

# Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the  
whole Counsel of GOD

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## A Happy New Year

I do not know, I cannot see  
What God's Kind Hand preepares  
for me.

Nor can my glance pierce thru the  
haze,

Which covers all my future ways;

But yet I know that o'er it all

Rules He Who notes the  
sparrow's fall.

Farewell, Old year, with goodness  
crowned,

A Hand Divine hath set thy  
bound.

Welcome the New Year, which  
shall bring

First blessings from my God and  
King.

The Old we leave without a fear,

The New we hail without a fear.



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### IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN!



**'God is our refuge and strength'**

PSALM 46:1

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Editor: Gene Hawkins



## Definite Sign Posts Of The End

Gene Hawkins

“**A**nd he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:...” Dan. 2:21

“...when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people,... he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.” Lk. 12:1-2

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.” Matt. 24:3

The opening text above is unequivocal. God is Sovereign in determining the national leaders of this world. He demonstrated it in 606 B.C. when Gentle Times began, and Nebuchadnezzar was chosen as the first leader of what would be four world empires. However, His ways and purposes in appointing those leaders may not always be clearly revealed to mere mortals. His Sovereignty in this matter is seen long before Babylon came to power for King Cyrus is called by name as The LORD “...saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” Isa. 44:28 Isaiah’s prophecy promising the the Jews’ freedom from Babylon and the subsequent rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem was proclaimed around 176 years before it actually came to pass. God can make such positive assertions because He is Sovereign and knows the end even from the beginning. 3

King Saul is another whom God did indeed “set up” as king, but it was actually according to the wishes or “demands” of the people. “And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;” I Sam. 8:18,19 This choice of the people came after God’s very pointed warning that “...This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them



for himself,...and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest,... And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and...will take your fields,...vineyards,...oliveyards, even the best of them,...he will take the tenth of your seed, and ...your menservants, and your maidservants,... He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. “ I Sam. 8:11-18

4 The pattern set forth by the selection of King Saul has many times prevailed down through the ages. God has often bowed to the wishes of humanity in these matters of leadership, but it has been to their hurt, as noted above and is clearly evident at the close of Jesus’ earthly ministry. He offered Himself as King of the Jews or Messiah the Prince (Dan. 9:25) on what has become known, in our day, as “Palm Sunday. “And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem,... then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village...and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her:...And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them;...All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” Matt. 21:1-5 The tragedy here is that less than a week later this same people which “...cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David:...,” vehemently cried out in answer to Pilate’s question “...Shall I crucify your King?... We have no king but Caesar.” John 19:15 God gave them their wish, but tremendous hurt came upon them in 71A.D. when Titus invaded Jerusalem, fulfilling Jesus’ prophecy that, “...There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matt. 24:2 This devastation of Jerusalem is but a small foretaste of the destruction coming in the end of this age when Israel once again rejects her Messiah, fulfilling Jesus’ prophecy that, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” John 5:43 This is a direct reference to Dan. 9:27, wherein “...he (the antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate,...”

God did bring His Own Purpose to pass at Jesus’ first advent, using even the rebellious attitudes and acts of wicked men to accomplish it. He has likewise used such efforts throughout history to His



Own advantage as "...he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:..." Daniel records a brief snapshot of some Syrian kings who ascended the throne following the removal of Alexander the Great, whose kingdom was replaced by four generals commanding four separate partitions of power. The king of the North is that of Syria and while there is no end time prophecy recorded in these historical accounts, they still very much demonstrate that God "...removeth kings, and setteth up kings:..." using various ways and means to accomplish His Own pleasure. "Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: (Syria) but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. (his death is simply surrounded by mystery) And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." (Septuagint "deceitful ways") Dan. 11:19 While this latter scenario does fit the pattern of the end time antichrist, it is not a direct prophecy implicating the man of sin, and thus, one must not conclude that this ungodly man will emerge from Syria. 5 However, it is an example of the fact that God has used fraud and deception throughout the ages to fulfill His Own Purposes, even as is evident in regard to Calvary. Despite the Jews' false assertions, Pilate plainly declared "... Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:" Lk. 23:14 Regardless of Pilate's findings, God used the deception of wicked men to deliver The Lamb of God to the cross.

"...Take heed that no man deceive you," was Jesus' first and foremost answer to the disciples' question, "...what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (age) Matt. 24:3-4 He also repeated that warning at least three more times in this same chapter. The word "deceive" literally means to "roam (from safety, truth, or virtue):...seduce, fraudulence." Paul uses the same term in describing fraud as one of the many elements which define the "...perilous times..." pervading this world in these last days. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." II Tim. 3:13 He used like terms in writing to the Thessalonians. "Let no man deceive



you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,... so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.... For the mystery of iniquity doth already work:..." II Thess. 2:3-7 Once again, deception is the primary order of these last days and the ultimate deception seems to indicate the time in which the "...man of sin..." will try to convince the entire world "...that he is God..." Note also that this same atmosphere of deception is designated as "...the mystery of iniquity..." Such a mystery has been in this world from the very beginning of the Church Age, for it "...doth already work:..." This simply means that the very spirit of antichrist was clearly manifest in Paul's day, but it will surely come to its full manifestation when the man of sin is actually revealed. The term "mystery" gives reference to that which is "secret" or hidden. Its use here is for the specific purpose of deception. Jesus likewise declared, "...unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. (acting under a feigned part, deceit) For there is nothing covered, (hid) that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Lk. 12:1-2 Paul also exhorts, us as believers: "...judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." I Cor. 4:5

Scripture boldly declares that all these "secret things and hidden things" will eventually be brought to light, but hearts are grieved in many instances today when it seems that wicked men are "getting away with their practices of deceit and secret devices" leveled directly against innocent victims. Solomon summed it up so very eloquently, describing "...a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity." Eccl. 8:14 God's Word is sure, and wicked acts will be punished, but that seems little consolation at times for those who have been the victim of some rather heinous crimes. All these hidden things of darkness will be revealed, but the question remains, "When?" It is quite clear that many news stories were hidden on purpose until AFTER the American



election was past, but still it is of necessity that all men realize God allowed it.

There is a history of election fraud in America, going back to 1960. John Kennedy's handlers were much concerned that their candidate might present a major challenge because he was Catholic. He did win that 1960 election, but it was under a cloud of suspicion and there were many allegations, at the time then present, of votes coming off of tombstones in Cook County, Illinois. It is said that Richard Nixon knew of such fraud, but refused to challenge the election results lest the country be severely divided. History has surely shown that God used such deception to bring forth His Own purpose of spreading Catholicism in political circles around the world. Today, one of the most popular and effective things any politician can do is become Catholic. However, it was God, Who laid the foundation for this end time woman to "... sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Rev. 17:3 This woman is none other than Catholicism which is the only "woman" or religious entity that commands such world-wide political influence.

But what of Richard Nixon and God's purpose for him? He was elected President in 1968 and according to Wikipedia "Improved relations with the Soviet Union and the PRC (People's Republic Of China) are often cited as the most successful diplomatic achievements of Nixon's presidency. ... The reason for opening up China was for the U.S. to gain more leverage over relations with the Soviet Union. Resolving the Vietnam War was a particularly important factor." It is surely no coincidence or happenstance that both of these nations are now emerging as major players in end prophecy.

God surely "...removeth kings, and setteth up kings:..." at His Own discretion and history has shown that He may use many ways and means that are completely foreign to natural reasoning. He most assuredly has used fraud repeatedly to accomplish His objective. Both Jesus and Paul specifically affirmed that these hidden secrets of ungodliness will be a part of His end time agenda, and what God's Word has prophesied will most assuredly be realized. It should thus come as no surprise that God will use an atmosphere literally permeated with deception to bring His Plan to fruition in regard to world leaders. The recent American Presidential election has been described by a great many as being



unprecedented. The next president will emerge under a thick cloud of chaos and uncertainty, along with alleged fraud and deceit, but still it must be understood that only God, "...removeth kings, and setteth up kings:...", even using the aforementioned ways and means described above.

The American populace was told prior to the election not to expect a clear cut winner on election night. Why? Did certain people know things that the average citizen did not? News reports also asserted early on that no fraud was evident. That story was later changed to "there might be some fraud, but it is not widespread." After that, the narrative was amended to declare that "fraudulent activity might be greater than thought, but it had absolutely no impact on changing the outcome of the election." Seventy plus million people who voted for the President would strongly beg to differ with that assessment. The question must then be asked, "why have such fraudulent activity in the first place, if it was not intended to have an impact on the outcome?" Changing stories on any issue leads to confusion and doubt.

8 Many other questions remain unanswered in regard to the facts which have since emerged from this momentous night. Many wonder how Pres. Trump could be leading by 800,000 votes in Pennsylvania when a sudden halt was called to counting. When the process resumed, his advantage had magically disappeared and he now trailed by a considerable margin. It also seems that that same cessation of counting occurred in numerous states at the very same time, with the same result. Equally baffling is how the president could garner over ten million more votes in the present election than he did in the 2016 race, and still lose. More curious still is the fact that Mr. Biden collected more votes than any previous election winner in recent history, including Pres. Obama, who has held almost idol status among American voters for quite some time. If that count is truly correct, it would of necessity mean that he is more popular with the people than the former president has been, which is highly unlikely.

Major questions have also arisen concerning the Dominion voting machines. Following are the comments from an "Affidavit of Russell James Ramsland, Jr..... 'I am part of the management team of Allied Security Operations Group, I,I,C, (ASOG). ASOG provides a range of security services, but has a particular emphasis on cyber security, OSINT and PEN testing of networks.'" This affidavit is quite



lengthy, describing at least 13 potential problems with the vote count in Michigan. According to Mr. Ramsland, "The final red flag is perhaps the greatest. Something occurred in Michigan that is physically impossible, indicating the results were manipulated on election night within the EMS. The event as reflected in the data are the 4 spikes totaling 384,733 ballots allegedly processed in a combined interval of only 2 hours and 38 minutes. This is physically impossible given the equipment available at the 4 reference locations (precincts/townships) we looked at for processing ballots, and cross referencing that with both the time it took at each location and the performance specifications we obtained using the serial numbers of the scanning devices used.... The existence of the spike is strongly indicative of a manual adjustment either by the operator of the system (see paragraph 12 above) or an attack by outside actors. In any event, there were 289,866 more ballots processed in the time available for processing in four precincts/townships, than there was capacity."

A quick perusal of the internet reveals very quickly that there are those who absolutely deny the account of Mr. Ramsland as they try desperately to discredit him. However, why should the denials of mainstream media be accepted above this rather specific and precise explanation of the problem? The fact is that truth is always precise. Falsity is spoken more in generalities. 9

Deception is sure to become more and more a part of everyday life in this present world, and scripture long ago outlined one very prominent way to settle controversies. "...at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." Deut. 19:15 The problem in the current election is that the witnesses have not been given their due time. Camera images showing election observers driven from the vote count premises, leaving other workers to pull containers from under tables, have been seen by multitudes of voters. Paper being placed on windows so that outside observers could not see what was going on inside has also been seen by multitudes. That is one witness. The second witness is that of those who were present when these things took place and have signed affidavits expressing their willingness to testify under oath against penalty of perjury confirming the view from the camera. Even the Supreme Court denied these witnesses, and thus refused to hear the case, let alone rule on it.

Believers must remember that, regardless of the facts



clearly set forth here, God is still in charge, and He surely has a plan and purpose surrounding end time events. This unprecedented chaos due to fraud, in any measure, must be accepted as God's Way. Rather than being discouraged, it is imperative that God's people, who truly do have their eyes trained on the heavens, look to Him for deliverance. It is imperative for true believers in Jesus' eminent return to understand that God may directly use the fraudulent efforts of ungodly men to literally speed up Jesus' coming again.

Many over the years have compared the homegoing in the end time with Israel's deliverance from Egypt. That may apply here, for the children of Israel experienced great bondage and consternation just prior to their departure across the Red Sea. Could the current difficulties produced by Covid 19 and the subsequent difficulties with privation and lock downs, confusion and bondage simply be a forerunner of the exit to glory? Many never dreamed that they would see things transpiring before them as they are today, but still it is vitally important to realize that the departure of all those looking for Jesus to return is eminent and thus, "...when these things (fraud, lockdowns, and privation) begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Lk. 21:28

## **A Happy New Year**

I do not know, I cannot see  
What God's Kind Hand prepares for me.  
Nor can my glance pierce thro' the haze.  
Which covers all my future ways;  
But yet I know that o'er it all  
Rules He who notes the sparrow's fall.

Farewell, Old Year, with goodness crowned,  
A Hand Divine hath set thy bound.  
Welcome the New Year, which shall bring  
First blessings from my God and King.  
The Old we leave without a tear,  
The New we hail without a fear.

Anon



## **TRANSFORMED** Walter S. Anderson

**"** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:2

The above text records a miraculous change in our lives through grace. As we are conformed by nature to the downward course of this world we are transformed by a new mind to prove the will of God for ourselves." So "conformed" is just the opposite of "transformed".

The term "...conformed..." in the original Greek is SUSCHEMATIZO, meaning "to fashion or shape one thing like another." This word, in its verb form, carries the thought of being transitory, changeable, unstable. In our fallen estate in Adam we were fashioned by the course of this world under Satan. We were all "under the power of darkness," (Col. 1:13) away from God.

"...Transformed..." is METAMORPHOO. Its meaning implies to undergo a complete change in character and in conduct. MORPHE implies an inward change. This is also a continuous process. Here is the effective work of grace to transfigure our lives in Christ. How could any self effort bring about this change? Never!

11

As we were in the flesh by birth, we had no power or character to withstand the attraction of the world. We could not claim righteousness whatever. Romans 6:20 declares: "For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness." So the "Spirit of the age;" motivated our will and movements. We were captives by "the prince of the power of the air," as noted in Eph. 2:3. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." If we are to be delivered from such great captivity, this transformation must be wrought in our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost, as "...we...are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Cor. 3:18

Beyond ourselves, our entire thinking process undergoes



a marvelous renewal, "By the renewing of your mind..." A new mind, like the mind of Christ, is formed in the holiness of God. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:" Phil. 2:5 We are no longer under the law where we were weak in the flesh. We now are ruled by grace from heaven above! "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. 6:14

Being saved from sin by faith in Jesus Christ, are under a new administration. The rule of the law only demanded, but never gave any power or love to perform what is required of us. Under grace, it is God's Own righteousness that is given to us freely by promise. Because righteousness is freedom, it must direct our minds toward Christ; Who is our life. We can be sure that whenever there is a change of heart, there is also a change of mind toward heavenly things. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Col. 3:1,2

**12** It remains for our willingness through Christ, to please Him, as He pleased His Father. In lowliness and meekness we surrender to the will of God now in what is termed "Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." Eph. 5:10 There now follows what is proven in our lives. Here are three stages and classifications that control all believers, without partiality.

"...what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Whatever is "...good..." has its credit. "Let love be without dissimulation. (Pretense) Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Rom. 12:9 There is a wide range of goodness on which our new minds may now dwell. Phil 4-8 " Finally, brethren, 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, and if there be any praise, think on these things. "

These three fulfillments of our life of faith, answers to I Cor. 13:13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, (love) these three; but the greatest of these is charity." It is faith that is good.



Hereby we learn to walk by faith, and not by sight. Because sight can be deceiving, for things are not always what they appear to be. "(For we walk by faith, not by sight.) II Cor. 5:7

By advancing in grace, we arrive at the acceptable will of God. This answers to hope. The Psalmist tells us the ground of all hope. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." Psa. 42:5 It is abounding hope by the Spirit that brings victory out of all defeats in the flesh. "Rejoicing in hope;... " Rom. 12:12

We must learn the futility of just living under the sun as those who have not faith. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I Cor. 15:19

Whatever our goal may be, if it is only on earth, we cannot fulfill it. Notwithstanding this penalty of unbelief, there is such hope in grace that transcends all expectations. This is the hope of eternal life now. "That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:7 As this is all promise, it is all grace, apart from works.

Lastly, we may attain unto the perfect will of God. This is so supreme; and gives the highest returns. Far beyond all endeavors, the perfect will of God soars into heavenly glory. It, in turn answers to charity, which is translated love. There is no comparison to love. It even exceeds all knowledge. "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph 3:19 Only love can answer to the love in the heart. This love supreme is holy marriage to Christ.

Without love as the end of our lives in Christ, we never arrive at "...the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:14 No works or commandments can reach this sublime height of our calling and election. Through the heights of expression, the most desired passion of the Bridegroom is love. Here lies perfection beyond compare. There is no blame in love. This is the first purpose of God for our lives. It was given before the foundation of the world. It was never realized in Adam and Eve, where their human love could not resist the tempter.



"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Eph. 1:4

This is AGAPE love, which God is in Himself: and realized in ourselves only by the Holy Spirit. Its essence is spiritual and heavenly; and much different to our sensual, soulish love. Agape exceeds philanthropia, which is love for man. It comes from phileo, which is tender affection; and anthropos, which is man as its center and expression.

14 There is no character in all Scripture that reveals the marriage love, like King Solomon. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse: thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." S.O.S. 4:9 This love goes beyond the sensual, to the spiritual. How captivated was the King with the fairest Shulamite! All his riches and pomp and reign could never draw out Solomon's heart like this fairest of women. Her excellence was above nature, with its delightful attractions. It was the "image of Christ" so perfectly portrayed in her with such overwhelming charm and grace.

The King could not hesitate to respond further..."How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine and the smell of thine ointments than all spices." S.O.S. 4:10

Let us remember that Jesus Christ was the offspring of David; as was Solomon. In conclusion, the perfection of love was the fervent desire of the Apostle Paul for the saints. "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Col. 3:14 We too must make the journey from being transformed to changed, which is translated transfigured; and then we may be translated.

(Written Feb. 1993)

\* The real tragedy of life is not in being limited to one talent, but in the failure to use the one talent. --- E. W. Work

\* The best definition of money. It is "a universal provider to everything but happiness, and a passport everywhere but to heaven."



**REMEMBER**  
Paul N. Smith

**“W**herefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.” I Cor. 4:16-17

In these days when so many are forgetting the first principles of the Gospel as handed down by Paul and the other apostles, we are reminded to remember some things. As we start out on our journey into a new year with its unknown and unseen horizons, we need some guidance. What better guide can we have, than the experiences of yesterday? We can look back on the previous months and see how faithful God has been. We remember that God's Word has strengthened us in times of need. Thus it is not wrong to look back; especially when we remember the victories, and the ways that God has delivered us. We can look back even further, to Paul's time, and remember his ways and his manner of life. In verse 16, Paul tells us to "be ye followers of me." He was not conceited when he made this statement. He could say this without any fear of others going in the wrong direction. He went Christ's way, and his actions were motivated by the Holy Spirit. We cannot truly follow or imitate Paul unless we are familiar with his ways. It is one thing to remember his teaching, but it is another to remember his ways. His ways were not separated from his teaching. They originated with Christ, and his message did not vary. His teaching and his conduct were the same, whether he was in Corinth, Philippi, or any of the other places where he visited. He did not preach a message or walk in a way that was popular with the majority of people. Quite the contrary! Paul's ways were the opposite of the majority of his day. In writing to these Corinthians who were carnal and were puffed up because of it, Paul did not camouflage his manner of living in any way. It seemed he delighted in picturing his weaknesses and extremities. Read verses 9 through 15 of this chapter and you will see that Paul's life differed greatly from these people, and what a greater difference is seen between Paul and present-day Christian workers. We sometimes feel ashamed when we remember Paul's extreme suffering, and then compare it with our



lives of comparative ease. It doesn't mean that we are completely without suffering, but the difference is still great; and it makes us appreciate more and more the way he suffered to bring us this gospel. How we should love this truth, and stand for it more and more.

In Phil. 3:17 we read, "Brethren, be followers together with me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Paul and the others who were associated with him are examples today. In this same chapter we see Paul's purpose of heart. We can have no greater purpose than this. He also warns us of others who walk contrary to his ways. He found plenty of opposition in his day, and it is no wonder that we have opposition from the flesh now. Paul's way is not the popular way, but it is the expedient way. It is the way that leads to glory, and to a place with Christ in His throne.

16 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." Here Paul instructs us to remember him in all things. Many are content to follow him in a measure; but to follow him in all things, means that we will go the rugged way. It means that we will winter with him in the Fair Havens near to the rocky shores of Lasea (Acts 27). This is not a commodious place, but that is where we find God's grace. It isn't easy to follow Paul in all things; his way is hard on the flesh. He did not always please himself, so that he might be a blessing to others. 1 Cor. 10:33 expresses his life toward others. He wanted to seek the profit and good of others, and every move he made was to that end. He became all things to all men that he might save them. We are sure that many times he neglected himself and his own comfort for the sake of others. Another thing to remember concerning Paul is his love for the saints, as witnessed in 1 Thess. 3:4-6. He knew these saints were enduring great tribulation because of the Gospel. We can feel his concern in his words which he wrote to them. He sent Timothy to comfort them and to encourage them in all their troubles. He could hardly wait until Timothy returned with news about them. There were no telephones or air mail service in that day, and Paul had to wait for days and weeks without any word. He no doubt had great conflict of soul, wondering if they had given up under the onslaught of great tribulation. How happy he was to receive the good report that they were standing fast in the faith, and remembered Paul's conduct in



tribulation. Their faith encouraged him in his affliction and distress. Where there is mutual faith there is mutual strength and comfort. In II Tim. 3:10 we read of one who remembered Paul's ways. It was the one on whom Paul's mantle fell. What a contrast we see in this chapter. Paul warns of the attitude of the majority of religious workers in the last days, all of whom would have a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. But Timothy was different. He had been a diligent follower of Paul, because he had fully known his doctrine and manner of life, etc. How good to remember Paul's doctrine and Paul's ways. It makes us different too. We may, like Timothy, become discouraged at times; but Paul's admonition to Timothy is good for us also. He calls him to remembrance of his faith and of the Holy Spirit who dwelt within him. It is always thus in a time of trial. Paul speaks to us and calls to our remembrance who we are and what we possess. We are never without instruction and comfort when we follow Paul's teaching. There may be times when we do not know what to do or where to go. Then we should pause and remember. Though we may live in a different day and in a different country, we can find our present condition somewhere in Paul's gospel. His writings have been given to us for our edification and perfection. All men will be judged as to their attitude toward Paul's gospel. How important it is to follow him in all ways. Each new step that we take this new year can reflect an adherence to Paul's gospel and his ways. Our steps may be uncertain; but as we place them firmly on the foundation which has been laid for us, and conduct our lives according to Paul's pattern, we will never go astray or take unnecessary steps. So let us remember the ones who have gone before us, who have walked in Paul's ways. It is the best way and the only way.

17

(Reprint 1963)

\* Wonderful to contemplate is the mystery of the Christ. He assumed our humanity, and makes it worthy to stand before God in the glory.

\* Christians leave their inheritance and wander restless as strangers, in the place where they should be at home, but claim a home where they should be strangers.



# REFLECTIONS

*... From the Editor*

“**B**etter is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof:...” Eccl. 7:8

There are undoubtedly many across this entire globe who would readily agree with Solomon’s logic here as this world comes to the end of an extremely tumultuous, uncertain, troublous, and devastating year. Many hopes, dreams, and aspirations were dashed by the ungodly virus unleashed on this planet by China, along with many other destructive developments. Sadly, the end of a year is not really bringing such chaos to a conclusion.

18 There are a multitude of things coming to pass in this earth over which man has absolutely no control. Past years, undoubtedly including this one, have dictated a time when men would make certain “resolutions” in an effort to make their lives better and more productive, hoping that a “new beginning” might bring forth the answers for them. Such resolutions have often proved to be futile after only a very few weeks, as disappointment was then left to rule the day.

God does have His Own plan for new beginnings, however, and it is effective, directly because all His endeavors are centered around Christ. He announced the beginning of Israel as a nation with these glorious instructions for observing the Passover. “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:” Ex 12:2-3

Like instruction is issued as preparations were made to go into the land of Canaan. “Also in the day of your gladness,... and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings,... that they may be to you for a memorial before your God:...” Num. 10:10 Blowing of the trumpets simply signifies the practice of sounding out the trumpet of God’s Word, and the object is once again to place attention on the redemptive work of Christ at Calvary, where He offered Himself as a complete Burnt Offering before God. The glorious



result here is "...that they may be to you for a memorial before your God." Nothing gets God's attention more than claiming the glorious works of Christ's redemption as He bowed Himself unreservedly to all God's purposes for Him at the Cross.

Jeremiah also offers this bit of encouragement not only in the beginning of a new year but for every new day. "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Lam. 3:22

This new year is already bringing forth challenges which can certainly be daunting. However, God's promise is available to all who would simply believe Him. His mercies are renewed every morning, and despite all the negative, and often Satanic elements of opposition leveled against God's people in these last days, His promise still rings true to the honest heart. Now is the time to step out boldly and blow the trumpet of God's Word whereby the heart of faith may effectively claim this glorious promise for the new year. "...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." II Cor. 12:9

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## **Prayer for the New Year**

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we live.

"Dying and behold we live."-----II Cor. 6:9



## Boundless Benefits!

Ray Quintana

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?” Psalm 116:12

In the dateless past, my Father and His Son Jesus thought of us. What more of a tremendous benefit was there than this. My Father, and I can say my Father, because Jesus paid for this at the cross. My Father had a choice to send His Son to die on the cross or to destroy mankind. Because of My Father's great love, He chose that His only begotten Son would die for me. What greater benefit than that! What love for me and you! Could we ever sum up His benefits? No! We can also think of the mercies of God. When fierce diseases encompass us, we can say, Psa 91:5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. God has been pleased to give us food and raiment, and a place where to lay our weary heads. To many He has given all the comforts of this life, so we can say, “My cup runneth over; I have more than my heart can wish.” He has given us enough, and though we may have passed through many straits, yet our bread has been given us, and our water has been sure. Is not this cause for thankfulness?

20

We thank God for even a moment's rest. Do you not know what it is to toss to and fro in the night and wish for the day, and when the daylight has come to pine for the night? If there has been an interval of relief, just a little lull in the torture and the pain, how grateful we have been for it! Shall we not be thankful for health then, and specially so for a long continuance of it? I thank God and lift up my heart in thanks to My Father for a mind to think upon Him. Consider what pains the human body may be subjected to; imagine what ills may come upon humanity; conceive what distress, what woe, what anguish, we are all capable of bearing, and then in proportion as we have been secured from all these, and in proportion on the other hand as we



have been blessed with comforts and enjoyments, "What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us?"

Then think of the spiritual blessings which we have received. It is not very long ago that we were in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. Thank God, we were awakened, and we felt the load and the guilt of sin: a grievous burden, from which we feared we never could escape; but the Lord sought me! Bless the Lord, that is over now. Blessed be the name of God, my soul has escaped like a bird out of the net, and this night, instead of talking of sin as a thing unpardonable, I can stand here and say for you as well as myself, that He hath put away all our iniquity, and cast our transgressions into the depths of the sea. If He had never done anything for us but that, it seems to me that we should be bound for ever and forever to extol His name with as much exultation as Miriam and Moses felt, when Miriam took the timbral, and Moses wrote the song, "Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation."

21

Forgiven sin was the beginning of His tender mercies towards us, for after that He comforted us like as a mother comforts her children. He bound up every wound; He removed every blot; He covered us with a robe of righteousness, and decked us with the jewels of the Spirit's graces. He has placed us into His family, even us who were aliens by nature, foes by long habits, rebels and traitors by our revolt against His government. He made us heirs of God, and we can be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. All the privileges of sonship, which never would have been ours by nature, have been secured to us by regeneration, and by sonship. All His benefits! If these were all, oh, what should we render unto Him Who is the Author and Giver of such immeasurable blessings? All His benefits! How could we estimate their value, even if we had to stop here?

Forgetfulness on the part of God's children is without excuse, for here we are, monuments of mercy, pillars of grace, living epistles; the living to praise thee, O My Father, as I do this



day; and thus beholden to the Lord for all His benefits. I feel that my thoughts and actions of adoring gratitude should break forth, restrained by no shore, but be continually overflowing every embankment with rivers of joy, and send out in tears of love and praise, for all His benefits toward me! All His benefits! Ring that note again. His benefits are so many, so various, so minute, that they often escape our observation while they exactly meet our needs. True it is, the Lord hath done great things for us, even the hairs of our head are all numbered. O My Father, what infinite tenderness, what boundless compassion, hast thou shown to us! Thou hast continued to forgive our offences: thou hast perpetually upheld us in the hour of temptation. What comforts have delighted our soul in the times of trouble! What gentle admonitions have brought us back in the times of our going astray! We have had preserving mercies, sustaining mercies, enriching mercies, and sanctifying mercies. Who shall count the benefits of the Lord, which are as many as the dust of the earth? What favors and bounties of the Lord are ours! My dear brethren, it is no small benefit that God

**22** the Father has conferred upon us that we are united together in the bonds of love with Him and His Son. We are looking forward to the blessed day when the Lord will catch us away and say to us, "Come up higher," and we shall ascend into the upper chamber, nearer to the King, to sit at his right hand and feast for ever. Oh, the depths of His mercy! Oh, the heights of His lovingkindness! Faithfulness has followed us, not a promise has been broken, not one good thing has failed us.

I am a "drowned debtor" to God's mercy. I mean, I am over head and ears in debt to God: I cannot tell how deep my obligations are. I can never repay this debt, nor would I try, but take His cup of the redemption that He has provided and drink and drink to the eternities to come! I am "a drowned debtor" to the lovingkindness and the mercy of My Father. Think of all His benefits towards you. As many as have believed in Christ were chosen of God the Father from before all the world began. It was His own absolute good pleasure, which wrote them in the roll of the elect. He has chosen you, my brother; and you, my sister, that you should be holy, that you should be His child, that you should



be made like your Elder Brother, Christ Jesus; and because He chose you to this, to this you shall come, though all the powers of earth and hell should try to withstand you, for the divine decree abides immutably steadfast, and shall surely be fulfilled in you. For that good work which He has begun in you He will perfect it! You are God's favorite one, His child, ordained to dwell forever in eternal bliss. What shall we render for this? O let the thought just stir in the depths of your soul for a minute. His seal of the covenant hath been set upon you. Before the sun began to shine, or the moon to march in her courses, God chose me, in whom there was nothing to engross His love, nothing to attract His favor. O my Father, if it be so that I, of all the sons of Adam, should be made a distinguishing object of your grace, and the subject of thy discriminating favor, take me, take my body, my soul, spirit, goods, talents, and faculties; take all I have, and all I am, and all I ever hope to be, for I am thine. Thou hast loosed my bonds, but thy mercy has bound me to thee forever.

Now think for a moment on the habitation of the highest glory, and consider how Jesus left his Father's throne, deserted the courts of angels, and came down below to robe himself in an infant's clay. Contemplate Him tabernacling in our nature; see Him after He has grown up, leading a life of toil and pain, bearing our sicknesses, and carrying our sorrows. Let your eyes look straight into the face of the man who was acquainted with grief. Then come to that famous garden, where in the dead of the night He knelt and prayed, until in agony He sweat drops of blood. It was for you and me, believer! There the bloody sweat-drops fell to the ground. We see Him rise up. He is betrayed by His friend. For you and me the betrayal was endured. He is taken; He is led off to Pilate. They falsely accuse Him; spit in His face; crown Him with thorns; and put a mock scepter of reed into His hands. For you and me that humiliation was endured; for me especially and particularly the Lord of Glory passed through these cruel mockings. See Him as He bears His cross: His shoulders are bleeding from the recent lash. See Him, as along the lonely road, He sustains the cruel load. He bears that cross for you and me. Our sins are on His shoulders laid, which make that cross heavier than



had it been made of iron. See Him on the cross, lifted up between heaven and earth, as a spectacle. Hear Him cry, "I thirst!" and hear His cry more bitter still, while heaven and earth are startled by it, "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" He is enduring all those griefs for you and me. For us was His thirst and the fainting, the nakedness and the agony. For us the bowing of the head, yielding up the ghost, and slumber in the cold and silent tomb. For us His resurrection when He rises in the glory of His might, and for us afterwards the ascension into heaven, when they sing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors." For us His constant pleading at the right hand of the Father. Yes, all for you and me, and what should be done for Him? What tribute shall we lay at the pierced feet? What present shall we put into His nailed hands? Where are kisses that shall be sweet enough for His dear wounds? Where is adoration that shall be reverent enough for our blessed and exalted Lord Jesus? All He desires is our heart, our attitude to Him. Let us all bring all that we have, for such a Christ as this deserves more than all we could ever give. What shall we render, Christ of God, to thee for all thy benefits towards us?

Then My Father provided the Holy Ghost, our comforter who never calls attention to Himself, but all glory to Jesus Christ. Let us never forget that when we were like filthy rags, His hand touched us. When we were like corrupt and rotten carcasses in the graves of sin, His breath quickened us. It was His hand that led us to the cross. It was His finger that took the film from our eyes. It was His eye salve that illuminated us that we should always look to Jesus and live. The Holy Ghost has never left us. We have grieved Him; vexed Him oftentimes; but still He is here, never departing, being Himself the very life of the living incorruptible seed that abideth forever. My dear friends, how often the Holy Ghost has comforted you! How very frequently in your calm moments has He revealed Christ to you! How often has the blessed truth been laid home to you with a divine savor which it never could have had, if it had not been for Him! Christ was incarnate, and the flesh in which He was incarnate was pure and perfect. The Holy Ghost was not incarnate, but still He desires to dwell in the bodies



of His saints. Oh, what grace and condescension is this! Thou blessed Dove, thou Dear Comforter, thou kind Lover of the fallen sons of men, thy condescension is matchless! We love thee even as we love Christ Himself, and this night if we ask the question, "What shall we render unto the Lord the Holy Ghost for all his benefits towards us?" We know not how to answer, but can only say, "Take us, take us, Holy Spirit; use us; fill us with thyself; sanctify us to thy holiest purposes; unveil the word of truth that we may become full overcomers; make us living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, for it is our reasonable service." The Holy Spirit never calls attention to Himself but directs us to the Lord Jesus Christ. What a benefit to us. Thank you, Father, for your wonderful Comforter.

The Lord has rendered so much mercy to us that we ought to look about us, and look within us, and see what can be done by us to manifest our gratitude. We ought not only to do what is plainly before us, but also with holy initiative to search out various ways by which we may render fresh praises unto our Father. His benefits are so many that we cannot number them, and our ways of acknowledging His bestowments ought to be varied and numerous in proportion. 25

Then the Psalmist says, I will take the cup of salvation. "I will take..." is a strange answer to the question, What shall I render? And yet it is the wisest reply that could possibly be given. The best return for one like me, that was once so wretched and so poor, is to draw a plea from His gift of grace, and ask Him still for more. To take the cup of salvation is in itself an act of worship, and it is accompanied with other forms of adoration, hence the Psalmist says, "...and call upon the name of the LORD." Psa. 116:13 He means that he will utter blessings and thanksgivings and prayers, and then drink of the cup which the Lord had filled with His saving grace. What a cup this is! Upon the table of infinite love stands the cup full of blessing; it is ours by faith to take it in our hands, make it our own, and partake of it, and then with joyful hearts to laud and magnify the gracious One who has filled it for our sakes that we may drink and be refreshed. We can do this figuratively at the sacramental table, and we can do it spiritually



every time we grasp the golden chalice of the covenant, realizing the fulness of blessing which it contains, and by faith receiving its divine contents into our inmost soul. Beloved reader, let us pause here and take a long and deep draught from the cup which Jesus filled, and then with devout hearts let us worship God.

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?” Jesus in His prayer of intercession for us in John 17:9 declared, “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. The reason why Christ prays not for the world, but for His people is because as He puts it, for they are thine. They were the Father’s! “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are Thine.” We might have thought that Jesus would have said, they are mine, and therefore I pray for them. It would have been true; but there would not have been the beauty of truth about it which we have here. It is the unity of the Father and the Son for us. He loves us all the better, and He prays for us all the more fervently, because we are the Father’s. Such is His love to His Father, that our being the Father’s sheds upon us all the beauty of sons. Because we belong to the Father, therefore does the Savior plead for us with all the greater earnestness at the throne of heavenly grace. In the eternities past, there was a decision made. The Father had a choice. To have His Son Jesus die for us or to destroy mankind. Why would He choose to have His only begotten Son to die for us? One word, Love! It was the Divine Love of My Father. I can call Him Father because Jesus paid it all. What a benefit that I have such a Father! “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.” I Jn. 3:2

\* “When science and knowledge fall exhausted, then FAITH spreads its wings and enjoys the mysteries of God.”

\* “A wise man never blows his knows.”



## **WITNESSES**

Jack Bannister

“**I**f we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” I John 5:9

The subject of this message is "Witnesses." No one can exhaust a Biblical subject in one sermon; therefore, we will only touch on a few Scriptures concerning this topic. "Witnesses" means "one who declares what he has seen, or heard, or knows." That is, one who witnesses has a direct knowledge of the facts and he declares those facts.

"Witness" is translated by words and phrases; for instance, "bear record," "have a good report," "well reported of," "testify," and "martyr." The witnesses that we want to bring on the scene are of the highest caliber. Their witness has been found to be infallible. 27

God is the first and perfect Witness, and He witnesses of His Son. There are many people who witness about Jesus, but God was the first One. Three times, on three different occasions, God said, "My Son." When Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan, as He came out of the water and was praying, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove. Then a Voice from Heaven said, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:17 This was God's first official public witness of His Son. God had witnessed of His Son through the angels when He was born in Bethlehem. God is not limited to any certain way of witnessing. He took a Personal Hand this time. He said, "This is MY Beloved Son!"

God is never ashamed of His Son. He never tires of speaking of Him. Furthermore, He is not ashamed of us either. We read of Jesus in Hebrews, where He said He was "not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:11 That is a continuation of God's feeling toward His Son Jesus. God testified of His Son in giving us eternal life. Through this we learn that God is true. Someone may ask, "Why would you have to say that God tells the truth?"



Because some people make God a liar. Paul said, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Rom. 3:4. People make God a liar by their unbelief, but God does not stop witnessing of His Son.

On another occasion, on the Mount of Transfiguration, He took Peter and James and John, a select group with Him to the top of the mountain, where He was transfigured before them. That metamorphosis was a glow that covered His body. He was showing forth some of the glory of His own Divine Sonship. God was witnessing by the glow in His body that the Son, who had taken upon Himself human limitation, was going to have a throne. He had the strength to turn down the offer from Satan when He was in the wilderness alone. Everything seemed to be against Him. He had not eaten for forty days. God did not witness of Him there. He had witnessed of Him before He went into the wilderness.

28 While on the Mount of Transfiguration, clothed in a foregleam of the power and the glory that will be His as a Man, Peter was overwhelmed and did not know what to say. In a magnanimous mood, he said, "Let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee (Jesus), and one for Moses, and one for Elias (Elijah)," who were there with Jesus on the Mount. God listened to him, but acknowledged His Son in a different way. To all the men present and to angels and even to the devil, God said, "This is MY Beloved Son."

The third such witness is found in Psalm 2:7 - "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee." The one who really caught the power and truth of that Scripture was Paul. He quotes that verse three times: Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5. He is showing that God was speaking to Christ in resurrection, as the Head of the New Creation and as the glorified Man.

God not only witnesses of His Son, but He also witnesses of His saints. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report" - Hebrews 11:1,2. After Paul enumerates the worthies of faith, he adds, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise" - Hebrews 11:39. From whom did they receive that good report? From God. God witnessed to their faith and to their exploits in His behalf and for His glory. They were people with "like passions as we are." Jas.



James says of Elijah? He was just like us, and he prayed and God heard him. He received an answer. He prayed, and it did not rain for three years and six months; he prayed again, and it rained. What power he had with God! That was a witness that God gave of him, that he was glorifying and pleasing God.

Throughout the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul enumerates in brief what those men and women were doing. God is witnessing of their faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." He did not say that Cain's was not excellent, but Abel's was more so. "By which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." The word "testifying" is in the present tense, and it means that God continues to testify of it. Everybody who reads the eleventh chapter of Hebrews knows about the gift of Abel, and that God voices His pleasure of His people.

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Gen. 4:1-4 Now, why did God respect Abel's offering and not Cain's? Cain brought an excellent sacrifice - the best that his hands could bring forth from his garden. He brought the firstfruit. He wanted to show God that he could bring the best; but the best was not what God wanted. God wanted a sacrifice. Blood was to be shed. A life was forfeited in behalf of the one who needed another to die in his place. Therefore, that is what made it a more excellent sacrifice, the blood was shed. Adam and Eve taught their children that when God slew those animals and made the coats of the skins, it was God's way of fellowship.

The Scripture says, "But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." It does not matter what the best is that man can give, God does not witness of it. "Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin (or, a sin offering) lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and



thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Gen. 4:5-8 Why did Cain slay his brother? John tells us that he was envious because his brother's deeds were righteous, and his were not - I John 3: 12. What was their conversation? That word "talked" means "he challenged him." Cain challenged him as to the way of salvation, and I am sure that Abel witnessed to him. Otherwise, why would he get angry? He probably told him, "Cain, you know that father and mother taught us that God wants a sacrifice, and that there is only one way. You cannot blame me. This is between you and God." Cain did not want anyone telling him that his way was not the right way. That is the way people are today. But God witnesses of Abel, not of Cain. Cain is not in the Hall of Fame of Hebrews eleven. He is in the Hall of "ill fame" in the book of Jude. He is placed in the same category with Balaam and Core. They are all false prophets. God testified many times of the offerings of His people, by causing fire to come down and consume the sacrifices. This is how Cain knew that Abel's sacrifice was accepted of God. God never leaves us without sufficient testimony to back up our words if we are in His will.

The Holy Spirit also testifies. "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth. For there are three that bear record (witness) in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." I John 5:6-8 These Scriptures which we have read contain at least eleven references to the word "witness." The Word says that "the Spirit is Truth," and that means that the Holy Spirit is Deity; and, therefore, He must be Truth. Sometimes people tend to forget that. They talk glibly of the Holy Spirit, and ask, "Have you been filled with the Holy Spirit?" That is wonderful, but they get taken up with the experience and not with the Person. A brother said to me one time, "Are you enjoying the Holy Ghost?" I replied, "yes, I have a good time with the Lord." He answered, "I did not say that. I asked, Are you enjoying the Holy Ghost?"

There is a difference between being filled with Him, and enjoying Him! He is a Person. We have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, but we also have communion with the



Holy Ghost. Why? Because He is a Witness of God's Truth. Jesus said, "When the Comforter (the Spirit) is come ... He shall testify (witness) of Me" - John 15:26. He is the greatest Witness today of the Son of God. What is the sin against the Holy Ghost? To deny His witness. That is the unpardonable sin. He puts man on record. He witnesses by His operation in the hearts of men concerning the Person and work of Christ. He enlightens them. He convicts "the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" - John 16:8. On the day of Pentecost, He bore witness of the resurrection of Christ to the apostles and to others present by their speaking in tongues.

The apostles were not the only witnesses. He bears witness through the Scriptures which are given by the inspiration of God. In II Timothy 3: 16 - "All Scripture is given by inspiration (breathing) of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Three different times we read that God breathed. He breathed into Adam "the breath of life." Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost breathes into us. Each Person in the Godhead breathes on people. I like the breath of God. That is what eternal life is. Praise the Lord! 31

The Holy Spirit witnesses to us of sonship. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption (sonship), whereby we cry, Abba, Father" - Romans 8:15. It is the spirit of Christ that we receive, when we are born again; and nowhere in the Bible does the Holy Ghost call God "Father." It is the spirit of Christ that calls God "Father." That is how we know the difference between the Spirit of God and the spirit of Christ. Some people confuse the two and say, "Holy Spirit of Christ." It is true that Christ had a holy spirit, but that was His human spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, and He does not call God, "Father."

The Holy Spirit "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children (sons) of God" - Romans 8: 16. He is a Witness of these things. How? First, through the Scriptures; and then in our lives through our victories, our hopes, our joys, our failures, our weaknesses, our down-sittings, and our uprisings. He witnesses of all of these things, no matter what they are. He witnesses of our sonship, first through the new birth and then by experience. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with



Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" - Romans 8: 17. Suffering is an experience, and comes from yielding to God. During all these times, the Holy Spirit is bearing witness to us that we are the sons of God. This is necessary to keep us from becoming discouraged. Glorification will also be an experience.

32 Now we want to see the witness of Jesus. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is THE FAITHFUL WITNESS, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" . Rev. 1:4,5. That is a marvelous statement about Jesus. He has many titles, such as Saviour, Lord, Messiah, Deliverer, the Nail of God, the Cornerstone, and the Battle Bow. There are over one hundred Names that Jesus is called in symbol, and indirectly or directly. This is another one of them - He is "the faithful Witness." "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God." Rev. 3:14 Jesus was "the faithful and true Witness" when He was on the earth. After His resurrection, He continued to be "the faithful Witness" to the disciples. "The Acts of the Apostles" are simply things "that Jesus began both to do and teach," and He continued to be with them. He witnessed to them by mighty deeds and wonders.

"I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify (witness) unto you these things in the churches." Rev. 22:16 There are at least eight times in the book of Revelation that "witness" is used. At the beginning of this book there are seven churches. He shows them their places, their works, and their rewards; and to each one He says, "To him that overcometh." The promises were to the overcomers, but John wanted to give this whole book to the Church. The churches are responsible to read it. "I Jesus" puts emphasis to this witness. At the beginning of the book He is portrayed as Jehovah, and in the middle of the book He goes by the Name of "Lamb of God" the reigning One; but at the end He shows that He is the same Jesus who was with God before He was here on the earth. Revelation begins with "I John," but ends with "I Jesus." The whole book of Revelation is a witness. He is saying, "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these



things in the churches." In other words, "I sent My angel that he should be a witness to all the assemblies that have been delivered the Truth." We have the Truth delivered to us, and we can deliver it to others.

Last, but not least, the Apostle Paul is a witness. If it had not been for the other witnesses, Paul would not even be on the scene. I use him first, because the Lord called him as an example, and he is our pattern. Ananias said to him, "Thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" - Acts 22:15. Then we read, "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified (witnessed) of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" - Acts 23: II.

There are many ways that we as believers can witness. How had Paul witnessed in Jerusalem? He told the truth concerning Christ, and they put him in chains. He was a witness by the chains he wore. He later went to Rome on a ship and was shipwrecked, he was bitten by an asp at Malta, he faced death at another place; but God delivered him. He went to Rome as a prisoner in humiliation, but God said, "You are witnessing of Me." To witness of God is to glorify the Name of the Lord. Sometimes people think that witnessing is only when everything is going all right. If that is true, then they miss the boat. We cannot miss Paul's boat though. This is God's ship of state, or standing I should say. He went to Rome as a prisoner of the Roman government, and supposedly as an enemy of the Jews. But God worked in him and through him, and the greatest truths that came out of the heart of God came from a Roman cell.

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" - Acts 26:16. This is Paul's testimony before King Agrippa. The Lord gave him a blank check as a minister and as a witness of what he was to have revealed to him. The Lord gives us a blank check, too. He will appear to us in many things, based upon the Scripture; but God will never cease to reveal things to us from the Scriptures. There are ins and outs, and fold upon fold, of the different characteristics of God - different phases, different meanings found in the Scriptures. If He left us here for eternity, He could still reveal Truths out of



His Word. Think how it is going to be in Heaven when we are not limited any more. He will be revealing things to us through all the ages of eternity. We will worship God and have revelation FOREVER! We can never come to the end of God. We may come to the beginning of a new phase of Him! Paul was a witness. He did not only witness of salvation and the infilling of the Spirit, but also of his sufferings.

"The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel. What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." Phil. 1:16-20.

34 This word "witness" is part of a root, and there are two kindred words that go along with it. They are like three links in a chain, and come out "martyr." This was applied to the early Christian who bore witness to the Truth by his death. That is what Paul meant. He said, "I will be a martyr, or a witness." This is the ultimate to say, "Whether it be by life or by death. It does not matter to me, just so I glorify God." This is the pinnacle of witnessing. People, who live for the Lord's coming, and die, can be termed martyrs. There were many saints who were killed for their testimony, but that is not the only way of martyrdom.

Witnessing starts early in the Christian life and develops. As we yield and grow, our witnessing will become effective and we will reach others who are seeking more Truth.

(Reprint 1974)

\* "Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves."

\* Wherever there is a human being there is opportunity to do a kindness.





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