

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole counsel of GOD

Without Price Since 1910

'Loving his Appearing'

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Thou shalt rejoice
in every good
thing which the
Lord thy God
hath given
unto thee.
DEUTERONOMY 26:11.

A Tremendous Pillar Transported To Glory

Bro. Roy Clark was called home to be with The Lord Sept. 24, 2012. This gentle man of faith was indeed a pillar of love, wisdom, faith and truth. Roy graduated from Grace and Glory Bible College in 1957, and went on to preach and teach this glorious message, establishing a new assembly in Arkansas City, Kansas, along with pastoring Churches in New Mexico and Kansas. His final work, for the past 32 years, was in Carbondale, Kansas.

This faithful brother stood steadfastly as a pillar of truth, at times in the face of great opposition and personal sacrifice. Though we will surely miss his loving, and gracious, spirit, our greatest loss is that more light has been removed from our midst, and thus darkness will ensue. We rejoice that he surely did fulfill II Thess. 2:7. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (*hinder, restrain, withhold*) will let, until he be taken out of the way.”

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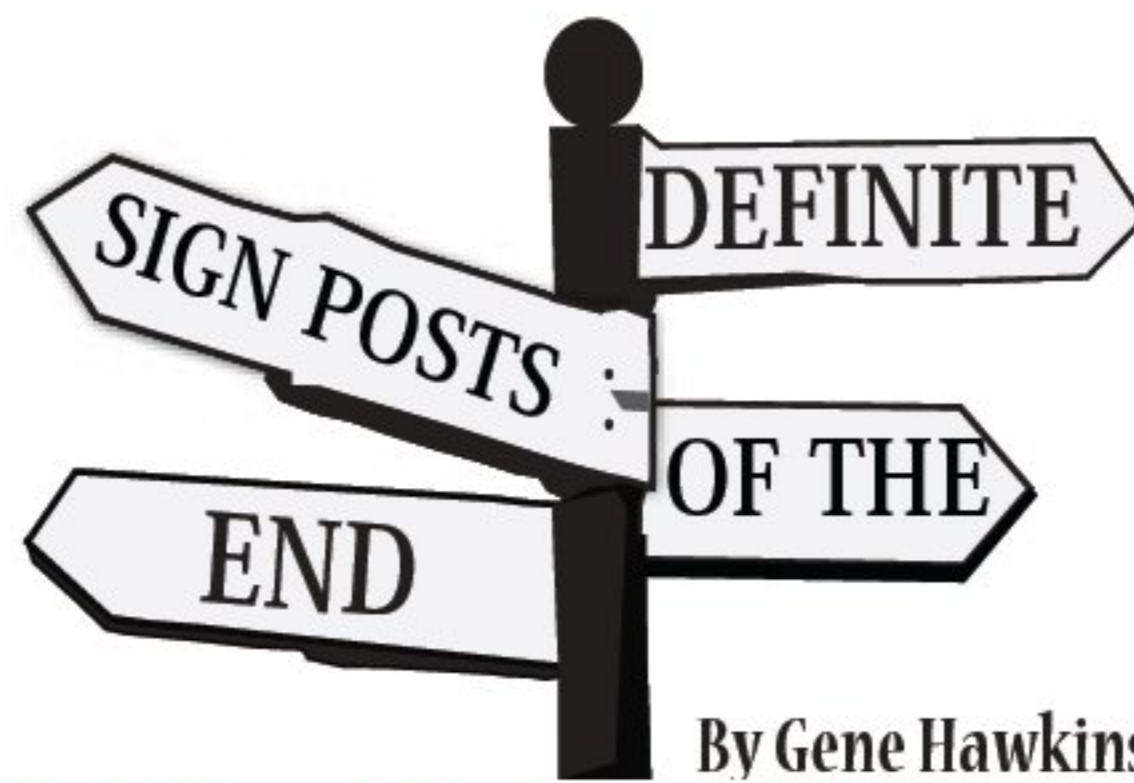
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.” Gen. 6:-7

3 **T**hese timely words could well have appeared in today’s news, for Jesus emphatically declared: “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. 24:37 They reflect the perspective of this earth from God’s point of view, which is in total contrast to the opinions, and assessments of men. God declares that the out of control wickedness prevails because there is a “heart” problem, as “the thoughts of his heart was only evil **continually.**” Today men trumpet their accomplishments and universally agree that if they are given enough time, they can “educate” this world into an exalted, and peaceful society. That will never happen! The above words were true in the days of Noah, and they are true now. Thus the outcome will likewise be the same, and destruction is eminent.

We are often accused of preaching a “gloom and doom,” message, for making such statements, but that is surely not the case. Men read words, like those quoted above, and assume that we are announcing the end of civilization. When great tragedy strikes in the form of tornadoes, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, or out of control fires, it is men who are quick to jump to conclusions and ask “are we coming to the end?” Further turmoil ensues when there is a major conflict among the nations, and especially when Israel is involved, we have heard some news commentators ask “are we headed for Armageddon?”

It is amazing that when men hear the message: “Jesus is coming,” they automatically think of judgment and destruction, but these should in no wise, be the first thoughts of a believer. Paul wrote these beautiful words to the Thessalonian saints. “But

of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them,..... But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.....we are not of the night, Therefore let us not sleep, as do others;..... But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faithand for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,..... that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. I Thess. 5:1-11 According to these words, the Thessalonian believers were so well versed in scripture that they knew perfectly the coming of Jesus would be as a “thief in the night.” They would not at all be surprised by the dark destructive days which prevail at this present time, and neither should we. That knowledge, was not to strike fear in their hearts, for these saints knew there was a difference between those who looked for Him and those who did not. That same distinction must be drawn today. “**They**,” referring to those whose hopes and dreams are in the affairs of this world, are quick to announce a time of “peace and safety,” meaning “we have everything under control. All is well.” The reality is that “sudden destruction,” will overtake **them**, but as the apostle affirms: “...**ye, brethren**, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake **you** as a thief.” Paul further emphasizes the difference in “**us**” and “**them**,” and encourages; “God hath not appointed **us** to wrath,” meaning the wrath of the tribulation. He closes this segment with, “comfort yourselves together,” leaving them with a message of hope and anticipation rather than a fear of dread and destruction.

Men of our day simply do not understand the order of scripture. Even many Christians are persuaded that when “The Lord comes,” He will simply swoop down and take all the believers back to glory, leaving every sinner to perish in a firestorm of judgment and world destruction, and be lost forever. Many others view this as a time when the world will be completely destroyed, and blasted into some nuclear oblivion, but that scenario is in no wise true. Were Jesus to come “tomorrow,” and subsequent judgments begin shortly thereafter, heaven and earth would not pass away for another 1000 years.

Paul declared that there was no need of writing to the saints at Thessalonica in regard to “.....the times and the seasons. For yourselves know perfectly....” They knew God’s order of events because they had listened attentively to His instruction. They knew that when Jesus came, He would come as “a thief in the night,” meaning that some would not be aware of it. The bulk of the Church will be caught in this lethargic stupor. The word “sleep,” here is not a reference to sinners, as many suppose, for unbelievers are said to be “dead in trespasses and sins.” Only Christians can be pronounced “asleep,” which describes the same “lukewarm,” state wherewith Jesus warned the Laodicean Church.

5 It is vitally important that we today understand “perfectly,” the “day of the Lord,” even as did these Thessalonians, for it is a “day” that will last 1000 years, beginning when Jesus takes His throne in heaven. It truly will be His Day. Scripture plainly teaches that the Philadelphia Church will be kept “...from (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” This is why these saints could be comforted, rather than apprehensive and terrified during this season, for they would be translated **before** the night time of judgment even began. This group of saints is seen **in heaven**, as the four living ones and twenty four elders, when Jesus is enthroned. Rev. 4-5. Revelation 5:10 describes them as “kings and priests,” symbolizing two sides of the same company. The kings are represented by the 24 elders who have crowns on their heads, while the “living ones,” full of eyes and leading in worship, express the priestly character of this bridal company.

The “great multitude, which no man could number” does not reach the throne in glory until Rev. 7 and are defined as: “These are they which **came out of** great tribulation,” meaning that they did experience some of the promised judgments which would come upon all the world to try them. Given the extremely carnal condition of the overall Church today, is it any wonder that God would use the purging fires of the tribulation period to purify it?

The 144,000 do not arrive in glory until shortly before the middle of the tribulation period and are identified as the “man child.” This same group is pictured by the “five wise virgins,” of Matt. 25, as their arrival in heaven is also at the “midnight” hour. Matt. 25:6 The official reign of the antichrist comes next, as he is given a total of 1260 days, or

42 months, (Rev. 13:5) to complete his Satanic mission, which will culminate with the battle of Armageddon. He then, along with the false prophet, will be cast into the lake fire. Rev. 19:20

Then comes the period known as the millennium, wherein Satan is bound a 1000 years and Christ reigns as God, with Israel as the head and not the tail of the nations. Deut. 28:13 They will finally be the “kingdom of priests,” which God envisioned, (Deut. 19:6) and will lead the entire world in righteousness unto The Lord. The “day of the Lord,” that is the day of Christ, will be consummated by the battle of Gog and Magog, followed by the Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers, (Rev. 20) after which Jesus will render the kingdom back up unto His Father. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” I Cor. 15:24,25

God did promise in the days of Noah that the earth would be destroyed and it was. Likewise, there will come a day when the present world will also be destroyed, but only be **after the millennium!** “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Re 21:1

The great question today, is where are we on God’s time table? Even the great destruction that will come to pass during the devastating tribulation period will not bring forth the end of the world. However, Jesus did positively affirm that all the “wars and rumours of wars,” nations “rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and famines, and pestilences,” with “earthquakes, in divers places,” would be a period known as “the beginning of sorrows.” Matt. 24:6-8 We are presently in that period of time, and have been for a number years. We have noted numerous times that the word “sorrows,” is a word used to describe the birth pangs of a woman with child when she is about ready to deliver. Those “contractions,” become much more frequent, and severe, as the delivery date approaches. Such is the case with our world. Men may try and explain that these events have always existed, and the only reason it seems that they are more frequent and severe, is because we have better worldwide communications. That latter statement is most assuredly true, a direct fulfillment of the scripture, but make no mistake, all of these characteristics,

described as “the beginning of sorrows,” are literally becoming more frequent and intense by the day. Multitudinous News agencies are hard pressed to even keep up with them, and we can only wonder how many items go unreported, due to the sheer volume of them or perhaps some other political reason.

God targeted the problem as being “...**every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**” Gen. 6:5 Today we hear of atrocities wherein we can hardly believe that man would stoop to such low degree in his treatment of a fellow human being, but that is indeed happening, and it is often due to “religious” constraints. Currently there is the furor over the 14 year old Pakistani girl who was shot in the head by the Taliban because she dared to promote the idea that young girls, such as her, should be educated. This same terrorist group has vowed to “finish the job,” were she to recover. We also know that the horrendous attacks on America, which have come to be known as “911,” were a direct result of religious indoctrination. Israel has witnessed, and been the target of, this hatred for generations and there is no sign that such “imagination of the thoughts,” in the hearts of wicked men will cease any time soon. The attacks on the American consulate in Benghazi, Libya which killed the American ambassador and three other American citizens, confirms the fact that religious hatred continues to rage in the hearts of vile men, and Al Qaeda has in no wise been neutralized, despite the death of Osama Bin Laden. These attacks once again, took place on Sept. 11, 2012, for the purpose of reminding America, and the world, that this ungodly regime is still alive and well.

Bashar Assad’s quest to retain power in Syria continues to hold first place in news around the world. One report by “Lignet News,” declares that “The Syrian uprising that began in the spring of 2011 has now reportedly resulted in the deaths of 30,000, according to Syrian opposition groups.” This is a reference to the fact that Assad has inflicted this damage on his own people. The current concern is that Mr. Assad could dip into his WMD (weapons of mass destruction) arsenal and use these weapons to quell the uprising against him. There is a national outcry against such a move, which also includes Russia, one of Syria’s most ardent supporters. However, despite the verbal condemnation, the same Lignet article quoted above also asserts: “For the second time in a week, Turkey stopped and searched a Syria-bound plane for

weapons, increasing the likelihood of a military conflict between the two nations. While NATO will still try to avoid military action in Syria without a UN mandate, Western pressure on Russia will increase due to a report that the Assad regime is using Russian-made cluster bombs on civilians.” We can hardly imagine this kind of wholesale slaughter of one’s own people, but these actions simply confirm God’s assessment that the thoughts in the hearts of men “are only evil continually.” One other note on these Syrian WMD is the international fear that; were Assad’s regime to fall, as most observers believe it will, these weapons could fall into the hands of Al Qaeda, which is helping the freedom fighters in their battle against Syria, and are just waiting in the wings to assume some sort of power in that country just as the Muslim Brotherhood did in Egypt. The idea of weapons like these, falling into the hands of these extreme demonic minds, is almost unthinkable.

Israel, the first to warn that Assad could use these weapons against his own people, is also much concerned with the aforementioned evil thoughts of men. Lignet News also ran this headline: “IRAN SEEK NUCLEAR INFO.” The commentary 8 following it indicates that two European nuclear physicists who work for prestigious European nuclear laboratories “report continuing efforts by Iranian scientist to obtain sensitive nuclear science data that could be used for nuclear weapons development.” Iran continues to try and convince the entire world that her nuclear pursuits are only for domestic energy purposes, but no nation on earth is buying it, and despite increased sanctions, the program for a nuclear warhead continues. Not only so, but Iran continues to plague Israel through her terrorist surrogate; Hezbollah. Israel recently shot down a drone which some Israeli lawmakers asserted was launched by this group. “Slate News,” ran this commentary. “Hezbollah has launched drones into Israel in the past, including two that are believed to have been carrying explosives meant to detonate in central Israel. Although the drone was quickly shot down, it still traveled more than 15 minutes over southern Israel because officials had to wait for it to be far from population centers. The drone shot down Saturday is not believed to have been carrying explosives, points out Haaretz, noting it was likely gathering intelligence.”

We are assured that these wicked thoughts of men will continue to carry out Satan’s wicked agenda. Jesus described

these days surrounding Israel thus: “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh..... For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.....for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.....and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear,” Luke 21:20-26 We are surely witnessing the fear among the nations today as they try desperately to “cope” with all the situations described in these pages. The word “perplexity,” in the above text, describing the state of the nations, comes from a word which means “to have no way out, i.e. be at a loss (mentally).” Present, and multiple, conflicts around the world surely confirm this evaluation. None of the nations have a clue as to what course they should take in view of these pending disasters which are simply confirmation of God’s view that “the thoughts of men’s hearts are only evil continually. Jesus said it well when He noted that “....except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved:...” Matt. 24:22 Left to himself, man would bring about his own total destruction, because that is where the thoughts of his heart would eventually take him.

We, however, need not be consumed with these devastating thought patterns. We must claim our hope as did the Thessalonians. The little word “but,” in chapter five of this book, indicates a decided change for those who would look up for sure redemption. “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief,” and again, “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” There is no “gloom and doom,” in these verses. They are rather shrouded with glorious hope and deliverance, as we anticipate and speed toward our appointment with Him, in the throne room of glory! Hallelujah!

**Being
Redeemed
Isn't
Desireable
Enough**

Aaron Blair

GOD'S TILLAGE

S.O. Sheldon

(Reprint 1937)

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” I Cor. 3:9.

Ye are God's husbandry, or farm. You must have ground to farm. God wants to produce something. He wants to bring forth something in our lives of benefit to Him. The only way He can produce is to farm the farm. I used to be a farmer. When we wanted to raise corn we did not put corn in the ground and expect the ground to be the corn. The only way to have corn is to plant it. Let us look at Mark 4:26-29.

These are the words of Jesus. “And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself ; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle because the harvest is come.”

10

When men gather the corn, they do not pay attention to corn stocks, but just the corn. God will someday send down to the corn field to get His corn. Jesus is coming again. The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast a seed and should sleep and rise day and night and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. First, the ground must be prepared. In the lesson in the Bible School this afternoon, we learned that Adam was formed from the ground. Men plant corn to get something from it, and God planted Adam to get something from him. Jesus is looking for the fruit. It is a long process. God has to farm a long time to get the fruit; but I am one He is interested in, and has purposed to get something from. My heart is His farm. He plows it with His plow. Years ago God sent a messenger my way and plowed my heart. Our ground was once grown up with grass, the type of self-righteousness. That has to be plowed under. We died on Calvary with Christ. Everything man could produce went to Calvary with Christ. I am so glad God planted His word in my heart.

Now we read of the sower that went forth to sow. Some fell by the wayside, some on stony places, some among thorns and some on good ground. The ground here is the heart; the seed is the Word

of God. Seed on good plowed ground will bring forth fruit. A great many people are trying to make themselves be fruit. Adam, or the old creation, cannot bring forth Christ. You plant the seed and the ground produces. God plants the seed of the Word of God in our hearts. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." I Pet. 1: 23 The Word of God is the only seed you can plant that will produce Jesus Christ. We read that afterward the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

I met a little boy going to Church. I asked him what they taught him there. He said, "All about the boy scouts." One had just as well plant a lead pencil, and expect to see it bring forth fruit. Jesus Christ and the Word of God are One. The word Adam means red earth. God does not care what kind of dirt He plants in. Dirt will produce. God does not care what kind of life you have lived. Some folks are so concerned about the kind of life lived before they were saved. It is a question of planting the Word and letting it bring forth something for God. We cannot explain how the Word can produce Christ in our lives. You know what I am trying to do? I want to go to Brother Copley's Church. You say I am already there. I went to a Church one night. The Minister asked how many were trying to make heaven their home. Practically every hand went up; but not mine. What? Am I not trying to make heaven my home? No! That has been my home for something like 30 years. Some of the folks wondered, has Brother Sheldon backslidden? I was raised up together and made to sit together with Christ in the heavenlies—Eph. 2:6. The great mass of people is trying to do right, to earn their salvation. Trying to do that, is a pretty good sign you are not corn. God is producing corn in our hearts. The corn is a type of Christ.

First the blade. Many people never get past the blade stage. Just as soon as you put corn in the ground it starts to grow. It will show that it is on resurrection ground presently. The Word planted in the heart will produce Christ in the life. We need to take care of the crop God is raising. We need to go to Bible School. We must have food to grow. God wants the full grown ear. He is bringing forth Christ in us that He may bring us home and present us to Christ in the bridal company. When the fruit is brought forth, He puts in the sickle. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain."—James 5:7.

The latter rain has been here some time and God's plantings are coming to maturity. The sickle may cut us down with physical death; but it will be all the same when the harvest comes; for first they which are dead will be resurrected: then they which remain will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. God will be pleased with His corn. Yes, He sees us perfect in Christ Jesus. God will not be disappointed with one grain of corn. God sees the end from the beginning. I am so glad we can go to school and learn from Him. Can we say to God tonight, Thy will be done in my life? He will complete the thing He has begun in our lives. When God plants corn, it will never turn to cockleburs. You do not have to sow thorns and thistles. They are the result of the curse upon the ground. I have never seen a cocklebur on an ear of corn. You cannot mix them. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In the field there may be so many cockleburs you can hardly get through them. The corn among them is corn.

The farmer leaves everything else to get the corn. He cuts the stocks that they may enrich the land for next year's crop. Psa. 83:6-10 mentions nations, which "become as dung for the earth." God is not saving those nations. He is saving the seed of Abraham, or all who believe on Jesus Christ. They must have them to enrich the land. The application is that our old lives enrich our spiritual lives. If we do not judge the old life, it draws from the new life; but if we realize that it *was* all judged at Calvary, then the new creation can be brought to full growth.

We can see the harvest in the taking home of the saints. The harvest is about to be reaped. The world hates us. We are not of it. We are heavenly seed, and we belong to Jesus Christ, because we are in Him, being produced on His farm. We will look over the years spent here and thank God for every trial. I am so glad God is going to have spiritual corn and He will be enjoying it through eternity.

One soul lost is a terrible thing. It can never be reproduced. This year's crop did not grow 10 years ago, nor last year. I have an apple somebody gave me. I expect to eat it; then it cannot be reproduced. If a soul is lost, it cannot be reproduced. It is gone. God is giving to everyone the opportunity to hear the Word of God. His purpose in producing Adam was to bring forth spiritual fruit, even His purpose is to bring forth "many sons unto glory" a perfect man. All God can ever get out of our lives is Christ. When that is done, there is no use to let us stand any longer. The time will come when

God will say, "It is enough." Then we will go home to dwell with Him. God is bringing something forth in us to absolute perfection. What have you in the Lord? What has He in you? Maybe you have never let Him bring forth anything in you. Let God bring forth something that will glorify Him. If you refuse, your life will be a blank. A few years ago I was in the Rockies. I did not see a farm. There were farms in the valleys. The soil in the mountains was fertile; but it was untillable. Nobody farms it.

The mountains typify sinners. They will not allow God to plant. They are no good to Him. Some day they will be as dung on the face of the ground. God has no interest in decayed vegetation. Something that brings forth His Son is what He wants. If you are a sinner, you will go to a Godless eternity, if you do not accept Christ. Judgment will face you. If you let Him till you, your life will be profitable. God then will work in you to bring forth something useful for Himself.



THANKSGIVING

*I do not thank thee, Lord,
That I have bread to eat while others starve;
Nor yet for work to do
While empty hands solicit heaven;
Nor for a body strong
While other bodies flatten beds of pain.
No, not for these do I give thanks! But I am grateful, Lord,
Because my meager loaf I may divide; For that my busy hands
May move to meet another's need;
Because my doubled strength
I may expend to steady one who faints.
Yes, for all these do I give thanks!*

—Selected

Hindrances In The Race

(Tucumcari Camp Meeting Sermon 1956)

Raymond Hart

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?” I Cor. 9:24

My message tonight is about a race course. It seems that is all I have heard since I have been here. My feet are getting lighter, and I feel like running. Some people might not be like the Philippian saints, who love the race, but praise God, we love this message of the grace of God, and the race that is set before us.

I have never been to a horse race, but I do know something about it. I do not know if Paul ever went to the Olympic races, but he wrote about them. He said that there are racers, and that they really run to obtain a prize. In the spiritual sense, we are just like race horses. You know they breed good blood in race horses. Then the owners say, “This is a good race horse, he has the blood of so and so. He is from good stock.” You know, that's just the reason I can't keep from racing tonight, because I've got good blood in me—the life of the supreme Racer, the Lord Jesus, Himself. The life of Christ is surging through my spiritual veins tonight. It is against my nature to get out and run, but I really love this race course. When we run in this race, and see another coming up even with us, it encourages us to go that much more, and to “press forward for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

One day in the shop where I work, they had the television on, and were showing some qualifying races for the Olympics that are coming up this winter. These men were running the mile race, and I noticed one man who took off with long strides, stepping out so easily while, all the other racers took off real fast, and soon were way ahead of him, it seemed as though he was a quarter of a mile behind the rest, but his pace never slackened. He just kept going with his long strides, and then as the course began to curve, the other racers began to slow down and fall back from their early pace. But this one kept taking those huge strides; they seemed to be ten feet a step. When they neared the finish line, some of the others tried to hurry up, but with those long strides, they could not catch him. And when he saw the goal line he quickened his pace and ran across the line, the victor. There

were many men running, but only one crossed the line first.

My theme then, for my message, is that we are running on a race course, and one verse of Scripture that stands out so vividly in my mind, is found in Galatians. It is a verse that saddens our hearts, as we think of it, but on the other hand, we can see the counterpart that is glorious and grand. If we had only the first part, it would be glorious—Gal. 5:7— **“Ye did run well.”** These very words were said to the man who won the race. When he came to the microphone, he was congratulated and handed a golden cup to show he had run well. But as we see in Galatians, they did not continue to run as they began. Paul said to them, **“Ye did run well, who hindered you that you should not obey the truth?”** So, we have this question, “Who hindered you?” We can answer that—Satan. He is the one who hinders. One might ask, “You say that Satan hinders God's people?” Yes, he does. We read in the book of Daniel, that God was sending deliverance, but Satan hindered for twenty-one days, until Michael prevailed. Satan is doing the same today to God's people. He is hindering them so that they do not continue to run well. Notice, that they were hindered that they should not obey the truth. Satan seeks to side-track the saints from the truth. There are many things that he uses to detract and draw saints from the truth. I had the privilege of talking with a man who knew a lot about dog racing. He said that in some states, it is illegal to race dogs, because it became crooked. He told how they would make money on the dogs. They would put a dog in the races who would win all the prizes for the time, until the people would begin to bet very heavily on this favored dog. Then they would take this dog and trim his toenails very short. He could take off and run very fast for a little ways, and then his feet would begin to get sore and of course, he would lose the race. Some other dog won, and the gamblers lost their money. Also, another method of cheating was to rub the pads of the dog's feet with sand paper, and make his feet sore so that he could not win the race. Still another method was to stick a piece of gum in the dog's flank, so that when he ran, it would divert his attention. That was just a little thing, but it cost the dog the race.

This reminded me of how the devil hinders God's people. He will trim their toenails, or take sand paper and cause them to become lame in their running, or he will use little insignificant

things to detract their attention from the goal and the Prize. He may try to hinder our running with many things hard to bear, but if we get tender feet, all we need to do is to heed Paul's words in Eph. 6, "having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."

Thank God, we are running on. Paul has espoused all the Church to be the wife of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one of us has been promised the same reward, if we will run and win in this race. But, by the process of elimination, saints drop out. Do you realize how small this Bride Company will be? Let us see a few illustrations. There are 206 bones in the natural body. How many bones did God remove to build a wife for Adam? He took only one—one out of 206! That's not a very big majority. As we see conditions today, the Bride Company will constitute the minority. There is a process of elimination going on today. We see this illustrated in the story of Gideon. When he first went to battle, he had 32,000 men. God said that there were too many. If there were any that were afraid to go to battle, let them go home. You know how many he had left? He had just 10,000 left. There were quite a few faint-hearted. So it is on God's race course. The first cry is how many are faint-hearted. How many want to "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us?" Most of them say, "No, not me, that looks like a pretty hard race course." So God says let all the faint-hearted sit on the side lines and watch the racers go past. God said to Gideon that there were still too many. You, go down and eliminate some more. Finally Gideon ended up with 300 men to fight the army of the Philistines that were just like grasshoppers on the hill side. And God said, you have the right number now, Gideon. 300 men out of 32,000 --- quite a process of elimination, isn't it? And when we look around at Christian ranks, we wonder if it is not going to go far below that number. We find that there are many others that God sets aside. Let's look at the final consummation for just a moment. In the book of Revelation we read of a great innumerable company of all the saints who said, "I am faint-hearted." As soon as there was a notice that there was going to be a race they said, "That looks like pretty strenuous work. I'd just better sit back on the side lines." So we see in contrast to that innumerable company how many ran the race—Four and twenty elders and four living ones. Of course these are figurative numbers, but it gives you a comparative value of how this process of elimination

is going to segregate and drop out of the ranks of the racers, all those who are not willing to run for the Prize. Look at Enoch, that great man of God. He walked with God and he was not, for God took him. There will be such a few taken for the Bride that I don't think there will be too much stir in the world. I think there will be more trouble the very minute our feet leave this earth, There may even be an atomic bomb to explode on the earth the very instant that we are translated. There will be so much trouble that folks are not going to worry that a few people have left this old world. They are not going to go out into the hills and look for them as they did for Elijah. Why? Because trouble is coming upon the world! Elisha walked all the way down through the ranks of Christendom, he walked through the school of prophets, and they said, Did you know that Elijah is going to heaven today. Elisha said, Hold your peace, because I'm right behind him and he's not going far without me. Elijah said, Elisha, this is a rough journey, you stay here. Elisha said, Nothing doing, I'm going with you. So they two went on together. Oh that is precious, they two went on together, while the multitude of the school of prophets stood by and stood afar off to see what was going to happen. They knew that there was a rank of believers that was going to heaven, but they weren't interested in being in it. They just wanted to see what was going to happen. So we see that God has eliminated them. But today, we need to heed Paul's words in Heb. 12:1,2, in order to win the race: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that 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".

Assurance is lovely, but Christ is altogether lovely.
 Assurance is the cream of faith. The milk comes first.
 When it is settled the cream follows.

REFLECTIONS

. . . *From the Editor*

“Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.” Psa. 106:1 “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Col 3:15 “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1Th 5:18

The above citation from Psalms seems to be almost a “plea” to give thanks unto the Lord for His goodness and mercy. The latter two, however, are given almost as “commands.” Paul states in Colossians “be ye thankful,” and the text in I Thessalonians declares that giving thanks is emphatically the will of God for you. We, here at Grace and Glory, have great reason to give thanks and we surely do recognize that it is all because of His goodness to us and the extension of His marvlous grace in our behalf. We rejoice greatly because He fought our battle with the IRS and we are once again tax exempt. I am sure that you have also noticed the difference in printing over the past two or three months, for The Lord graciously provided us with another printing press, capable of printing two colors at one time. We are also grateful for an increase in our cirulation, which He has done little by precious little, over the last couple of years. We have prayed earnestly that He would increase us and continue to rejoice that He has been doing that. The readers who have encouraged our hearts with kind words and generous offerings, are also a tremendous reason to rejoice in The Lord for His goodness and grace, and we also say a hearty “thank you,” to all those whom He has used. We are confident that your sacrifices will not go unrewarded.

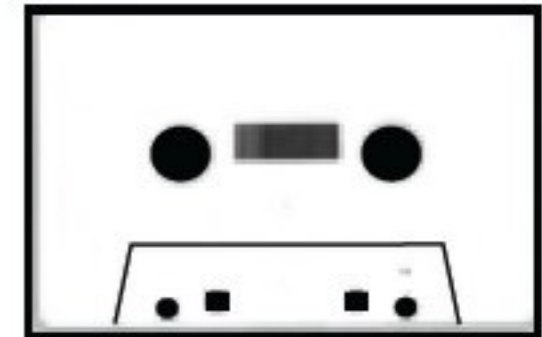
We are also, so very, thankful for the efforts of Bro. Bill Morphis from Denver, Colorado, who posts Grace and Glory on our web site, www.gracegod.com, every month. This has proven to be a real boon to our foreign readers. Several years ago, we would send over 3,000 copies of the magazine to various

countries, especially Africa and India. Postal rates changed drastically in the last few years and now all foreign mail must go first class international, meaning that all items are sent air mail. The cost for one copy is between two and three dollars. We still send some of them, and gladly do so, but the internet has proven to be a tremendous tool in spreading this glorious gospel of Divine Grace. We also rejoice in The Lord for His Faithfulness, in supplying adequate funds and materials to reprint a number of books, tracts, and booklets, which had been out of print for some time.

Grace and Glory celebrated 100 years of continuous publication back in 2010. This year we marked the 75th anniversary of Grace and Glory Bible College and we are so very glad to report that The Lord has met our needs and challenges in both these endeavors, just as He did those who have gone on before. He truly is "...the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever," (Heb. 13:8) and we surely do lift our hearts and hands, in deep thanksgiving unto Him. GH

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‘That He Might’

“This is a GREAT MYSTERY: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Eph. 5:32

R. Hawkins

The Apostle Paul knew a little something about mysteries. After a dramatic roadside conversion, he immediately preached Christ to the same Church he once persecuted - only those plans were cut short. Instead he was led into the wilderness of Arabia and three years later emerged with a gospel ‘*by the revelation of Jesus Christ*’ (Gal 1:12.)

Paul began calling it ‘*his gospel*’ for it was new and not exactly downloaded. The entrusted truth for the Church required a disciplined man who found time, effort, and of course, blessed quietness. It is no different today, because revelations are meant to become property. So personal, in fact, Paul discovered a race to win Christ was a race against oneself- (Rom 7) - and how he labored for the Church to know that one!

20

He went on and proved learning truth is the way to win. Fully expecting Jesus to return in his lifetime, Paul is a good pattern for John 4:23: “*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth.*” Jesus said those words to the woman at the well so she would discover that true worship has a catch: revealed truth.

So, perhaps you have heard of the bride of Christ. This revelation is the ‘*high calling of God in Christ Jesus*’ - (Phil. 3:14) and it is for the Church. It is truly a ‘*GREAT MYSTERY*’ because that is the best way to explain why a pre-tribulation rapture will leave much of the Church awake and watching - *and knowing* – it was ‘*because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*’ Matt. 13:13.

Mega Musterion

The Apostle Paul puts the Church on notice that he is one of the ‘*stewards of the mysteries of God*’.(I Cor. 4:1) His letters confirm this by using the word ‘mystery’ 17 times. Only on five occasions does it **not** apply to his gospel. That leaves

12 mysteries, and ironically, Paul did most of the work for us.

Eleven times he unfolds or explains a particular mystery: *Israel's blindness during this age (Rom. 11:25), the Church (Rom 16:25), the Holy Spirit as revealer of mysteries (I Cor. 2:7,10), we shall not all sleep (I Cor. 15:51,52), the gathering of all things in Christ (Eph. 1:9,10), Jew & Gentile as fellow heirs (Eph. 3:6), Christ in you the hope of Glory (Gal. 2:20), the Godhead in Christ holding all wisdom & knowledge (Col. 2:2,3), the mystery of iniquity (2 Thes. 2:7), the mystery of faith (I Tim. 3:9), & the mystery of man's restored Godliness (I Tim. 3:16).* That is eleven mysteries but leaves one unaccounted for: **Ephesians 5:32.**

21 It's not too hard to figure out what the Greek words "mega" & "musterion," might imply. "Mega," means large or great. "Musterion," is the root word for our English word mystery. Funny thing is, up and down the religious landscape, Ephesians 5:32 wasn't a 'Great Mystery'. It was obvious and easy, and here it is: The Church, comprised of every believer, isn't merely the 'body of Christ', but also the 'Bride of Christ.' And if every believer is also the Bride of Christ- **it must** mean all the saved go to Heaven at the same time. One Resurrection. One Trumpet.

Hmmmm. Now, Paul might think they came up with that themselves and he would probably back them up to Ephesians 5:18: '*be filled with the Holy Spirit* - which is exactly where Paul's mysteries, and our study begins.

A Necessary Initiation

Strongs concordance says this about musterion: "*A mystery, a secret, of which initiation is necessary.*" Acts 19:6,7 records the genesis of the Ephesian church and what this necessary initiation is: '*And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about 12.*'

Ephesus means 'full purposed' and those 12 disciples of John, whether they knew it or not, had just increased their capacity for the '*spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him;*' Eph. 1:17. Paul spent 3 years in Ephesus, helping them earn that name, with '*all the counsel of God,*' and then he writes Ephesians from prison to finish the work.

These saints were told to be '*redeeming the time*'

(5:16) because Paul saw a Church become cold and formal, (*Galatians*) watered down, (*Colossians*) and misusing the gifts of Pentecost (*Corinthians*). The spiritual intoxication in Corinth nearly exasperated the Apostle, so he warns the Ephesians: ‘*be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; v.18*

Did Paul see the connection between emotion and the Church? Between music and spirit? Could he have known that Churches today would lather up the saints with a praise and worship band, while some tread into the gifts – all before a single Word of God has been spoken?

Being ‘*filled with the spirit*’ puts a knowledge of the Word in front. Paul says saints should be ‘**Speaking.**’ (*As in verse 19*): ‘*to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*’. Imagine 1st century Christians edifying one another on the straightest path to memorize **anything**: lyrics! Jesus said, ‘*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*’, (Matt. 12:34) so where did Paul put a music’s importance? Answer: ‘***in your heart to the Lord.***’

22

But. . . long before it finds the heart, is put to a song, or is joined by instruments, a melody finds birth in struggle. King David proved that. His Spirit led-walk before God, full of trial and victory helped the man ‘*after God’s own heart*’ find truth while overcoming. Are trials important? Jesus informs the Church at Philadelphia He holds the ‘*key of David*’ (Rev. 3:7) and since that key gets forged in trials, how glorious to know our hands can open the translation door together.

‘*Giving thanks always*’ - v.20. Paul tells the Ephesians that thanksgiving is a large part of overcoming, and what the psalms are about. But if you look for a dividing line, v. 21 has to be it. It invites many fiery darts and it is reads; ‘*Submitting (*hupotasso*) yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*’

The Greek words “hupo,” and “tasso,” meaning “to place or rank yourself under or below,” go against everything that makes up the human ego. *Goodness!* – who willingly does that? Jesus did. Paul did too. So can we, if we let the Word of God have ‘*free course*’ like Paul’s prayer request -(II Thess. 3:1). God’s Word can correct an attitude or desire, and when “*hupotasso*” begins, things start to change.

All of this is because God ‘*knows the way that I take*’ and He knows who, or what, needs to be on that path with us. The truth is, there is possibly many, many things that need replacing,

but over time, perhaps a lifetime, we encourage (*speak to*) others with a life (*psalm*) of trial and victory over this world.

Starting to see it? Well, read on because the mystery gets even deeper.

Submission

Fortunately for me, I was raised a witness to Eph. 5:25 ‘*Husbands, love your wives.*’ Because of that, I saw a wife ‘*submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*’ I feel honored to have witnessed their enduring exchange of love and submission made possible by the spirit’s infilling. Because of them, I believe every man and woman that follow this principle, become breathing lines of scripture.

23 But you don’t read very far to find the first attack on marriage.(Gen 3:1). Satan won’t change his inheritance but he can change ours by showing husbands objects to desire; things to love and compete directly with a wife. Any wonder that when it comes to a wife’s submission to ‘*their own husbands in everything*’ some have it open to discussion?

The Church was no different. Like the first wife, church leaders come to the same crossroads where Satan creates doubt and gives ideas. ‘*Pleasant*’ and ‘*desirous*’ is the fruit when acting alone. The Roman Empire- minus the Holy Spirit- sanctioned the power of the clergy in 312 A.D. and most of the denominations that follow found the same unity and a widespread dismissal of Paul’s gospel for ideas of their own.

Men like to talk about revelations, visions, divine appearances, and of course God’s instructions for the Church have abounded, but they don’t fit in. They never will fit. To claim there is something to be added to Paul’s Gospel is to diminish the power of Jesus, the Word ‘*made flesh*’- John 1:14.

Ministers still take doctrine in their own hands and teach their flocks how to stop being ‘*subject unto Christ*’ (v. 24). It seems fair to me that God should have a choice when it comes to a bride for His Son. I know Spirit led translators for King James got the words right when they came to Ephesians 5:26 & 27.

“That He Might”

‘...*Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That He Might Sanctify (hagiazō- treat as holy) and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*’ 5:26.

Cleansing the Church is why Jesus handpicked Paul to reveal Church business in mystery form. The Church required *Sanctification* (separation) so Paul was led into the wilderness of Arabia to begin, and put in a Roman prison cell to finish, what would become not only the epistles, but the example, intended to prepare the Church. Prepared for what?

‘That He Might Present (paristemi- place beside, stand by) a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.’ (5:27) His shed blood means the entire Church is **‘treated** as holy,’ but the courtship has been rocky. The un-glorious Church replaced the *‘washing of water by the word’* with whatever agrees with short attention spans, busy schedules, and all-inclusiveness. Jesus continues to *‘stand by’* His Church, but as He does, He is aware of each member. He is looking at His Body and He is judging. Sound familiar?

Prophecy students might recall this scene. We are taken there in Revelation 1-3 in John’s vision from the Isle of Patmos - but for the *‘hearers’*, it can be seen today. We still see Jesus walking among the candlesticks (7 city churches) of Asia; but we know this scene is the prophetic past and future of the Church. Just insert a denomination that still preaches the saving blood of Jesus Christ and you will find their roots going back to one of these Churches. What does Jesus tell John to write to Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis and Laodicea? The same thing he tells 5 out of the 7 today: *Repent. Overcome.*

A majority of the Church today does not get this. They argue against anyone who might suggest the body of Christ is divided. We won’t argue this point but we will turn back to the 5th Chapter of Ephesians to find the Apostle Paul summed up the Church in one verse: *‘We are members of his body, of his flesh (sarx) and of his bones (osteon)’ - Eph. 5:30.*

And he’s right. The Church was, and continues to be, either sarx (flesh) or osteon (a bone). Go looking for the word sarx in Paul’s gospel and notice it’s interchangeable with the word carnal – and not exactly fitting a description for our two remaining Churches in Revelation.

They are Smyrna (Rev. 2:10) and Philadelphia (Rev. 3:11) and the only thing He needs to tell them is ‘just keep doing what you’re doing’. To Smyrna he says, *‘Be thou faithful unto death’*

which they are. It meant joining departed saints gathered in spirit and wouldn't that be something to behold! So the members of the Philadelphian assembly are living overcomers of today and mark his directions well: *'hold that fast which thou hast'*.

What do they hold? *'Christ in me'* was held by every Smyrna saint right into death - and it made them rich (Rev. 2:9). Smyrna saints did not settle for a skin-deep knowledge of our Lord. They ran a race. They ran all. They were deeply connected and supportive to our Lord. They knew no quit because God has faithful ministers, teachers, and fellow runners who felt the same way.

Of course a Smyrna saint could get distracted, but they knew how to look to Jesus, the *'author and finisher (perfector) of our Faith'* (Heb.12:2). Yes it was a way of suffering - they learned and loved Paul's gospel - no matter what. Lukewarm brethren. Old-fashioned. Out of step with family and friends - it was irrelevant. Overcoming all that is how they got so close to the heart of Christ!

' . . . Of His Osteen (a bone)' Paul was being specific. Which bone do you think he is referring to? We know the bride of Christ to be of every *'kindred, tongue, and people, and nation'* (Rev. 5:10), so the church at Philadelphia must be a collection of individuals. It surely is a loose and scattered group that not only got this mystery, but laid hold of the Grace of God to overcome this world and a certain beguiling serpent.

For this Cause...

Paul was well aware of trouble in the Church. The Corinthian believers read the first mention of a bride for Christ, along with a nod to the Garden of Eden.(11:2,3) This chief apostle to the Church says he is jealous - Godly jealous- because a chaste and virgin Church is his life's work.

He declares himself to be afraid, and compares the attack on Eve with the future of the Church: *'But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity (singleness) that is in Christ.'* What was so obvious to Paul, the singleness of following Christ, was well on it's way to becoming a mystery - *and apparently* - he couldn't just give it away.

But he could leave clues.

Paul would later write to Timothy '*For God hath not given us a spirit of fear*' (II Tim. 1:7) because Paul had to overcome exactly that. By the time he wrote this letter to Ephesus – some four years and a Roman prison cell after warning Corinth, the '*... but I fear...*' had become real: The church would be divided by ranks in the resurrection.

So he pens the finishing touches to the 5th chapter of Ephesians and looks back to that first marriage in the garden. Adam is waking up from a deep sleep and meets and marries his bride. Adam knows that Eve was not formed of the dust of the ground as he was, but that she was created from a piece of his own body - osteon. A rib bone. It is only **after** the marriage that Adam said, "*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh..*" Gen. 2:23

Because Christ has not met and married His bride yet, he is like Adam before the operation. He cannot comment on her body – but He can on His. So Jesus shows Paul the only clue he can give us: the condition (asleep) of his body (the church) and what God has to do to build a wife. There is your cause. There is your great mystery.

The Church is fast asleep because it can't be bothered with the details needed to stay awake and '*love His appearing*' - (II Tim. 4:8). They don't want to hear this – and will not hear it - because it doesn't fit their business model. So God, on a day soon coming, will call and gather a group of men and women – a rib compared to the whole of Christendom - who in the throne room of God, will become the Bride of Christ.

Reader, it is not too late. The scope of this eternal prize is an on-going revelation but it only comes one way. You have to wash in the Word of God. It is the only way to remain sanctified. To be cleansed. To become Holy and without blemish.

Jesus is standing next to you.

But what he wants to do is be known by you. Not just as the Savior of your soul, but as the One who kept you '*hidden*' in this evil world. He wants to know you held on to the times you met in His Word, because you are still in Love.

Forget yesterday - He just wants to see it today.

That He Might.

THE GRAPE

Joy Sparks

“For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:....” II Cor. 1:8

The pressing “out of measure” here, is intense, so severe in fact, that Paul declared they “despaired even of life.” It reminds me of a grape being pressed through a sieve illustrating the pressure it takes to separate the seeds, skin and pulp. The pulp is the substance in need of change, and is thus squeezed through the tiny holes to be made into a different product, or substance, such as jam. A grape is a fruit, and only born again believers in Christ can lay claim to the identity of spiritual fruit. It may be an immature grape, or an extremely tiny grape, or perhaps a large juicy one. Of course, the larger, more mature ones are required for the best and tastiest jam.

Like the grape, we too are a trinity. I Cor. 15:49 “And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” The seed of the grape represents the spirit, while the “meaty” pulp is a fitting portrait of the soul, or substance. The skin, or outer covering, is the body or temple, which holds the soul and spirit inside. When pressed through the sieve, the pulp goes through the tiny holes, leaving the seeds and skin behind. Some jams have seeds, but in the premium products, there are none. The seeds are left to produce more fruit. The skin, our old covering (body) will be changed. I Cor. 15:44 “It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.” I Cor. 15:51 “Behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”

Our text, here in II Cor. 1:8, teaches that the “good part” comes out of the grape, even as the pulp is pressed through to be made into something better, like jam. It takes on a new identity and life, a new substance; better than the old ! II Cor. 3:18 “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.” As we allow the Lord to give us the trials that press or burden us, even to the point of despairing of life itself -- He changes us, by putting His glory, His character, His image, into us, because through the pressing we see His face! We see Him! As we feed on the Word of God, He puts His divine love in us, which makes us sweet to His taste. In addition, the pulp, with which we

started, is cooked with fire and the sweetness is added to make us nothing like we were before. Now, we are a tasty substance for His good pleasure! Phil. 2:13 “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” It is only through the pressing, looking on His face through the Word of God, and being tried in the fire, that can we truly become happy. We are happy and “glorying” in our tribulations because God “delivered us from so great a death, and doth yet deliver: In whom we trust that He will yet deliver us.” II Cor. 1:10 Our fruit doesn't rot, nor does it dry out. It continues on, “from glory to glory,” as new fruit is made. Feeding on Christ , being changed ,(Pressed) into that wonderful new product: the Life of Christ! It's a Win, Win situation !



THANKSGIVING

For the days when nothing happens,
For the cares that leave no trace,
For the love of little children,
For each sunny dwelling-place,
For the altars of our fathers,
And the closets where we pray,
Take, O gracious God and Father,
Praise for this Thanksgiving Day.

For our harvests safe ingathered,
For our golden store of wheat,
For the bowers and the vineyards,
For the flowers up-springing, sweet,
For our coasts from want protected,
For each inlet, river, bay,
By the bounty full and flowing,
Take our praise this joyful day.

For the hours when Heaven is nearest
And the earth-mood does not cling,
For the very gloom oft broken
By our looking for the King,

By our thought that He is coming,
For our courage on the way,
Take, O Friend, unseen, eternal,
Praises this Thanksgiving Day.

-- Margaret E. Sangster

Sweetness Of The Lips

A. B. Simpson

Spiritual conditions are inseparably connected with our physical life. The flow of the divine life-currents may be interrupted by a little clot of blood; the vital current may leak out through a very trifling wound.

If you want to keep the health of Christ, keep from all spiritual sores, from all heart wounds and irritations. One hour of fretting will wear out more vitality than a week of work; and one minute of malignity, or rankling jealousy, or envy will hurt more than a drink of poison. Sweetness of spirit and joyousness of heart are essential to full tranquility, and the peace of God that passes all understanding, are worth all the sleeping draughts in the country.

We do not wonder that some people have poor health when we hear them talk for half an hour. They have enough dislikes, prejudices, doubts, and fears to exhaust the strongest constitution.

Beloved, if you would keep God's life and strength, keep out the things that kill it; keep it for Him, and for His work, and you will find enough and to spare.

~~~~~

*“Two men went to Church to pray. One was a so-called leading citizen, and the other a school teacher.*

*“The prominent citizen stood, and with eyes turned upward, said: “O Lord, I thank Thee that I am not like these professional men, even as this poor teacher. I pay half the teacher’s salary; it is my money that built this Church; I subscribe liberally to foreign missions, and to all the work of the Church. It was my money that advanceth Thy cause.”*

*“The schoolteacher’s prayer was quite different. He simply bowed himself in humility and said: “O God, be very merciful unto me. I was that man’s teacher.”*

—Selected..

# My Yoke

Gene Hawkins

*“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Matt. 11:29*

The yoke of this verse is one owned, and controlled, by Jesus Himself, and results in rest, for those who will take it. Peter defined the law as being “....a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.” Acts 15:10 Contrariwise, the yoke of which Jesus speaks, is easily defined as the covenant of Divine Grace which, in effect, takes on the same characteristics as Himself; that is, “meek and lowly in heart.” The analogy of the yoke has also been properly used as representing a yoke of “ministry,” even as the ox is fitted with a yoke to carry out a certain burden of responsibility and work. It is still “My yoke” for the work or purpose, still belongs to Him.

“My yoke,” thus includes all the decisions Jesus would make in our behalf, be it His choice for us to lay hold on the depths of His truth and grace, His decision to call one to a certain ministry or His overall desire to control, not only what we do, but who we are. Job is a beautiful example of such a choice as God made a corporate decision in his life to let down the hedge and allow Satan to do whatever he desired, barred only by the restriction that you “...save his life.” Job 2:6 Many in the Christian world today who govern their lives only by the standard of “cause and effect,” insist that Job had to have been guilty of something, such as fear, (Job 3:25) in order to warrant the suffering which quickly ensued. God speaks very plainly however, asserting “....thou (Satan) movedst me against him, to destroy him **without cause.**” Job 2:3

“My yoke,” means that we accept the yoke, or circumstance, which Jesus would impart to us, and that such a thing is entirely beyond our own control. It is indeed His “yoke,” chosen specifically for us. The order of Matt. 11:29, “take my yoke upon you, ...and learn of me,” is also quite evident in Job’s experience for after this ordeal was over he cried out quite triumphantly, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.” Job 42:5 He had indeed learned of Christ.

This “Job experience,” is also illustrated by another in scripture, with which most of us can identify, for while Job had done nothing amiss, Jonah certainly did deserve the yoke which

was conferred upon him. God endeavored to place a yoke of ministry around his neck when He said “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.” Jonah 1:2 The rebellious prophet promptly refused that “yoke” and promptly fled from the “...the presence of the LORD.” V. 3 It is clearly evident that he did not just “misunderstand,” or accidentally “took a wrong turn,” for we read that “...he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish...” Thus, God brought to him another “yoke,” over which he had absolutely no control as He “....**sent out a great wind** into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.” V. 4 There is no doubt that Jonah had rebelled against the Lord, but this new yoke is actually a glorious manifestation of Divine Grace, sent by God specifically for Jonah. It is also a display of the judgment seat of Christ. Many in Christendom today, live in mortal fear of facing The Judge, AFTER they depart out of this life into glory, having been taught that “fear” will deter them from wrongdoing, but that simply cannot be. Paul indeed declared “For I know nothing by (against) myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.” I Cor. 4:4 He knew his own opinion of himself, **at the time then present**, was worthless, for Christ Himself is the only Judge, and the apostle further asserted “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that (in order that) every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” II Cor. 5:10 The entire Church Age lies between the words “Christ” and “that.” We are being judged, or scrutinized, or evaluated, at this present time, by the piercing eyes of The Judge, “that,” we may **receive** our reward, or lack of it, after we leave this earth. That Judgment Seat or Throne of Jesus is clearly manifest in Rev. 2 where Jesus, The Judge, is seen walking amidst the candlesticks. The message to 5 of the 7 Churches is “repent...” NOW, or bear the consequence, later. Repentance must take place at this present time, not after one is in glory. There is no record that men will repent of their deeds AFTER they get to heaven. The Catholic teaching of purgatory is an absolute myth. How could one ever enjoy hearing “....Well done, thou good and faithful servant,....” (Matt. 25:21) if he still has an appointment at the “judgment

bar?" The Apostle Paul gives absolutely no hint that he expected such an appointment when he wrote: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.... Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, ..." II Tim. 4:6-8 He knew his reward was sure, before he ever left this earth.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is, in fact, a glorious manifestation of God's amazing grace. Jesus listed the sins of those Churches and then gave them the opportunity to repent and change their courses, before it was too late. Likewise, God would "arrest" men today, even as He did Jonah, trying desperately to bring them to that place of needed repentance. The evidence is quite clear that Jonah did not respond to the "yoke" which came in the form of a wind. Though the other "...mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, ....Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; .....**and was fast asleep.**" Jonah 1:5 Nor was there any change when he was wide awake and admitted to his shipmates "...that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them." Ch. 1:8

It is a scriptural fact that if men do not heed the voice of The Lord, He has a tendency to speak even louder. Thus, another "yoke," is in the offing as "...the **LORD had prepared** a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Jonah 1:17

We cannot even begin to imagine the abject darkness which enveloped him, and the stench had to have been overwhelming. He later complained that "...the weeds were wrapped about my head." Ch. 2:5 This great fish, however, is also a grand example of God's amazing grace. Jonah is actually in a place of safety. He did not drown in turbulent ocean waters, and though he declares that "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever:..." he knows that he has been protected from the crushing depths of the sea. Jonah 2:6 continues: "yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." Jonah 2:1-2 How long was the prophet in this very trying place before he finally "prayed unto the LORD?" There is no record of such a response when the great wind came, nor even when he was cast into the sea,



and he knew full well that he was the problem. Ch. 1:12 Here we read that he did finally cry out to the Lord, but there is no evidence of an immediate deliverance. Herein lies the fallacy of the current prosperity message sweeping this country and the world. God has his purposes for preparing the “yokes” which He sends, and until those intentions are completed, freedom is often not forth coming. The text here reveals that “....thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight;...” Jonah 2:3,4 Jonah feels the isolation, and as we know from scripture, this ordeal would ultimately last three days and three nights, but it seems that he did not know that. It is at such a point, however, that faith springs to the fore, for this verse continues: “yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.” This is not a cry of despair, but of hope. It is much the same utterance made by Job, when he cried out “when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold.” That same chapter also records the “roller coaster” ride that many experience when walking this path of faith. “Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.” Job 23:10,15

Just so, conditions for Jonah begin to worsen. “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: (down into his innermost being) the depth closed me round about, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains;....” Ch. 2:5,6 This experience was so intense that “When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.” What a glorious expression of the deliverance outlined in I Cor. 10:13! “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 to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” Sometimes people put a period after the word escape, meaning that instant deliverance is always God’s plan. However, the last clause of this sentence is crucial to our development and understanding of God’s ways for it says “*that ye may be able to bear it.*” God does not always answer our cry for immediate extrication from difficulty, but He will make a way for us to enjoy and experience victory in spirit. It was when Jonah “fainted,” that his “prayer came....into thine holy temple,” and verse nine indicates that he had indeed learned the lesson which God intended: “Salvation is

of the LORD.” It was through this yoke, where Jonah experienced absolute weakness, and total lack of self, that he did indeed “learn of Me.” However, even after this great deliverance when “... the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land,” (V.10) Jonah’s training is not yet complete. There remain two more chapters in this book, wherein God “prepared” three significant object lessons for him and the book does not come to a definitive conclusion. Jonah is rather left on a hillside pondering a question posed by God Himself, which is a reminder that the last chapter of our lives has not yet been written either.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matt. 11:30 Undoubtedly, both Job and Jonah would argue that point, in light of the things they suffered at the time. However, Paul points us to the same avenue of faith as he firmly asserts: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Rom. 8:18 The chief apostle to the Church likewise sounded out the same glorious message of faith when he wrote to the Corinthians. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” II Cor. 4:17 We likewise, shall in no wise be disappointed, if we too: “take my yoke upon you and learn of me.”

**(Ed. Note: This message is part of a series entitled “Learning Christ” and is being printed by request. The entire series is available on CD. We will resume the study of Isaiah next month.)**

Prayer is so simple  
It is like  
quietly opening a door  
And slipping into the very presence  
of God,  
there in the stillness,  
to listen for His voice  
Perhaps to petition  
or only to  
listen, It matters not;  
just to be there  
In His presence,  
is PRAYER.



# *Our Corn Crib*

*"Buy The Truth, and Sell It Not"*

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| Chaste Virgin                 | How to Receive Holy Spirit       | Resume of What we Teach   |
| Comfort in Time of Sorrow     | It is Finished                   | Salvation for the Body    |
| Death, Hell & Lake of Fire    | Jesus Heals Today                | Scriptural Terms Defined  |
| Destiny of the Wicked         | Judgement Seat of Christ         | Words on Eternal Security |
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| Dying Daily                   | Life Everlasting                 | The Two Adams             |
| Earnest but Wrong             | Light on the Law                 | The Sin Offering          |
| Eternal Life                  | Living Ones                      | The Unforgiven Sin        |
| Extra! Extra!                 | Made Sin for Us                  | This is That              |
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| Fear of the Lord              | Mercy or Judgement               | Tithing                   |
| First Day of the Week         | New Birth                        | Water Baptism             |
| Five Much Mores               | Not Legislation, Revelation      | Wheat and Tares           |
| Five Consequences             | Oneness of Christ                | Why am I Not Healed       |

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