried in the tomb, and that He was resurrected after three days. This is the message of the cross, which is foolishness to those who are perishing but the power of God to those who are being saved. (1 Corinthians 1:18). Referring to this gospel, the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans, in Rom. 1:16, proudly wrote, "For I am

not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. . . ." The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross by the will of God for the propitiation of the sins of the world, and His burial in the tomb as a proof of His death, and His resurrection after three days from the dead, is the gospel of salvation that must be preached to all men everywhere. Immediately, after commanding the disciples to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," Christ added these words: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved. . . ." (Mark 16:16).

Christ was with God from the beginning in heaven (John 1:1). But He left heaven to come on earth as a man. (John 1:14). He came on earth to die on the cross for the sins of the world. (Philippians 2:6-8). In His own words: "For God So loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). The Son of God had come on earth to die for the sins of the world. He want to save man from sin, so that man could go to heaven through Him. The gospel of Christ is the power of salvation for everyone. The gospel must be preached to every creature.

But there are those today who are perverting the gospel of Christ and are preaching a different gospel, as they were doing in the first century, A.D., of whom the apostle Paul wrote, "But there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ, But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that we have preached to you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-8). What gospel did the apostle Paul and the other apostles preach? The same one gospel of Christ that Christ according to the Scriptures had died for the sins of the world, that He was buried and that He rose again. They were not inviting people to come to Christ to be healed of their physical ailments, or come to Christ to receive any kind of physical relief. **They were not telling people to get the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The apostles were not begging for money from their listeners under some pretext.** They were preaching the gospel as Christ had commanded them to do. Friends, only the gospel of Christ must be preached.

How Should We Pray?

J.C. CHOATE

Prayer is the avenue through which Christians approach God their Father. Another way of putting it, it is our way of talking to God. But how do we do that? In what way do we approach our creator?

How can we enter into the presence of God without showing reverence, humility, and a worshipful attitude? Christ said that "God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24).

Christ tells us how to pray and how not to pray. He said, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which is in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matthew 6:5-8).

The Lord goes on to tell the disciples how to pray. The words that he spoke were a prayer of example, of teaching the disciples *how* to pray, rather than being the Lord's own prayer. Still, we may derive from it important points on how to speak to God even today. Christ said, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." (Matthew 6:9-13).

Why was this prayer not offered in the name of Christ? Because Christ had not yet died to save man from his sins, and to become our mediator. Therefore, today we would make two changes in this prayer of example. We would pray for the growth

and spread of the Lord's kingdom and close our prayer to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:2).

You will notice that the prayer was directed to the Father. First, there was praise of God. Then Jesus emphasized the importance of the church, or kingdom, teaching the disciples to pray for its coming, which was imminent.

Second, He taught the disciples to pray for physical and spiritual blessings.

The third item in Jesus' prayer concerned forgiveness—the forgiveness we need of God, and the forgiveness we are to extend to those who wrong us.

Fourth, we are to ask for God's help in avoiding temptation and sin.

And, fifth, Jesus closed the prayer with further glorifying God and the confession that all power and glory are His.

This was a brief prayer but it covered the basic and general topics about which we would pray. The more individual and specific needs would be those that pour from our own hearts, in the conviction that he cares and will help us.

There are personal prayers and public prayers. (Luke 9:18; Acts 12:12). There are prayers where we stand (Mark 11:25), and prayers where we kneel. (Acts 9:40). There are prayers that continue day and night (1 Thessalonians 3:10), and we are exhorted to pray without ceasing, or to live with the attitude of prayer. (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Are you a Christian? Do you pray? What is your attitude about prayer? Do you pray in faith, believing that God loves you and hears what you say?

How blessed we are to be able to approach our Father in prayer. What great power we have at our disposal when we do so.

Do You Love Jesus?

FRANCIS DAVID

In John chapter 21, we read, when Jesus and disciples were having breakfast, He asked Simon Peter, "Do you love Me more

than these?; Peter replied by saying, "Yes Lord: You know I love You." He said to Him, "Feed My lambs." Further we read that Jesus asked the same question again and Peter replied by saying: "Yes, Lord You know I love you." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." Through the centuries, this question has been asked by many people in different situations. Husband and wife, parents and children and boys and girls have asked this question to each other and different answers have been given. But we know the people we admire and respect, we don't want to hurt them because we love them.

As we read this conversation between Jesus and Peter, we see Peter gave the right answer because he loved Him, of course at one situation he denied him but we know he was not scared to die for Jesus, and later he became a martyr for His name's sake. If the same question is put to us today what would be our answer to the Lord? Jesus while talking to His disciples once said that "If you love Me, you will keep My commandment." (John 14:15). Do we love Jesus? Do we really want to keep His commandment? I have heard, people say that they love Jesus, but at the same time they are not willing to do what He expects from them.

Do you believe in Jesus? you might say I do, but if he says to you in order to be saved you must be baptised, what would be your answer? Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16). Have you been baptised scriptually? If not then this is the time that you need to do this. Have you repented of your sins? Jesus expects that we must repent to our old sinful life. Before your baptism, you need to change from your old sinful situation. He said, ". . . unless you repent you will likewise perish." (Luke 13:3). Jesus wants that you must confess Him before others. Do you love Him? If you do, then you must confess Him before the people. He says: "Therefore, whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32). Wouldn't you obey Jesus today? If you really love Him, you will do what He says.

For those who are Christians his command is that they should attend services of the church regularly. In Hebrews 10:25, we read, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the

more as you see the Day approaching. What about you, do you often miss the worship? Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Knowing that Jesus is there in our midst, if we love Him we would not miss the worship.

What about preaching the gospel? Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19). Each and every Christian has a responsibility of taking the gospel to others. If we really love Jesus we would obey his command of taking the gospel to others.

Lastly, we see, if we have decided to follow Jesus, we would not turn back. We will walk with Him with all sincerity and honesty. Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Do you love Jesus, if yes, then follow Him faithfully.

Is It Well . . . ?

CHARLES BOX

The account of Elisha raising the Shunammite's son is a touching story which demonstrates the power of God. The account is found in 2 Kings 4:8-37. God had blessed this family with a son because of their goodness and love shown to His prophet, Elisha. On one day the son died suddenly. In haste the woman went to Elisha. Gehazi, Elisha's servant was sent to meet her with the questions found in 2 Kings 4:26. "Please run now to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?' And she answered, 'It is well.'" Let us answer these questions:

IS IT WELL WITH YOU?

How can one know if it is well with him? Most would judge by health, good house, cloths, a nice car and money in the bank. Those who possess those things would say, "I'm doing fine. Things are well with me." But, all those things can be left behind in one quick moment and you are again faced with the question, "Is it well with you?" Ask the man in Luke 16:19-31 our question.

Is it well with you? While on earth he is rich and enjoying life to the full (at least that is what he thought). On earth he would say, "things are wonderful with me." But when the question was asked after death his answer is far different. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' " (Lk. 16:24.) It is well with you only if you recognize the terrible effect of sin in your life. (Rom. 6:23.) It is well with you only if you love the Lord and keep His commandments (Jn. 14:15, 1 Jn. 5:3.) It is well with you only if you have obeyed the gospel and have been forgiven of sins (Heb. 5:8-9, Mk. 16:15-16.) It is well with you only if you are living a faithful Christian life (Rom. 6:1-6, 1 Cor. 15:58.) Is it well with you?

IS IT WELL WITH YOUR HUSBAND?

Our concern must be not only for self but also for others. Cain had no concern for his brother (Gen. 4.) Noah had much concern for others (Gen. 6.) Our responsibility is to help others go to heaven. Let it never be said of us that we did not care for others. "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me. Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul." (Psa. 142:3-4.) Is it well with your husband or wife? We have a responsibility to help our husbands or wives in their walk with God (Eph. 5:21-33.) What are you doing to help your husband or wife go to heaven? (1 Pet. 3:1-8.) Let us all live faithful lives so our influence can help our husbands or wives reach heaven. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.) Is it well with your husband or wife?

IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD?

Are you fulfilling your obligation to train your children to serve God. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.) Children must be taught to respect, honor and obey their parents. Parents, especially fathers, must fulfill their responsibility in "bringing their children up

in the training and admonition of the Lord." "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:1-4.) Is it well with the child? Do you see that the physical and emotional needs of the child are met? And what about the more important spiritual needs, are the spiritual and eternal needs of the child met? Even from Old Testament days God has tried to impress the minds of parents with the need for spiritual training for their children. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deut. 6:4-9.) Parents must love their children and train them to go to heaven. It is well with the child?

The questions asked by Elisha's servant are still important today: (1) Is it well with you?, (2) Is it well with your husband?, and (3) Is it well with the child? Can we answer as the Shunammite woman? She said, "It is well." If today should be the day your soul was required by God could you truly say, "It is well with my soul!" Do not be a stumbling block to others by your failure to obey the gospel or to be faithful. Believe in Jesus with all your heart (Acts 2:36-37.) Repent of every sin in your life (Acts 2:38.) Confess Jesus as Lord and Christ (Rom. 10:9-10.) Be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 22:16.) Be faithful till death (Rev. 2:10.) Is it well...?

Avenge Not Yourselfes

KEVIN CAULEY

Enemies come in all different shapes and sizes. There are

physical enemies who seek to take our lives. There are enemies in the business world who would destroy our way of earning a living. There are enemies within families when close bonds have been severed due to a "falling out." And, there are spiritual enemies who teach a different doctrine or a changed gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). As Christians, it's a guarantee that we will have enemies (John 15:20). Perhaps the greatest test of a Christian within the New Testament is not how he treats his friends, but how he treats his enemies.

As humans, when we are wronged, we tend to want to lash out in response to that wrong and defend ourselves. Usually in pursuing such a course of action, we demand only what is "equitable" for ourselves in relationship to the harm that has been done to us. Vengeance is the demanding attitude that what was done to me ought to also be done to my enemy. Christians, however, are directed not to harbor such thoughts in their sanctified minds. Romans 12:19-21 says, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Our Lord Jesus gave us the quintessential example of this very attitude through his life. His enemies were all of the enemies listed above rolled up into one: physical, financial, familial, and spiritual. How our Lord acted toward his enemies should spur us toward the same behavior. He is our example, our pattern. Peter writes, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23). When pursued by our enemies, how do we respond? Do we avenge ourselves or do we "give place unto wrath?" Do we revile or revile not? Do we threaten or threaten not? Do we seek to render our own verdict, or do we commit ourselves to the righteous judge? Do we try to overcome evil with evil or do we overcome evil with good?

The truth of the whole matter is this. Through our sins, we

placed ourselves at enmity with God. And God, in all of his righteous might, had every right to take vengeance on us. However, He did not do this. He chose to give us a way whereby we could be reconciled to Him. This He did through His Son, Jesus. What we could not do for ourselves, God did for us through his Son while we were His enemies. Romans 5:6-10 states, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Those who are our enemies deserve our mercy and love, not because they are our enemies, but because we were once God's enemy and that is how God looked upon us in such a state. To treat them otherwise, is to invite the same judgment that we mete out upon them upon ourselves (Matthew 7:1). The greatest test of the Christian may be how we treat our enemies, but the same test is ultimately how God will judge us as well. Dear Christian, "Love your enemies."

How To Stay On Top Of The World

J.A. THORNTON

Being on top of the world is more of an attitude than that of altitude. It basically is a positive attitude. Think of the positiveness of Paul's statement in Philippians 4:8, "Whatsoever things are true, 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, if there be any praise, think on these things." This truth should be

translated into our lives by practicing it. We must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. II Cor. 10:5. One's disposition and attitude are formed early in life. The older we become, the harder it is to change our attitudes. Parents should help children to form a good disposition. My mother never allowed us to be grumpy and my father often said, "Sing or whistle before breakfast and your day will go better." Remember when you complain, you are not helping your disposition. Psychologists say, "Act better than you feel and you will feel better" and I believe that. It is also true that if you act worse than you feel, you will feel worse.

"I am on top of the world" is an expression I have been using for years. This expression is really a commitment. I am therefore committed to this day being a good day. Though I may face some difficulties and disappointments or pain, God is still in charge and I am His child. With that in mind, I am on top of the world.

CHOOSE TO BE HAPPY

Happiness is a choice. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Many years ago a man who was very much uneducated somehow got on a national talk show. He stole the show from others with his zest and happiness. Recognizing they had lost the show, they said, "Sir, how is it you have all this exuberance?" The man answered, "Well, you see it's this way. Each morning I get up and I have two choices. One to be happy and one not to be happy. And I ain't as dumb as you think. It's a lot more fun being happy so I choose to be happy." This is a choice that you and I can make.

Writers of the *Declaration of Independence* said, "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." We cannot pursue happiness and catch it. It comes upon us unawares while we are busy helping others. Happiness does not depend on a full pocketbook, but a mind full of rich thoughts and a heart full of rich emotions. Happiness does not depend upon what happens outside us, but what is inside us.

Jesus tells us how to be happy in Matthew 5:1-12. It has His guarantee, for that is what "Blessed" means. Happiness puts a smile on your face. Prov. 15:13 A smile helps your face value. One cannot be happy and discontent, self-centered or angry, at the same time.

The Christian has more to be happy over than anyone else. We have the forgiveness of sins, fellowship of brethren, hope of life eternal and a heavenly Father. Isn't it great to be on top of the world!

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Gratitude should be high on the list of reasons to be happy. Rough roads make one really appreciate the smooth, just as the black but accentuates the white. And diamonds seem to sparkle more on black velvet. Never lose sight of God's love and goodness and you will have an attitude of gratitude. Many a success came from learning in our difficulties.

"In everything give thanks." I Thes. 5:18 "Giving thanks always for all things unto God." Eph. 5:20 In the latter reference Paul was in a Roman prison and yet he could give thanks for all things. He could give thanks that the imprisonment had "fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel" Phil. 1:12-14. When we face difficulties, even painful things, there are things for which to be thankful. Count your blessings. When you are thankful you are on top of whatever you are enduring. Remember there is never a problem that God and you cannot handle. Never allow what you don't have to keep you from being thankful for what you do have. Therefore, an attitude of gratitude will help you to stay on top of the world.

LIVE IN THE NOW

Do not live in the past by holding grudges. A grudge is a poison that does more harm to the vessel holding it than to the one on which it is poured. A person who can make you hate him is destroying your happiness. You cannot be on top of the world by worrying over mistakes. Get forgiveness of your sins and forget it. Trust God for the future and do not worry about it. Learn to live one day at a time. Yesterday is a cancelled check, tomorrow is a promissory note and today is cash on hand. Cf. Matt. 6:34

Remember if life hands you a lemon, make lemonade. Often the things that appear bad can be used for good. Following these things is how to stay on top of the world.

"One ship goes east, another goes west,
By the self-same winds that blow.
Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
That determines the way they go.
Like the waves of the sea or the winds of fate
As we voyage along through life,
Tis the set of the soul that determines the goal
And not the calm or the strife."

If these truths are translated into our lives, then isn't it great
TO BE ON TOP OF THE WORLD!

Jesus, Our Lord

KABITA GOOTAM

Jesus is the **Lord**, as he has all powers in the heaven and earth (Mathew 28:18). "In the beginning was word, and word was with God and word was God" (John 1:1). With this word Apostle John begins his account of Gospel. The Word was made flesh and dwelt on this earth for 33 years. ".....by him were all things that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers, all were created by him and for him (Col 1:15-17).

Jesus, our **Lord** taught with authority. "For he taught them one having authority and not as the scribe" (Matthew 7:29). The lawgiver taught with authority. Once the pharisees and scribes criticized him for his disciples pluck ear of corn to eat as that was wrong to do in sabbath day. Jesus said. "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath days". (Matt 12:8, Mark 8:28).

Jesus, our **Lord** has authority over nature. Once he wanted to have some fruits from a fig tree and found nothing. He said, let no fruit grown on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away." (Matt 21:19). Once a great tempest arose and the ship which he and his disciples were travelling was

covered with waves. He rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, what manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him. (Matt 8:27). He even walked on the sea. Jesus is the Lord of nature !

Jesus, our Lord cast out evil spirit, while on earth, "....behold they brought to him a dumb man, possessed with a devil, when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake, and the multitude marvelled saying, it was never so seen in Israel". (Matt 9:33). Once he rebuked a foul spirit saying, "....Thou, dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him and enter into him no more." (Mark 9:25). Even the evil spirit confessed ".....I know thee who thou art, thou holy one of God." (Mark 8:26). Jesus had power over sickness. Mathew account of Gospel record says, "Jesus went about all cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the kingdom, healing every sickness and every disease among them (Matt 9:33). Jesus made the blind to see, lame to walk, deaf to hear and lepers made whole. Jesus, Our Lord had the authority over the sickness as he is the creator of human body.

Jesus, our Lord had the power to forgive sins on the earth. Once four men brought a palsy man to him by uncovering the roof, as there was no way to reach him. He said to the sick man. ".....Son, thy sins be forgiven thee". (Mark 2:5). Once pharisees brought a woman to him caught in adultery and wanted to stone her to death. But Jesus asked them to stone first who has no sins. Every one left the place, one by one, Jesus told the woman, "Neither do I condemn thee go and sin no more." (John 8:11). Jesus healed a man who had infirmity for 38 years. Saying "Behold, thou art made whole sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. (John 5:14). Jesus, Our Lord had power on earth to forgive sin. (Mark 2:10). Today Jesus forgives our sins when we obey his commandments.

Jesus, our Lord raised the 12 year old daughter of Jairus, the only son of a widow from nain and lazarus from death. He is the life giver and he is the creator. Everything was created by him and created through him. He said, "I am the resurrection and life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live".(John 11:25).

He is the author of eternal Salvation. Apostle Paul says, "he humbled himself and became obedient unto death of cross,

wherefore God also hath highly, exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and in earth and things under earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God." (Phillip 2:8-11). Apostle Peter preached Jesus on the day Pentecost "therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). He is Lord of Israel he is Lord of the gentiles too. ".....he is Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). "Thou, Lord in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth." (Heb 1:10).

Jesus, our Lord is Lord of all. Have you received him as the Lord of your life? If you have not received him as the Lord of your life you will die in your sin. Not every one that call him Lord shall enter into heaven, but those who do the will of the Father in heaven shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Before entering Jerusalem for the last time, he sent two of his disciples to a village nearby to get a donkey and its colt. "And if any man says aught into you, ye shall say. "The Lord hath need of them...." (Matt 21:2). Jesus went to Jerusalem many a times in his life time on this earth, but he needed an ass to carry him on his last journey, to fulfill a prophecy by prophet Jeremiah. He chose a donkey to carry him into Jerusalem symbolising his meekness and humbleness towards God's will. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death of cross. He gives salvation to those who are obedient to him (Heb. 5:18).

Jesus, Our Lord needed a humble courier to carry him into Jerusalem. Now, he needs a humble courier to take his message of salvation to the unreached. Jesus, our Lord, needs you! Jesus calls you to save you, Jesus wants you to walk in him, Jesus Needs you to carry his Gospel into the world! As ye have therefore received Christ, Jesus the Lord, so ye walk in Him (Col 2:6).

"I Promise: You're Safe"

DAVID THURMAN

When the wise men from the east came to Herod, they were

seeking information about the location of the new king of the Jews (Matt. 2:1ff). Herod had his scholars search the Old Testament and they found the answer in Micah 5. Micah had foretold the coming of the Messiah. Micah had even explained how the Messiah would lead God's people. Instead of focusing on just the birth of Jesus, let's spend our time exploring the promise of the coming of the Prince of Peace.

"Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; they have laid siege against us; with a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek. But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. Therefore, He will give them up until the time when she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. And He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth. And this One will be our peace" (Micah 5:1-5). Micah speaks of a time in which the enemies of God will rise up against God and His anointed One. But, God promises that a Ruler will come who will lead His people in safety. This ruler will become our peace, in Him, we will be safe. This is God's promise. In Christ, we are safe. Looking at these verses we see first of all the need for this promise of peace.

THE WORLD IS AGAINST US

Micah describes a time of war. There will be troops, a siege and the enemy will attempt to smite the judge of Israel. This is a time of horrible suffering, a time of pain, a time of loss and struggle. No wonder the promise of safety, of peace, is so important in Micah's prophecy.

This principle is still in effect. When Jesus was born, Herod killed all the boys up to age two in the area of Bethlehem. This mass murder was committed in an effort to stop the Messiah. From the first of His life until His crucifixion, Jesus was under constant attack from Satan.

So, even today, those who follow the Christ will face struggle and suffering. *"And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ*

Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul warns us that our service in the name of Christ will generate opposition, just as Jesus did. Peter goes even further, explaining that suffering is inevitable, but can be positive. *"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ"* (1 Pet. 1:6-7). We should never be surprised that we seek peace and safety. Satan will do all he can to keep us from being safe. The world is against us.

THE WORLD PUTS US ON THE DEFENSIVE

In ancient times a siege meant you were surrounded. It usually meant your army had been defeated in the open combat, and now, in effort to survive, everyone has retreated behind the fortified walls of the city. A siege meant you were on the defensive. Everywhere you look, you see the enemy entrenched around your home. You have no escape, and it seems inevitable that you will be taken and killed.

This is still Satan's approach. He will surround you with doubt and guilt. He will make it look as if he is stronger than God. So, today, in our society all we hear is failure, crime, death and disaster. Many people believe our world is rapidly deteriorating and the future will be much worse than the past. Satan wants us to see how big, how powerful he is.

Even in our own hearts we are on the defensive. Satan will keep whispering in your ear that you are not good enough. He will remind you of all your failures, big and small. He will make you doubt your worth. He will undermine your faith. And, once he convinces you that you are no good, he will tempt you to act as if you are no good. Satan will tempt us, and tempt us, and tempt us, all the while reminding us how unworthy we are.

THE WORLD DOES NOT CARE ABOUT US

Micah's prophecy describes a time of war, a time in which God's people seem overwhelmed. It looks as if even the king will be killed. As in many wars, it is obvious the enemy does not care who gets hurt. All that matters is winning.

Satan still works this way. He does not care about us or our well being. All Satan wants to do is bring down as many souls as he can. All he wants is to inflict as much suffering as he can. We are in a spiritual war, and Satan does not care how many people he hurts in order to get his way. Micah does not leave God's people in this helpless, defensive position. Instead, he promises the coming of a Christ Who will bring peace. God's promise to give us a Christ brings us peace. Notice how this gift works.

THE GIFT BEGINS INCONSPICUOUSLY

As He often does, God begins His work of victory using the least from among His people. God chooses a little town in the hills of Judea as the place of birth for the greatest king ever. Although small, even in its own clan, it will give rise to the One whose origins are from ancient times. So, a baby is born in a small town, laid in a manger, and becomes our source of peace.

God does this over and over again. He uses a shepherd who has been run out of Egypt to go back and lead His people out of Egypt. He uses a shepherd boy, the youngest of eight sons to become His mightiest king. Moses and David were not special, they were inconspicuous until God chose to use them.

God still does this. He chooses people who seem to have little to offer, and from them He accomplishes great things. Fishermen become preachers. Tax collectors become evangelists. Staunch enemies become great missionaries. And today, God will use you. He Will make you His vessel. It does not matter how important or unimportant you seem to be. God brings peace to your life through small, inconspicuous steps that may change the entire world!

THE GIFT RISES TO LEAD US

God did not just send another message. Instead, He sent His only Son to lead us. God became flesh, born in an unimportant village in a nowhere part of Palestine. Yet, this gift became the most important man in history. This gift, from small beginnings, rose to lead us in the strength of the Lord.

Jesus offers us what we need to cope with the enemy. He will stand in the strength of the Lord. He will shepherd us in the strength of the Lord. We will live securely. While Satan attacks

us, Jesus defends us. While Satan spreads doubt and guilt, Jesus offers confidence and forgiveness. Jesus leads us by taking our sins away. He leads by offering us a way to live above the doubts and fears of this world. As a result, the gift of God in Jesus allows us to live securely in a world that is full of upheaval. *"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life"* (1 John 5:13). God wants us to have assurance of our salvation. That assurance allows us to live above the trials Satan uses to bring us down.

THE GIFT GUARANTEES PEACE

God promises we will have peace through His Son, Jesus. That is why the angels sang—*"Peace on earth, good will to men"* (Luke 2:14) when Jesus was born. God's message to us is that we are safe in the Son of God. That security offers us a peace that the world will never understand.

Paul demonstrates this. He writes to the Philippian church from prison in Rome. He is unsure if he will live and be released or if he will be convicted and be killed. But, he is not worried, since he has the promise of peace from God. Paul tells us, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:6-7).

Christians have a security that is much bigger than life, or health or blessings. Our peace comes from our Savior, who leads us in victory. Even as life changes, we have peace. Even as health deteriorates, we have peace. Even as our material blessings are taken from us, we have peace. God does not want us worried and afraid. In the gift of His Son, the Lord promises us, we are safe.

SO ACCEPT THE REALITIES OF LIFE

It is vital to face the facts. The world is against you, will put you on the defensive and will not care what happens to you. This is the reality of life. Satan will do all he can to make you doubt. He will want you to be frightened. He will want you to fail. This is the reality of the world in which we all live. *"All have sinned and*

fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Since we have all failed, we live in doubt and fear. Since we have all sinned, we live at odds with each other. In this world you will never find peace and security.

SO ACCEPT THE PEACE OF CHRIST

You can find the security. You can find the peace that passes understanding. You can be safe today. Simply put your life in the hands, of the One who came to lead you to safety* Trust in Jesus as your savior. Turn from your sin. Be immersed into His name for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you can rise to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4). You can live in peace and security when you put your life in the care of the Savior. Be safe, today!

We Can Live It

CLIFFORD DIXON

Some do not make commitment to deny self, and take up the cross and follow Christ (Matthew 16:24-26) because they have the 'feeling' that they cannot live the Christian life. To help us all realize that we CAN live the Christian life with God's help, the following reasons are put forth.

1. We can live the Christian life because **God will help us**. He said, "Let your conversation be without coveteousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:5-6).

2. **We have the light to walk in**, with the promise that if we walk in it we will be cleansed of all sin. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

3. When we sin we have the **promise that if we will repent of our sins, and confess them, the Lord will forgive us**, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

4. **We have an "Advocate,"** which means that Jesus is our lawyer of defense, who is pleading our case to the heavenly Father. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:1-2).

5. When we become Christians we become sons of God and as sons **we have the promise that some day we will be like him;** and this is a motive to purify our lives. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purified himself even as he is pure" (I John 3:1-3).

6. **We can be more than conquerors** of any habit, any difficulty, and persecution, or calamity, *through him who loves us.* "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39).

7. We have God as our helper and **nothing is impossible with God,** Jesus' disciples once asked him, "Who then can be saved?" and Jesus answered, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:25-26). This is the God we serve when we become Christians.

8. **God will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear** if we lean on him. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with

the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

9. We also are promised in I Corinthians 10:13 a way of escape from the temptation, provided by the Lord. Jesus used the word of God to overcome Satan's temptations (Matthew 4:1-10). He taught his disciples to pray to be delivered from evil (Matthew 6:9-14).

10. We are encouraged to be faithful by the men of faith who have lived before us. Hebrews 11 points out a number of these men and what they endured; but they were successful, and so can we be successful. Hebrews 12:1-3 states: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

11. According to verse three (of Hebrews 12 quoted above), we have Jesus to look to as we live the Christian life. He lived a sinless life and died a martyr's death; and striving to follow his example we can also live a successful Christian life.

12. We can set our affection on things above and thus destroy old sinful habits, attitudes, and words. Read Colossians 3:1-5).

13. We also have prayer as a wonderful privilege of Christianity. Paul told the Philippian brethren to "stand fast in the Lord" to "be of the same mind in the Lord," to "rejoice in the Lord," and to "let your moderation be known unto all men" (Philippians 4:1, 2, 4, 5). Then he told them how these things could be accomplished: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

14. We can live the Christian life by leaning on Jesus, our sympathetic high priest, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let

us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

15. We can live the Christian life **because we can do all things through Christ**, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

16. We can live the Christian life **because we have yielded our bodies as the temples of the Holy Spirit** and thus we have the motive to keep our bodies and hearts clean. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The conclusion is: we have faith in the Lord, in his word, in his church, and confidence in the future; and, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world; even our faith" (I John 5:4)!

All Authority

LEVI SIDES

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth . . ." (Matthew 28:18).

Jesus had lived on the earth. He had been crucified on the Roman cross. He had been buried in Joseph's new tomb. He had been raised by divine power. Unto his witnesses he had given ocular, tangible, and audible proof of his resurrection. And now, before his ascension to the Father, Jesus says, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth . . ." (Matthew 28:18).

In the great moral and spiritual realm, Christ is supreme. In matters pertaining to religion, his word is final, his teaching alone should be heard. Unto his authority every word, deed, and thought should be brought into captivity (II Corinthians 5:10).

Unto Jesus "all" mediatorial authority has been given. "For

there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). In the Christian era, it is the privilege of every child of God to go directly and immediately to the throne of grace in the name of Christ, without the aid or assistance of a human or angelic mediator (Hebrews 4:16).

Unto Jesus "all" **legislative** authority has been given. Since he has "all" authority to legislate or make laws for God's people, there is no such authority left for any man or any group of men. "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 (II Timothy 3:16-17). Biblical instruction is all-sufficient as a guide in the moral and spiritual realm.

Unto Jesus "all" **executive** authority has been given. He is the Lord of lords, and the King of kings. He alone has the divine right to rule and to reign in the hearts and lives of the sons of men. And since the risen Christ possesses "all" ruling and reigning authority, there is no such authority left for any man upon the earth or any angel in heaven.

Unto Jesus "all" **judicial** authority has been given. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). He alone has the divine right to sit in judgment on the souls of men and to determine their eternal destiny.

Unto Jesus "all" authority over **death** and Hades has been given. When the glorified Christ appeared to John on Patmos, he said unto him: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades" (Revelation 1:17-18). Having "the keys of death and Hades," Christ has all authority over death and Hades.

Since "all authority" has been given unto Jesus, it is evident that no such authority is left for any man or group of men. Jesus has all mediatorial, all legislative, all executive, all judicial authority, and all authority over death.

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