

FOR HIS GLORY

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CHRIST, THE GLORY OF HIS PEOPLE!

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

We would give a word of warning to those of you who seek your glory anywhere else but in Christ, because as surely as you do—even if you meet with honor for a time—you will lose it. It is always ill to put your treasure where it will be stolen from you. Now, suppose you seek your glory in your *learning*. Well, well, well! Let the sexton take up your skull after you have been dead a little while, and what learning will there be in it? What show of wisdom will be found in it when it is resolved into a little impalpable brown powder? What will your science, and your mathematics, and your classics do for you in death and judgment?

Suppose you seek your glory in *fame* and become the favorite of the nation as a great soldier? When the grave-digger rattles your old bones about, what will that signify? You will have great fame, you say, and men will talk about you. Well, will that stop the worms from eating you? Will it give you a single moment's repose, if you are found in Hell, to know that there are those on earth who say that you were a famous man? Great men in Hell look very small! Great men in Hell have to suffer as well as others—yes, they endure more of anguish because they were so great and had so many responsibilities.

When you wake up on the Day of Judgment, you graspers of earthly honors will get to reaching for your glory. And trying to find it, you will be like the sleeper who dreamed that he had much gold. He was gathering it up by handfuls, but when he woke he was in a narrow attic in the abode of poverty, and as penniless as when he fell asleep. Ah yes, if you seek your glory anywhere on earth you will lose it—even if for a while you win it.

But he who has his glory in *Christ*—when he opens his eyes in the next world will *see* Christ—and so behold his glory safe and firmly entailed upon Him! “There,” says he, “is my Treasure, and I have it, have it forever!” This is security which no bolts, and iron safes, and Chubb’s locks can ever give you! Do but put your treasures into *Christ*, and they are all safe! Even infernal pickpockets shall not be able to take Christ from you! If you win Christ, and put your treasure in Him, you are secure! God grant, Brothers and Sisters, that we may be wise for

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OF LAW AND INVITATIONS

By Charles H. Spurgeon

“Assuredly I say unto you, there are some standing here, who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.”

Matthew 16:28.

In that little group addressed by the Savior stood Judas. He had been trusted by His Master and he was an Apostle, but after all he was a thief and a hypocrite. He, the son of perdition, will not taste of death till Christ comes in His Kingdom. Is there a Judas here? I look into your faces, and many of you are members of this Church, and others of you I doubt not are members of other Christian Churches, but are you sure that you have made sound work of it? Is your religion genuine? Do you wear a mask, or are you an honest man? O Sirs, try your own hearts, and since you may fail in the trial, ask the Lord to search you; for as the Lord my God lives, unless you thus search yourselves and find that you are in the right, you may come presumptuously to sit at the Lord’s Table. Though with a name to live, you may be among His people here, but you will have to taste of death when the Lord comes. You may

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Go after Christ, dear Friend. Seek after Christ with your whole heart and soul. Feel that the one thing you must have is to be reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Keep on with that cry, “None but Christ, none but Christ.” Make this your continual litany—“Give me Christ, or else I die. Give me Christ, or else I die.” Then you will soon find Him. Let your eyes look right on and let your eyelids look straight before you, and you shall see the Lord of Grace appearing to you through the mist and through the cloud—that same Savior who stands in the midst of us even now and cries, “Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else.”—CHS



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OUR GLORY!

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eternity, for all other wisdom is but folly.

Another word, and that is a word of rebuke. There are some preachers we know of, and I suppose there will always be some of the form, who preach, preach, preach, but they never preach what is Israel's Glory. They talk of *anything* but Christ! Oh, how often have I heard the complaint from Christian people, "Sir, our minister is a talented man. He is, on the whole, a sound man doctrinally, and he preaches to us a great deal *about* the Gospel. But oh, we wish he would preach *the* Gospel, not preach *about* it, but preach the thing itself! O that he would preach Christ!"

The best sermons are the sermons which are full of Christ! A sermon without Christ is an awful—a *horrible* thing! It is an empty well! It is a cloud without rain! It is a tree twice dead, plucked by the roots! It is an abominable thing to give men stones for bread, and scorpions for eggs—and yet they do so who do not preach Jesus! A sermon without Christ? As well talk of a loaf of bread without any flour in it! How can it feed the soul? Men die and perish because Christ is not there, and yet His glorious Gospel is the easiest thing to preach, and the sweetest thing to preach—there is variety in it—there is more attractiveness in it than in all the world besides!

And yet so many will gad about, and make their heads ache, and turn over those heavy volumes to get something which shall be nothing better than a big stone to roll at the mouth of the sepulcher, and shut in Christ as though He were still dead! O Brothers, let us, if we cannot blow the silver trumpet, blow the ram's horn—but let the blast always be Christ, Christ, CHRIST! Always let us make the walls ring with the dear name of the exalted Savior, and let us tell men that there is salvation in no other, but that there is salvation *and* life for them in Jesus—life for them *now*; life for every soul that looks to Jesus—depending, alone, in *Him!*

Dear teachers in the Sunday school, continue always telling the children about Jesus! Dear Friends who work in any way for the Lord's Glory, here is your one topic! The old proverb is, "Cobbler, stick to your last," so, "Christian, stick to your text," and let the text be Jesus Christ! Let no glitter or show tempt you away from that. This cool Snow of Lebanon—be not taken away to drink of the tepid streams that mock the thirsty soul. This Gold of Ophir—there is none like it—seek no other! This is the grandest pasture to wander in—this glorious Subject—Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! Let Him be preached, since HE is the GLORY of Israel!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #826, Vol. 14—*Christ, the Glory of His People*—Read/download the entire 63 volumes of Spurgeon's sermon at www.spurgeongems.org.

PRAY FOR
YOUR PASTOR DAILY!

OF LAW AND INVITATIONS

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deceive *us*, but you cannot deceive *Him!* The preacher reflects that he himself may be mistaken, that he himself may be self-deceived. If it is so, may the Lord open my eyes to know the worst of my own state. Will you put up this prayer for yourselves, professors? Do not be too bold, you who say you are Christ's; never be satisfied till you are quite sure of it; and the best way to be sure is to go again just as you went at first, and lay hold on Eternal Life through the power of the blessed Spirit, and not by any strength of your own.

No doubt, however, there stood in that little throng around the Savior some who were careless sinners. He knew that they had been so during the whole of His teaching, and that they would be so still, and therefore they would taste of death at His coming. Are there not some careless persons come in here tonight? I mean you who never think about religion, who generally look upon Sunday as a day of pleasure, or who loll about in your shirtsleeves nearly all the day; you who look upon the very name of religion as a bugbear to frighten children with; who mock God's servants, and despise the very thought of earnestly seeking after the Most High. Oh, will you, will you be among the number of those who taste of death when the Son of Man shall come in His Kingdom? Oh, must I ring your death knell tonight? Must my warning voice be lost upon you? I beseech you to remember that you must either *turn or burn!* I beseech you to remember this—"Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." By the wounds of Jesus, Sinner, stop and think! If God's dear Son was slain for human sin, how terrible must that sin be; and if Jesus died, how base are you if you are disobedient to the Doctrine of Faith! I pray you, if you think of your body, give some thought to your soul! "Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? And labor for that which satisfies not?" Harken diligently unto Jehovah's Words, and eat of that which is good, real, and substantial food. Come to Jesus, and your soul shall live!

And there are some here of another class—Bethsaida sinners, Capernaum sinners. I mean some of you who constantly occupy these pews, and stand in yonder area, and sit in yonder gallery Sunday after Sunday. The same eyes look down on me week after week; the same faces salute me often with a smile when Sunday comes, and I pass you journeying to this the Tabernacle of your worship, and yet how many of you are still without God, and without Christ? Have I been unfaithful to you? If I have, forgive me, and pray to God both for me and for yourselves that we may mend our ways. But if I have warned you of the wrath to come, why will you choose to walk in the path which leads to it? If I have preached to you Christ Jesus, how is it that His charms move you not, and that the story of His great Love does not bring you to repentance? O that the Spirit of God would come and deal with you, for I cannot! My hammer breaks not your flinty hearts, but God's arm can do it, and O may He turn you yet. Of all sinners over whom a minister ought to weep, you are the worst; for while the careless perish you perish doubly. You know your Master's will, and yet you do it not. You see Heaven's gate set open, and yet you will not enter. Your vicious free will ruins you; your base and wicked love of self and sin destroys you. "You will not come unto Me that you might have life," said Christ. You are so vile that you will not turn even though Jesus should woo you. I pray you let the menace of judgment to come contained in my text, stir you now if you have never been stirred before. May God have pity on you even if you will have no pity upon yourselves.

Perhaps among that company there were some who held the Truth of God, but who held it in licentiousness—and there may be such here now present. You believe in

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CALVINISM: ITS PLACE IN BAPTIST HISTORY (2)

By DANIEL E. PARKS, PASTOR

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, PO BOX 305, FREDERIKSTED, VIRGIN ISLANDS, 00841

Post-Reformation Baptists are spiritual descendants of certain ancient Anabaptists. The term Anabaptists was coined by the Roman Catholic Church prior to the Reformation. It was branded by Rome upon those churches and sects which did not accept the baptism of infants administered by it as Scriptural baptism, and who consequently baptized all persons who converted to their faith from Romanism. Such churches and sects were therefore called by Rome, *Anabaptists*, or *Rebaptizers*.

The term *Anabaptists* was applied to both orthodox and heretical rebaptizers. The most notorious of the heretical were the Muniters. The most exemplary of the orthodox were the Waldensians, from whom today's Baptists descended.

Waldensians trace their history all the way back to the Apostles of Jesus Christ. They therefore existed as true churches of Christ centuries prior to the rise of the Roman Catholic Church, and for 1500 years prior to the Reformation. Their doctrine of salvation was what we today call Calvinism (see last month's article).

During and after the Reformation, many Christians throughout Europe and Britain embraced the doctrine of the Waldensians regarding Believers' Baptism. They, also, were known as Anabaptists. Eventually, the prefix *ana* was dropped from their name, and hence the name *Baptists*.

Britain's Baptists have a rich Calvinist heritage. The most notable group of them was the English Particular Baptists, so-named because of their emphasis on the doctrine of Particular Redemption, the third point of Calvinism (also known as Limited Atonement). This term distinguishes them from the General Baptists, so-named because they embraced the Arminian doctrine of Universal (or General) Atonement.

The General Baptists trace their beginning in England to the church founded in London about 1611 by Thomas Helwys, who had returned there after suffering severe religious persecution in Amsterdam. Many of their churches were eventually closed due to declining numbers, and others became Unitarian. The few General Baptists who remained were revived during the revival of Arminianism under the ministry of the Methodist, John Wesley, and formed the New Connection General Baptists in 1770.

The story of the Particular Baptists is far more glorious. Their first church was established in London in 1638, under the pastorate of John Spilsbery, by two groups who had left an Independent church in 1633 and 1638. They were devoutly Calvinistic.

Seven such churches set forth their beliefs in the *London Baptist Confession* of 1644, which was reissued as the *First London Confession* in 1646. The British Presbyterians adopted in 1647 the *Westminster Confession* which contains what is generally acknowledged as a foremost presentation of the Scriptural doctrine of salvation. Its articles regarding salvation were included in the confession adopted by the British Baptists in 1689: the *Second London Confession*, also known as the *Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*. All these confessions are thoroughly Calvinistic, without a whit of Arminianism.

Some of the greatest champions of the Baptists—and of the Christian Church at large—have come from the ranks of these Eng-

lish Particular Baptists and their peers in other parts of Britain. For example: **John Bunyan** (1628-88), the greatest allegorist of the English language and author of *Pilgrim's Progress*. **Benjamin Keach** (1640-1704), introducer of congregational hymn-singing in British churches. **John Gill** (1697-1771), unexcelled in his day as being all-three expositor-theologian-apologist, writing voluminously in all three areas.

Andrew Fuller (1754-1815), a founder of the modern foreign-mission movement. **William Carey** (1761-1734), the first missionary to the Indian sub-continent. **Robert Haldane** (1764-1842), a Scotsman in Geneva and teacher of Merle d'Aubigne (who became a leading historian of the Protestant Church and of the Reformation). **Adolphe Monod** (who became the foremost French Protestant preacher of the 1800's), and **Cesar Malan** (who evangelized throughout western Europe).

Christmas Evans (1766-1838), one of the two greatest preachers of his time, if not of all time, in Wales. **William Gadsby** (1773-1844), "The Apostle of the North," who traveled more than 60,000 miles in his preaching tours and delivered between 10-12,000 sermons. **Alexander Carson** (1776-1844), a Greek scholar, and perhaps the most eminent of Ireland's Baptists. **J.C. Philpot** (1802-69), editor for more than 20 years one of the leading Christian periodicals of Britain, the *Gospel Standard*. **Charles Haddon Spurgeon** (1834-92), acknowledged as the greatest preacher of the Gospel since Paul the Apostle. All these were devout Calvinists.

Europe's Baptists have a rich Calvinist heritage. However, the Baptist legacy in Europe is not nearly as sterling as in Britain. The most influential Baptist on that continent was probably **Johann Gerhard Oncken** (1800-84) of Germany. This home of the Reformation was, in the 1800's, a hotbed of infidelity. Oncken gathered the first German Baptist church of the modern era in Hamburg on April 24, 1834. The Englishman C. H. Spurgeon assisted in the inaugural service. Oncken evangelized throughout The Netherlands, Hungary (and Romania), Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. Oncken and his peers were devout Calvinists.

America's Baptists have a rich Calvinist heritage. One of their first was **Roger Williams** (1604-84), founder of Rhode Island colony, the first democratic state of modern times. Another of their first was **John Clarke** (1609-76), who gathered a Baptist church in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1639. This church is said by many to be the first Baptist church established in America. From the roots planted by Williams and Clarke, Baptists spread prolifically throughout New England, and from there throughout the rest of the American colonies. Williams and Clarke were devout Calvinists.

Colonial Baptists formed associations to aid their fellowship and joint endeavors. The foremost was the Philadelphia Association. It issued, in 1742, the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith*, which was in essence a reprinting of the *Second London Confession* of 1689. This thoroughly Calvinist confession was used by churches throughout the American colonies.

These American Baptists also produced their own champions,

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Calvinism in Baptist History

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including: **Henry Dunster** (1609-59), the first president of Harvard College until he embraced the doctrine of Believer's Baptism. **Isaac Backus** (1724-1806), a leading spokesman for Baptists and a champion for religious liberty. **John Leland** (1754-1841), leader in the abolition of taxes on churches. **Adoniram Judson** (1788-1850), the first American missionary to the Indian sub-continent. All these were devout Calvinists.

The Southern Baptist Convention has a rich Calvinist heritage. Although it is in the main, Arminian, today, it was thoroughly Calvinist at its inception in 1845. Its Calvinist founders and first shapers include its first three presidents, **W.B. Johnson**, **R.B.C. Howell**, and **Richard Fuller**. Also **Basil Manly, Sr.**, first president of its Domestic Mission Board. **J.P. Boyce**, founder of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and author of the seminary's textbook for theology, *An Abstract of Systematic Theology*. **B.H. Carroll**, founder of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas. **John A. Broadus** and **Basil Manly, Jr.**, for whom Broadman Press is named. How glorious is the Baptist heritage!

But how *inglorious* is their station today! Arminianism prevails over Calvinism. Exalting God's Sovereign Grace has been replaced by exalting man's supposed free will. Preaching Christ has been replaced by enlarging churches at any cost. Adherence to the Truth of God has been replaced by compromise for the sake of unity.

We are witnessing what was also witnessed after the death of the generation of Moses and Joshua: "When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the works which He had done for Israel" (Judg. 2:10). Most of today's Baptist ministers are like the infidel sons of Eli: "Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD" (1 Sam. 2:12).

Here and there are yet a few Baptists proclaiming the glorious Gospel of God's free and Sovereign Grace in Jesus Christ, that doctrine nowadays known as Calvinism. We need many more! Let us pray the Lord of the Church will raise up many more!

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the Doctrine of Election, so do I; but then you make it a cloak for your sin. You hold the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints, but you still persevere in your iniquity. Oh, there is no way of perishing that I know of worse than perishing by making the Doctrines of Grace an excuse for one's sins! The Apostle has well said of such that their damnation is just—it is just to any man, but to a seven-fold degree is it just to such as you are. I would not have you forget the Doctrine, nor neglect it, nor despise it, but I do beseech you do not prostitute it, do not turn it to the vile purposes of making it pander to your own carnal ease. Remember, you have no evidence of Election except you are holy, and you have no right to expect you will be saved at the last unless you are saved now. *A present faith in a present Savior is the test.* O that my Master would bring some of you to trust Him tonight. The plan of salvation is simple. Trust Christ, and you are saved; rely upon Him and you shall live. This faith is the gift of God, but remember that though God gives it, He works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure. God does not believe for you; the Holy Spirit does not believe for you—you must believe, or else you will be lost; and it is quite consistent with the fact that it is the *gift of God*, to say that it is also the *act of man*. You must, poor Soul, be led to trust the Savior, or into Heaven you can never enter. Is there one here who says, "I desire to find the Savior tonight"? Go not to your bed until you have sought Him, and seek Him with sighs and with tears.

I think this is a night of Divine Grace. I have preached the Law and the terrors of the Lord to you, but it will be a night of Grace to the souls of some of you. My Master does but kill you that He may make you alive; He does but wound you that He may make you whole. I feel a sort of inward whisper in my heart that there are some of you who even now have begun your flight from the wrath to come. Where do you flee? Fly to Jesus! Hurry, Sinner, hurry! I trust you will find Him before you retire to your beds, or if you lie tossing there in doubt and fear, then may He manifest Himself to you before the morning light. I think I would freely give my eyes if you might but see Christ, and that I would willingly give my hands if you might but lay hold on Him. Do, I beseech you, put not from you this warning, but let it have its proper work upon you and lead you to repentance. May God save you, and may the prayer we have already offered this evening be answered, that the company of you may be found among His Elect at His right hand. To that end let us pray.

Our Father, save us with Your great salvation. We will say unto God, do not condemn us; deliver us from going down to the pit of Hell, for You have found the ransom; may we not be among the company that shall taste of death when the Son of Man shall come. Hear us, Jesus, through Your blood. God be merciful to us sinners. Amen.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software—Sermon #594, Volume 10—AN AWFUL PREMONITION—by God's Grace, read/download all 63 volumes of CHS sermons free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.

URGENT PRAYER REQUEST!

Pray for Brother Alan Roman of Mexico City who is in treatment for his second bout of lung cancer. Praise our Master's Holy Spirit for keeping him faithful in translating Spurgeon sermons into Spanish, even during this trial. Pray our heavenly Father will use the sermons to draw hundreds of millions of Spanish-speaking Roman Catholics to His Son, Jesus Christ.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal 2:20). That all mankind are in the same condition as the Apostle, in the days of his unregeneracy, was, is, a melancholy fact of which every renewed soul is by sad consciousness too sensible. Born in the sinful likeness of fallen Adam, they are all partakers of the curse under which he brought himself and all his posterity by his sin, namely, “you shall surely die.” But to every contrite soul awakened to its state of loss and ruin, the Gospel of the Divine Grace of God proclaims salvation from the curse through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

When this saving Truth is brought home with power to the heart of a child of God through the almighty working of the Eternal Spirit, his understanding is enlightened to see himself in the position of the regenerated Apostle in the language of our text. He speaks of the change of which he had been the subject—he had been “dead in trespasses and sins”—but now he was dead to sin and alive unto God! Observe, also, with what energy he speaks of two persons—Christ and *me*—and with what determination he clings to Christ, and claims the merits of His death, the privileges of His life.

The first branch of the text is, “I am crucified with Christ.” He claims to have fully paid the penalty of sin when Christ died, from which we gather: 1. That Christ, on the Cross, was not a private, but a *public* Person, representing *all His people* so that when He died and suffered, we died and suffered in Him. As the first Adam did not sin only for himself, but for all his natural seed that should come of him, by ordinary generation, so the last Adam did not die for Himself at all, but for all His seed. 2. There is a real, spiritual, and indissoluble union between Christ and all His people, inasmuch that His being crucified is the same as if they had been crucified in their person.

The second branch of the text is, “Nevertheless, I live.” It is not an *annihilation* of my being, but a renovation and reformation of my *former* being. Though I am crucified and dead, yet I live a new life. I am not *what* I was, nor *whose* I was, nor *where* I was. I am not what I was: I am not Saul the persecutor, but Paul the believer, the preacher. I am not whose

I was: I was Satan’s, but now I am Christ’s. I am not where I was: I am living in another world, breathing another air—I live.

The third branch is, “Yet not I.” “Not I.” Who then? Why, what solemn contradictions are here! “I am crucified and dead.” Then there is an end, for death is the end of all. No, but hear him again: “Nevertheless I live.” Why, this is a short death that is so soon restored to life! Or is he at one and the same time both dead and alive? Yes, Paul is dead, and Paul lives. “I live.” It is not, “I was crucified and dead,” but, “I am crucified with Christ.” “I am dead, and yet I am living,” and, “yet not I.” Here is another contradiction or paradox—“Not of myself but by the life of Another.” No soul can animate this body but my own—yet neither soul nor body can live but by God. Thus does he annihilate himself, that he may magnify his Master, and that Christ may be *All in All*.

The fourth branch of the text is, “Christ lives in me.” Christ is the Root and Fountain of all spiritual life, having it so superabundant in Himself that He can convey it to all His members. Christ is said to live in the Believer by virtue of the spiritual union whereby He and they are one spirit. The soul does not more properly live in the body than He does quicken the soul and will quicken the body. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness to the soul. His absence leaves us dead. His Presence revives us—and happy is he that can say, “Christ lives in me.”

The fifth branch is, “The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.” “I live, and live in the flesh.” By, “flesh,” he means not the corruption of Nature, for to that he was dead when “crucified with Christ,” but the mortal body. It is one thing to live in the flesh, another to live *to* the flesh or *after* the flesh. Paul did not lead such a life as he did before, for that was *to* the flesh. His life now is *in* the flesh. In the former state he was dead while he lived, “but now I am alive,” he says. What a mercy were it if all who read this could say they *live* before they go from here and cease living.

But what sort of a life is it? “I live,” he says, “by the faith of the Son of God.” Here is life—“I live.” He was very sure of it, for he had said it before—“I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” And here again, “I live.” Well, here is the means of this life—“I live by faith”—“by the faith of the Son of God.” We live primarily and properly by Christ—as the body by the soul—but imme-

diately and instrumentally by faith, as by the spirits which are the bonds of soul and body. “He that has the Son has life.” He that has faith has the Son.

Here further is the designation given to this faith. It is called, “faith of the Son of God,” because, first, He is the Revealer of it. Neither nature nor law could open the door of faith. “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). “No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him” (v 18).

Secondly, He is the Approver and FAVORER of faith. There is nothing more acceptable to Him. When He finds it strong in man or woman, He is ready to say, “O man, O woman, great is your faith. Be it to you even as you will!” Thirdly, He is the Author of faith. He is both the Seeker and the Giver of it. Faith is the gift of God. And He that calls us to believe, He, only, works it in us.

Fourthly, He is the Increaser of it, therefore the disciples pray, “Lord, increase our faith”—He that gives it, gives the increase of it. Fifthly, He is the “Finisher of our faith”—both the Author and Finisher (Heb 12:2). He that begins this good work, He perfects the work of faith with power. Sixthly, He is the Object of faith. Faith desires to know nothing but “Christ and Him crucified.”

On these accounts it may be called, “the faith of the Son of God,” where again you have the Object of faith described from His glorious Person. He is the Son of God, a Person of quality, and of such quality as to be equal with God the Father, “higher than the highest, without beginning and without end, the Faithful Witness, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, which was, and which is, and which is to come, the Almighty. He who has on His vesture and on His thigh this name written, KING of kings and LORD of lords.”

And then the Object of faith is described from His works—“He loved me and gave Himself for me,” which is the sixth branch of the text. The Apostle had, in the preceding words, challenged Christ

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THERE HE IS!

*“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”
Luke 15:20.*

THERE he is! He is as wretched as misery itself; as filthy as his brute associates who could satisfy themselves with husks, while he could not. His clothes hang about him in rags, and what he is on the outside, that he is within. He is disgraced in the eyes of the good, and the virtuous remember him with indignation. He has some desires to go back to his father's house; *but these desires are not sufficient to alter his condition.* Mere desires have not scraped the filth from him, nor have they so much as patched his rags. Whatever he may or may not desire, he is still filthy, still disgraced, still an alien from his father's house—and he knows it, for, by God's Grace, he has come to himself. He would have been angry if we had said as much as this before, but now we cannot describe him in words too black.

With many tears and sighs he assures us that he is even worse than he appears to be, and that no man can know all the depth of the vileness of his conduct—he has spent his living with harlots; he has despised a generous parent's love and broken loose from his wise control; he has done evil with both his hands to the utmost of his strength and opportunity. There he stands, notwithstanding this confession, just what I have described him to be; for even though he has said within himself, “I have sinned,” *yet that confession has not removed his griefs.* He acknowledges that he is not worthy to be called a son—and it is true he is not; but his unworthiness is not removed by his consciousness of it, nor by his confession of it.

He has no claims to a father's love. If that father shuts the door in his face, he acts with justice; if he shall refuse so much as to speak a single word, except words of rebuke, no one can blame the father, for the son has so sadly erred. To this the son utters no denial; he confesses that if he is cast away forever, he well deserves it.

This picture, I know, is the photograph of some who are now present. You feel your vileness and sinfulness, but you cannot look upon that sense of vileness as in any way extenuating or altering your condition. You feel, but you cannot plead your feelings. You confess this morning that you have desires towards God, but that you have no rights to Him—you cannot demand anything at His hands. If your soul were sent to Hell, His righteous Law approves it, and so does your own conscience!

You can see your rags, you can mark your filthiness, you can long for something better, but you *are* no better; you have no more claims than you used to have upon God's mercy. You stand here today a self-convicted offender against the loving kindness and holiness of God. I pray that to such of you as are in this shape, I may be the bearer of a message from God to your soul this morning.

O you who know the Lord, put up earnest and silent prayers just now that my message may come home with power to troubled consciences! And I beseech you, for your own profit, look back to the hole of the pit where you were dug, and to the miry clay where you were drawn, and remember how God received you! And while we talk of what He is willing and able to do to the far-off sinners, let your souls leap with joyous gratitude at the recollection of how He received you into His Love, and made you partakers of His Grace in days gone by.—*Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software—Sermon #588—The Prodigal's Reception—by God's Grace, read/download all 63 volumes of CHS sermons free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org*

“The clay is in the potter's hand”

Jeremiah 18:6.

You and I are in the hands of God, like the clay is in the hands of the potter; and He has the right and power to do with us exactly what He will.

Throughout the Bible, God identifies Himself as One who has and exercises total control over all things, at all times, and in all places. His will, His purpose, His plans, His works, and His power are irresistible. He who is God has the incontestable right, and the irresistible ability to make, govern, use, and dispose of all things according to His own will—and that includes you and me.

You and I are clay in the hands of God. We belong to God; and God has the right to do with us what He will. He says to you and to me —“*Cannot I do with you as I will?*”

The God of the Bible, the one true and living God, the God we worship, trust, love, and serve, is totally, absolutely, irresistibly, uncontrollably, universally Sovereign. He created all things, owns all things, rules all things, and disposes of all things according to His own pleasure, even you and I! Nothing in this universe; nothing in Heaven, earth or Hell wiggles or moves but by the will of God.

God rules everything, absolutely. In Creation, in Providence, and in Grace God is Sovereign—He is incontestably Sovereign over all His works and all His creatures (Daniel 4:35-37). He is no more a debtor to us than the potter is debtor to the clay. He has the right to make and mar, use and dispose of us as He will. And he is not accountable to us for what He does to us or with us.

God exercises His Sovereignty with the greatest ease. It is very easy for God to do with us what He will. He makes us as it pleases Him, changes us as it pleases Him, uses us as it pleases Him, and disposes of us as it pleases Him. We cannot resist Him. He's the Potter. We're the clay. He's God. We're just men! One turn of the potter's hand, one spin of his wheel completely alters the shape of the clay, makes it, mars it, or makes it anew. So it is with us. Our times and our lives, the times and lives of all men are in the hands of God (Job 12:23; 34:29; Psalm 107:33; Isaiah 45:7; 46:9-13).

And God will be glorified in all His works. Vessels of honor, and vessels of dishonor both reflect the potter's wisdom, power, and skill. Vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy show forth the praise of God—“*The LORD has made all things for Himself, yes, even the wicked for the day of evil*” (Prov 16:4). God formed us out of the clay (Job 33:6). We are just clay in the hands of the Almighty—“*But now, O LORD, You are our father; we are the clay, and You our Potter; and we all are the work of Your hand*” (Isa 64:8). God has the same power over us that the potter has over the clay (Romans 9:21). We ought to willingly submit ourselves to the will and wisdom of God, being willingly pliable in His hands as the clay is in the potter's hands (Isaiah 29:15-16; 45:9).

By Donald S. Fortner, Pastor

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH of DANVILLE

2734 Old Stanford Road—Danville, Kentucky, 40422-9438

Telephone (859) 236-8235 - E-Mail don@donfortner.com

<http://www.donfortner.com> ~ <http://www.freegraceradio.com>

—Adapted from a weekly *Grace Bulletin*.

TELL SOMEONE TODAY THAT YOU LOVE JESUS CHRIST .

A Study of Ephesians 4:22**PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN – PART 2**

We continue with verse 22 in which we are told to put off the old man. Basically, I would like for us to consider two things. First of all, we will consider what the old man is, and then secondly how it is we are to put off the old man.

The old man is a familiar term in the epistles of Paul. It refers to what characterized the Believer before he became a Believer. Thus, *old* has the idea of *former*. It was what one used to be. Notice that our verse exhorts us to “put off, concerning your FORMER conduct, the old man.”

Of course, the old is even older than that. We can go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve; for it is there that the first man and woman disobeyed God. As a result of their disobedience, they became sinful in the very center of their being. Their natures were changed from the pure and righteous nature with which they were originally created. And since that day, all people have inherited from Adam the sinful nature.

Now, many people do not like this. And many go so far as to deny it; but there are few things more clear than the fact that all people are sinful. The behavior of every newborn child is a confirmation of this fact. No one has to teach the baby to disobey or to do wrong things, but it does.

Some carefully thinking Christians have had a bit of a problem with Paul’s exhortation here. Their problem is not in accepting the exhortation, but their problem is with the fact that this exhortation makes it sound as if the putting off of the old man is something the Believer is not finished doing yet, while other places in the Apostle Paul’s writings speak of the old man as something that is already crucified in the Believer.

A good example is taken from Romans 6:6—“knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” Do you see the question that arises? In Ephesians we are told to put off the old man as a present activity; in Romans we are told that the old man was crucified with Christ. It’s already dead. How do we reconcile the two?

This is more than a good question. It is an issue which every Believer should understand in order to rightly understand the life-long process of *sanctification* that he or she is going through. First of all, let us realize that passages like Romans 6:6 which speak of the old man as already crucified with Christ are speaking of the Believer’s POSITION in Jesus Christ. Those two little words “in Christ” give some very profound teaching that the Believer is actually united to Christ in such an intimate way that what is true of Christ is true of the Believer.

This means that because the Believer is united to Christ, and is part of Christ, what happened to Christ is said to happen to the Believer. All people are born “in Adam.” But when a person is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and becomes a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is no longer “in Adam” but is now “in Christ.” This means that when Christ died, the Believer died with him.

We have seen earlier in Ephesians 2:5-6, “even when we were dead in trespasses, [God] made us alive together with Christ (by

grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Now, I dare say that there is not a single Believer today who feels as if he is seated in Heaven with Jesus. But what the Scripture means is that you are *in* Christ. You are certain to go to Heaven when you die because you belong to Christ. It also means that your relationship to Jesus Christ is so intimate that there is a sense in which you are in Him, and *with* Him there in Heaven at the right hand of the Father.

Yet, one of the realities which no honest Believer can get away from is the fact that the INFLUENCES of the old man are still very much with us. There are memories and habits, and ways of thinking about things that persist in the Believer. And the duty of putting off the old man is the process of leaving behind all of those old ways.

I think one of the best ways to bring into focus what the Apostle is saying here is to use an illustration which Dr. Lloyd-Jones gave on this passage. Have you ever told someone to stop being a baby? What did you mean by that? When we use such an expression, we are saying to the person, “You are no longer a baby, yet the way you are acting right now is more like the way a baby would act; therefore act more consistently with your age and maturity. You are no longer a baby, and you must stop acting like one.”

The same idea is behind what the Apostle means when he tells us as Believers, to “put off the old man.” We are no longer unbelievers. We are not “in Adam” any longer, yet we fall back into that old way of thinking and acting. What we must do is to think and act more consistently with what we now are in Christ.

The next thing we must consider in our passage is the reason why it is so critical for Believers to put off the old man. Basically, we MUST put off the old man because the old man just keeps getting worse! Notice the Apostle’s description. He says “put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” It is this which tells us why it is futile to preach a mere morality. Telling people to get better is ludicrous for the simple reason that you can’t improve the old man. The old man, the old sinful nature, just keeps getting worse.

Paul says it “grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts.” There is no getting around the old man in one sense, for the Bible teaches that every person has one. David, mourning his own sinfulness in Psalm 51, says in verse 5, “in sin my mother conceived me.” Sin is in our nature at the very moment of conception, and from that point on, it only gets worse. And the reason why the old man keeps getting worse is because of its driving force which the Apostle describes here as “deceitful lusts.”—PF

“I have covenanted with my Lord that He should not send me visions, or dreams, or even angels. I am content with this one gift of the Scriptures, which abundantly teaches and supplies all that is necessary both for this life, and that which is to come.”—Martin Luther

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BEWARE OF THE CHRIST OF ARMINIANISM!

By Rev. Steven Houck

The Bible warns us that in the last days in which we live there will be many false Christs—those who claim to be Christ but who are imposters. Jesus said, “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matt 24:4-5). We who profess to be Christians must take heed. We must be very careful that we are not deceived. Our calling is to trust, love, and follow the true Christ and Him only. *We may have nothing to do with the false Christs who are so numerous in our day.*

We know about the Christ of the cults and other religions. He is a good man, a prophet, the first creation of God, a great spirit, a divine idea, or even a god himself. But he is not the true and eternal God. He receives his existence from another who is greater than he. He is not the Christ of the Bible. We are not deceived by this Christ. He is a *false Christ*.

We know about the Christ of Roman Catholicism. They profess that he is true God. He suffered and died for the forgiveness of sin. He arose again, ascended into Heaven, and is coming again. But he is not a complete Savior. The Christ of the Roman Catholics can not save sinners *without their own good works and the intercession of priests*. He is not the Christ of the Bible. We are not deceived by this Christ. He is a *false Christ*.

There is, however, another false Christ who is much more dangerous than the Christ of the cults and the Christ of Roman Catholicism. He has deceived people for many years and he continues to deceive millions. This Christ is so dangerous that if it were not impossible, he would deceive the very elect (Matt 24:24). He is the Christ of Arminianism.

This false Christ is extremely dangerous because in many ways he appears to be the true Christ. They say he is true God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. They say that he died on the Cross to save sinners. They even say that he saves by his grace alone, without the work of man. This Christ will have nothing to do with the Christ of the cults and the Christ of Roman Catholicism.

But watch out! Be warned! The Christ of Arminianism is not the Christ of the Bible. Do not be fooled!

ONE—*The Christ of Arminianism* loves every individual person in the world and sincerely desires their salvation. *The Christ of the Bible* earnestly loves and desires the salvation of only those whom God has unconditionally chosen to salvation. (Psa 5:5; 7:11; 11:5; Matt 11:27; John 17:9-10; Acts 2:47; 13:48; Rom 9:10-13, 21-24; Eph 1:3-4).

TWO—*The Christ of Arminianism* offers salvation to every sinner and does all in his power to bring them to salvation. His offer and work are often frustrated, for many refuse to come. *The Christ of the Bible* effectually calls to Himself only the elect and sovereignly brings them to salvation. Not one of them will be lost. (Isa 55:11; John 5:21; 6:37-40; 10:25-30; 17:2; Phil 2:13).

THREE—*The Christ of Arminianism* cannot regenerate and save a sinner who does not choose Christ with his own “free will.” All men have a “free will” by which they can either accept or reject Christ. That “free will” may not be violated by Christ. *The Christ of the Bible* sovereignly regenerates the elect sinner apart from his choice, for without regeneration the spiritually dead sinner can not choose Christ. Faith is not man’s contribution to salvation but the gift of Christ which He sovereignly imparts in regeneration. (John 3:3; 6:44 & 65; 15:16; Acts 11:18; Rom 9:16; Eph. 2:1; 2:8-10; Phil

1:29; Heb 12:2).

FOUR—*The Christ of Arminianism* died on the Cross for every individual person and thereby made it possible for every person to be saved. His death, apart from the choice of man, was not able to actually save *anyone* for many for whom he died are lost. *The Christ of the Bible* died for only God’s elect people and thereby actually obtained salvation for all those for whom He died. His death was a substitutionary satisfaction which actually took away the guilt of His chosen people. (Luke 19:10; John 10:14-15 & 26; Acts 20:28; Rom 5:10; Eph 5:25; Heb 9:12; 1 Peter 3:18).

FIVE—*The Christ of Arminianism* loses many whom he has “saved” because they do not continue in faith. Even if he does give them “eternal security,” as some say, that security is not based upon his will or work but the choice which the sinner made when he accepted Christ. *The Christ of the Bible* preserves His chosen people so that they cannot lose their salvation but preserves them by the sovereign electing will of God, the power of His death, and the mighty working of His Spirit. (John 5:24; 10:26-29; Rom 8:29-30; 8:35-39; 1 Peter 1:2-5; Jude 24-25).

As you can see, although the Christ of Arminianism and the Christ of the Bible may at first seem to be the same, they are very different. One is a *false Christ*. The other is the true Christ. One is weak and helpless. *He bows before the sovereign “free will” of man*. The other is the reigning Lord who wills what He pleases and sovereignly accomplishes all that He wills.

If you believe and serve the Christ of Arminianism, you must recognize the fact that you do not serve the Christ of the Bible. You have been deceived! Study the Scriptures and learn of the true Christ. Pray for Divine Grace to repent and trust the true Christ as your sovereign Lord and Savior. [Rev. Steven Houck is a former pastor of Peace Protestant Reformed Church, P.O. Box 5634, Lansing, IL 60438.]

Pray daily for Pastor Curt Daniel of Faith Bible Church in Springfield, IL. You can visit his site at <http://faithbibleonline.net/index.html>

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Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org www.pro-gospel.org
PO Box 940871, Plano, TX 75094

D. N., El Segundo, CA, writes—Thank you again for your ministry. I enjoy your newsletter so much and just read *Tell The Truth*. What a great book! I can't wait to apply the wise words of the Bible in witnessing. I'm just so excited. I think you should push this book more. Christians don't witness because they're afraid—they simply don't know enough. This book helps you by teaching the right way through the Bible. We should ask the Lord Jesus to go before us, and open our mouths in the right way. I've decided I will read the book twice and start witnessing correctly, asking the Lord to help me. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart for the truth.

M. B., Arab, AL, writes—Just wanted to let you know that I went to St. Louis this past weekend to visit a pastor. We ate at a restaurant in "The Hill," which is an Italian section of St. Louis. After eating we went into a famous old Catholic church, and placed your Gospel tracts in many of the pews. I wanted you to know in case you receive any e-mails or phone calls.

H. R., Dallas, TX, writes—I loved reading this newsletter, it's so "of God." Thank you for letting Him speak and work through you and Jane. What a privilege and pleasure to be involved in His ministry to the lost, especially the Catholics. From your fellow unworthy servant, who by His Grace and mercy, I am made worthy by being washed in His blood. I'll send your newsletter out with great pleasure and with prayers that it will reach its mark, hit the bull's-eye, reap an abundant harvest, glorify Him and achieve His purposes. All praise and glory be to Him!

Pastor J. J., Redding, CA, writes—Thank you for sending your Bible study outline for Will Metzger's book, *Tell the Truth*. I looked it over and it's great, I can't wait to use it. After your seminar here, the Lord spoke to my heart about my lack of evangelizing when I am out in public. He also used your example of faithful witnessing to really convict me of not using every opportunity to tell people about the good news of Jesus. I would appreciate your prayers with regard to this issue as I truly want to be obedient and faithful. Thank you. The RC structure does not follow the teachings of Jesus. It attacked and killed those who tried to get the Gospel to us common folk through the centuries. They've tried to keep their captives from reading the Bible for themselves. It is not a Christian religion at all, and it hurts to see people fall for it. But the blinders are now coming off of so many as the Holy Spirit works powerfully.

P. K. Chicago, IL, writes—This morning when I came out of Mass, one of your pamphlets was on my windshield. After reading it and discovering that you obviously don't know the teaching of the Catholic Church, I decided to go to your website. It was there that I saw that you were a Catholic for over 30 years. I realized that you never learned about the teachings of your church. So I felt compelled to send you some information for you to read, however, I will not get into a debate with you.

Brother Mike's response—No one would be foolish enough to copy a \$100 bill and trust that it would have purchasing power. Yet you and all your Catholic loved ones are trusting the "sacrifice of the Mass" (a blasphemous copy of Calvary) as a sin offering to God! Just as a counterfeit bill cannot be redeemed, neither can a soul be redeemed by the counterfeit offering of the Eucharistic false Christ. The reason someone left our Gospel tract on your windshield was to point you to the One and only Offering who can satisfy the righteous demands of God's perfect justice. It is the one time, all-sufficient, finished Sacrifice of Christ. He died once for all sin for all time. There are no more offerings for sin. The perfect High Priest offered Himself once, the perfect Sacrifice to a perfect God who demands perfection. May God grant you repentance as you read the 9th and 10th Chapters of Hebrews.

A.M., Brooklyn Center, MN, writes—My mom bought your book, *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*, at the *Understanding the Times Conference*. It has been a very helpful resource for us as we learn more about the RCC and prepare ourselves for witnessing to our family. I have a question. My mom was born-again two years ago, and has since been going to a Bible church. Recently she was told by a couple of different women at her church that she should go back to the RCC with my dad. Since the Scriptures tell wives to submit to their husbands, I am not sure how to counsel her.

Brother Mike replies—The situation in which your mom finds herself is a difficult one. God's Word outlines the role, duties, and priorities of wives in relation to their husbands. God has established husbands to have authority over wives. This is how He designed the family to function. Thus submission of the wife to the husband (and the husband to Christ) is to be done willingly and voluntarily. It is the will of God to give up one's independent rights to the God ordained authority. Submission, however, is different from obedience. There may be times when a wife must refuse to submit. Her obedience is to the Lord. If a husband asks her to do something against the commands of God, she must refuse with a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:3-4). Knowing that God hates idolatry, she must refuse to attend the blasphemous worship of a false Christ in the Catholic Eucharist. She should continue to honor God by being the kind of worshipper He seeks—those who worship Him in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24).

ZEBULON GEMS

ZEBULON BAPTIST CHURCH—Tom Harding, Pastor

6088 Zebulon Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501 ~ E-Mail: taharding@Mikrotec.com ~ Web-Site <http://www.henrytmahan.com/zebulongrace.htm>

ALL PROMISES OF GOD

*“For the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”
(2 Corinthians 1:20).*

Our God has given many promises to His believing children. These promises are all IN CHRIST JESUS, since only He existed when they were made, and since only He can and has fulfilled all conditions by His obedience and death. Therefore, these promises are all “YES” in Him, and in Him “AMEN” or “So be it,” “unto the glory of God by us.” His promises, Christ **fulfilling** them, our **preaching** Him, and your **believing** are all for the Glory of God.—**Pastor Henry T. Mahan**

IF THEY MEAN BY LOVE...

I constantly maintain the glories, beauties, and preciousness of love; and yet I am branded an enemy to love. But, if by love, they mean I ought to unite with those who deny the Deity of my God and Savior; if by love they mean I ought to unite occasionally with people who say without a blush that Election is a damnable Doctrine and hate it in their hearts; that Imputed Righteousness is “imputed nonsense,” a Doctrine that ought to be spurned by all, which is the very covering that hides all my shame, the very robe that adorns my naked soul, and is the joy and rejoicing of my heart, and which I have found to be the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

If they mean by love that I ought to unite with people who testify that we may be a child of God one day and testify that we may be a child of the devil another; that Christ died and atoned for the sins of Esau as well as Jacob, for Cain as well as Abel, for Judas as well as Peter, and that there are thousands in Hell for whom Christ died; if they mean by love that I ought to unite and call them Brothers and Sisters who profess to believe the Doctrines of Grace, and call themselves Calvinists, but can declare at times that those blessed Doctrines which are so precious and glorious to my soul are non-essential things; that is, if I understand their meaning right, they view them as useless things, and that it is of no consequence whatever whether we receive or believe these Doctrines or not, provided we do unite with all sorts, and pray for all, and are candid and mild, and esteem all as partakers of Divine Grace; I confess from my heart, if all this is love, I AM DESTITUTE OF IT, and instead of being grieved for my lack of it, I glory in it!—**John Warburton (1776-1857)**

A FRIEND

A friend is one to whom you never need to explain yourself, one who always puts the best construction possible upon your actions and words, and one who is always ready to help. A friend is someone who steps in when everyone else walks out. I pray for Divine Grace to be such a friend.—**Don Fortner**

DIVINE GRACE

Divine Grace is the sovereign and saving favor of God exercised in the bestowment of blessings upon those who have no merit in them, and for which no compensation is demanded from them. Nay, more; it is the favor of God shown to those who not only have no positive deserts of their own, but who are ill-deserving and Hell-deserving. It is completely unmerited and unsought, and is altogether unattracted by anything in or from, or by the objects upon which it is bestowed. Grace can neither be bought, earned, nor won by the creature. If it could be, it would cease to be Divine Grace! When a thing is said to be of grace, we mean that the recipient has no claim upon it, that it is nowise due him. It comes to him as pure charity, and, at first, unasked and undesired. Just because grace is unmerited favor, it must be exercised in a sovereign manner. Therefore does the Lord declare, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious” (Exo 33:19).—**Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)**

LOVE

If love is absent, so also is Divine Grace, no matter how “sound in the faith” one appears to be. “Now abides faith, hope and love.” No doubt, faith is of critical importance. One who does not clearly understand Who their hope is, and why He is their hope, has no hope. But still, “the greatest of these is love.” Make love your aim!—**Pastor Todd Nibert**

[Every week wonderful material like the above is found in the Bulletin of Zebulon Baptist Church. E-mail Pastor Tom Harding and ask him to send you, via e-mail, his Church Bulletin.—EO]

DO YOU PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL PREPARE THE HEARTS OF HEARERS BEFORE YOUR PASTOR/CHAPLAIN PREACHES? DO YOU ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO PREPARE YOUR HEART? YOUR PASTOR’S/CHAPLAIN’S HEART?

PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN PRISONS.

“My sins, my sins, my Savior! How sad on You they fall. Seen through Your gentle patience, I tenfold feel them all. I know they are forgiven, but still their pain to me, is all the grief and anguish they laid, my Lord, on Thee.”—CHS, Volume 44, Sermon #2566—A TEST FOR TRUE SEEKERS.

Pray to truly feel this prayer. Read the sermon.



Reflections is a Christian meditation sent by Action Uganda Ministries and is meant to instruct, encourage and edify.

GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT

*“Grieve not the Holy Spirit.”
(Eph 4:30).*

Consider who He is, what He has done for you, how much you are concerned in His continuance with you: and remember, that He is a free, infinitely wise and holy agent in all that He does: who came freely unto you, and can withdraw from you; therefore grieve Him not.

Grief is here ascribed to the Holy Spirit, not properly but metaphorically, in order to give us such an apprehension of things as we are able to receive. What may justly grieve a good man, and what he will do when undeservedly grieved, represent to us what we are to understand of our own condition with respect to the Holy Spirit, when He is said to be grieved by us. And grief in the sense here intended, is a trouble of mind arising from an apprehension of unkindness not deserved, of disappointments not expected, on account of a near concern in those by whom we are grieved. Hence we may see, what it is we are warned of, when we are cautioned not to grieve the Holy Spirit. As,

1. There must be unkindness in what we do. Sin has various respects towards God, of guilt, filth, and the like. But grieving Him denotes unkindness, or a defect of love, answerable to the testimonies we have received of His love to us. He is the Spirit of Love, He is Love. All His actions towards us and in us, are fruits of His love; and all our joys and consolations arise from a sense of the love of God, communicated in an endearing way of love unto our souls. This requires a return of love and delight in all duties of obedience on our part. When instead hereof, by our negligence and carelessness, or otherwise, we fall into those things which He abhors, He observes the unkindness and ingratitude which is therein, and is therefore said to be grieved by us.

2. Disappointment in expectation. Properly speaking, disappointment is utterly inconsistent with the Prescience and Omniscience of the Spirit of God. But we are disappointed, when things fall out contrary to our expectations, and to the means employed for their accomplishment. And when the means that God uses towards us, do not by reason of our sins, produce the effect they are suited unto, God speaks of Himself as disappointed, Isaiah 5:2. Now disappointment causes grief. As when a father has used all means for the education of a child, and expended much of his estate therein, if the child through dissoluteness or idleness deceives his expectation, it fills the father with grief. The Spirit of God has done great things for us; and they all have a tendency to an increase in holiness, light, and love. Where they have not a suitable effect, there is that disappointment which causes grief.

3. The concern of the Holy Spirit in us, concurs to His being grieved, for we are grieved by those in whom we are particularly concerned, those whom we love, or to whom we are related. The miscarriages of others are passed over without any such trouble. Now the Holy Spirit has undertaken

the office of a Comforter, and stands in that relation to us; and His love towards us has already been declared. Hence He is so concerned in us, that He is said to be grieved with our sins, when He is not so at the sins of others, to whom He stands in no special relation.

Now we may be said to grieve the Spirit, (1) when we are not influenced by His love and kindness, to answer His mind and will in all holy obedience, accompanied with joy, love and delight. This He deserves at our hands, this He expects from us; but where He is neglected, when we attend to duties with an unwilling mind, or servile frame, we are said to grieve Him. (2) When we lose the sense and impression of signal mercies received by Him; when we forget the Grace, kindness and condescension of the Holy Spirit in His dwelling in us, and communicating the love and Grace of God unto us, we may well be said to grieve Him. (3) Some sins there are, which in a special manner, above others, do grieve the Holy Spirit. These our Apostle discourses of, 1 Corinthians 3:15-20, and by the connection of the words, he seems to make corrupt communication, which always has a tendency to corruption of conversation (conduct), to be a sin of this nature (verses 29, 30.)—From *The Holy Spirit—His Gifts and Power* by John Owen (1616-1683). Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. 1954, pages 352-354.

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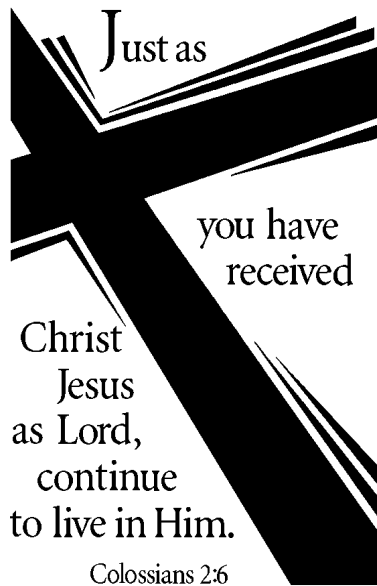
(Continued from page 5)

for his own: “I am crucified with Christ, and I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” He engrosses Him to himself, as if He were his own, and no man’s else. “And the life I live I live is by the faith of the Son of God, who is likewise mine, for He loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

It is a noble act of faith to claim Christ for his own, and that with an, “I,” and, “me,” as if none else were concerned but himself. And therefore this whole verse is made up of so many “I’s” and “me’s.” Oh glorious Lover! The Son of God! Oh gracious act! “He loved,” and oh, strange object whom He loved—*me*—unlovely *me*! But how did He manifest His love? Even by His gift—He *gave*. What did He give? *Himself*. For whom? For me, unworthy *me*! Every word has weight, and every act of faith has a “me” in the bosom of it—Christ lives in ME! He loved ME! He gave Himself for ME!—An ancient author, unknown. (Gleaned from Brother A. W. Pink’s *Studies in the Scriptures*, September, 1935). [Thanks to Mt. Zion Bible Church of Pensacola, Inc., 2603 West Wright Street, Pensacola, FL 32505-7950—<http://www.mountzion.org>.]

DO ALL YOU DO FOR HIS HONOR AND GLORY.

For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
P.O. Box 291301
Kerrville, TX 78029-1301



The only way to God is through Jesus Christ.

In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, *every* issue, our *only* purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

The renewed man—one who is renewed in the spirit of his mind—though he has to be in the world, his main thoughts are how he can use the world to promote the glory of Christ. If he goes into business, he wants to make money that he may have the means to give bountifully for the spread of the Gospel. If he meets with friends, he tries to thrust a word in edgewise for his Master. And whenever he gets an opportunity, he will speak, or write—but he will be aiming to do *something* for Him who has bought him with His precious blood. Why, I could pick out, if it were right to mention names, some here who are all alive till their bodies seem to be scarcely strong enough for the real vitality and energy of their souls!

Oh, these are the cream of the Church, the pick and choice of the flock, the men who are true men, and the women who are the true daughters of Jerusalem! The Lord multiply the number of such! Yes, may He make every one of us to be such, for I am afraid that we, all of us, need quickening. I know I do myself. It is



a long time since I preached a sermon that I was satisfied with. I scarcely remember ever having done so. You do not know, for you cannot hear my groans when I go home, Sunday after Sunday, and wish that I could learn to preach somehow or other—wish that I could discover the way to touch your hearts and your consciences, for I seem to myself to be just like the fire when it needs stirring—the coals have gotten black when I want them to flame forth!

If I could but say in the *pulpit* what I feel in my study, or if I could but get out of my mouth what I have tried to get into my own soul—*then* I think I could preach, indeed, and move your souls! Yet perhaps God will use our weakness, and we may use it with ourselves, to stir us up to greater strength. You know the difference between slow motion and rapidity. If there were a cannon ball rolled slowly down these aisles, it might not hurt anybody. It might be very

large, very huge, but it might be so rolled along that you might not rise from your seats in fear. But if somebody would give me a rifle, and ever so small a ball, I reckon that if the ball flew along the Tabernacle, some of you might find it very difficult to stand in its way.

It is the *force* that does the thing. So it is not the great man who is loaded with learning that will achieve work for God—it is the man, who, however small his ability—is filled with force and fire, and who rushes forward in the energy which Heaven has given him, that will accomplish the work! It is the man who has the most intense *spiritual* life—who has real vitality at its highest point of tension, and living, while he lives—with all the force of his nature for the glory of God. Put these three or four things together and I think you have the means of prosperity.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #802, Vol. 14—*Good Earnests of Great Success*—Read/download entire sermon at www.spurgeongems.org.