

THE BANNER OF TRUTH

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth"

Volume 33

June 1995

Number 5

The Consummation Will Occur at That Time

The Coming of the Lord

Part V

By Fred O. Blakely

*It Will Mark the End of Time and the Induction
of Eternity*

When we consider the consequences of the one more coming of the Lord Jesus, as they are clearly set forth in Scripture, the refutation of Premillennialism is even more pronounced than we have already shown it to be.

Throughout the inspired writings, the second coming is portrayed as marking the consummation of all things earthly. That includes the end of the old world and the revelation of the new one; the resurrection and calling of humanity, both saved and lost, to judgment. The ushering in of the kingdom of glory and that of damnation are also associated with the second advent.

Obviously, that situation, taken with the exclusion of a third coming of Christ, is positively disastrous to Premillennialism, which necessarily places the Millennium, or any other period or event that is to transpire on earth, before Christ's return.

The Scriptural Representation. Let us, therefore, consider some of the general scriptural assertions which establish the sequence of "the last things." It, of course, will not be practical to here examine all the passages thus affirmative, but some of the typical ones will be cited.

Peter's representation in Second Peter 3 is in itself alone conclusive. There can be no question that the Apostle is dealing with the second coming of Christ. As the climax of his refutation of unbelievers' denial of that doctrine he make the authoritative apostolic declaration in verse 10:

"But the day of the Lord will come . . ." The same occasion is called "the day of God" (v. 12). The "day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10) and "that day" are terms used in reference to it (Lk. 21:34; etc.). In all instances, the reference is unmistakably to the appearance of Christ.

Peter then follows with his outline of the awesome events which are to accompany and succeed Christ's coming. And it is these events which I want us now to notice.

The Last Things. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," we are told. Now, it is entirely beyond question that, in these words, we have a description of the end of the world. Peter clinches that assurance in verses 5-7, if indeed it were possible to say that the statement should require support.

In those verses, the Apostle calls up the destruction of the antediluvian world by water as an example of the coming catastrophe designed for this world. "The heavens and the earth, which are now", he concludes, "by the same Word [that of God, which held back the flood from the old world until the fullness of time, then released it to do its destructive work] are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (v. 7).

It, of course, will be readily recalled that our Lord drew that analogy between the destruction of the world by water and that which is to come by fire. He also added the instance of Sodom's destruction as a type of the

present world's end.

"They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk. 17:20-37; cf. Mt. 24:35-39).

Further scriptural references to the end of the world which agree with Peter's description thereof include:

Old Testament: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree" (Isa. 34:4; cf. Ps. 102:25-27; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:28-31; 3:11-16; Acts 2:16-20).

Jesus' language in Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13, and Luke 21. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," He tells us plainly in these passages. His portrayal of the convulsions of nature which are to attend that terrible occasion accord with the Apostle's representation, as do the Old Testament references.

"The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken," He asserts (Mk. 13:24-25; cf. Heb. 12:25-27; Rev. 6:12-17; Gen. 17:11).

Paul's citation in Hebrews 1:10-12 of Psalm 102:25-27 (cf. Rom. 8:17-25).

John's reference in First John 2:15-17: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof."

The general outline in the Revelation of the consummation (6:12-17; 16:17-21; 20:7-11).

But the end of the world is not the only momentous event that is to take place when Christ comes. The new heavens and the new earth are to be revealed. "According to His promise," we are told, "we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

That, of course, is the consummate regeneration of which our Lord spoke, as recorded in Matthew 19:27-30; Peter in Acts 3:19-21; and First Peter 1:3-13; and Paul in Romans 8:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; the Revelation in chapters 21:1 through 22:15; and the Old Testament in such passages as Isaiah 65:17.

Peter, in Second Peter 3, does not specifically mention the other occurrences that are to accompany our Lord's appearance. Other Scriptures, however, make clear that three more events will take place at that time.

The dead will be raised, both saved and lost. All humanity will be summoned to the eternal Judgment. Afterward, the condemned will "go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt. 25:1-46). See also Matthew 7:21-23; John 5:25-29; Acts 17:30-31; 24:14-15; First Corinthians 15:20-23; 50-52; First Thessalonians 4:13-17; Second Thess. 1:10-17; I Jn. 2:28; Rev. 20:7-15.

That, then, is the outline of events which are to transpire in the grand finale of mortal history. Premillennialism, however, vigorously denies that they are associated with Christ's second coming.

Because of that, I want us next to particularly consider the positive proof from Scripture that such is the case.

End of the Old, Manifestation of the New. Taking the occurrences

(COMING, Continued on Page Four)

THE BANNER OF TRUTH

FRED O. BLAKELY, Founder and, for the first 31 years, Editor
Published Monthly by the Independence Hill Christian Church
2230 W. 78th Ave., Merrillville, IN 46410

Please do not send any mail to above address.

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

ALBERT G. STONER, JR., Editor Phone: (219) 769-7048

MR. AND MRS. RICHARD SANKOWSKI, Mailers

Phone (219) 696-1110

DEAN E. BOELT, Local Distributor Phone (219) 844-8699

Editor's Address : 7903 Hendricks Street, Merrillville, IN 46410-5023

Mailing List Address : 18912 Delaware, Lowell, IN 46356

Requested donation to pay for actual cost of publication, \$7.50 per year

Sent Free for Three Months upon Request

Nonprofit Organization, Mailing Permit No. 358, Gary, IN 464

Regarding the Contents. All writing herein should be ascribed to the editor, with the exception of that which appears within quotation marks and/or is specifically credited to other sources.

Responsibility for Views. In the very nature of the case, THE BANNER OF TRUTH, in its editorials and editorial policy, represents only the views and attitude of its editor, and those of the other writers whose articles appear or whose assertions are reviewed therein. The paper is not to be understood as necessarily speaking for all members of the Independence Hill Christian Church, as would be the case with the expressions of any person or agency of any congregation.

Reprint Permission. All material, except that indicated as excerpts, condensations, or reprints from copyrighted sources, may be reprinted in full or in part without further permission. We appreciate a credit line in case of reprinting, but it is not demanded. We are anxious to share as widely as possible the truth which God has made known to us.

Where is the Promise of His Coming?

This is the question with which the first century infidels ridiculed and taunted the early church (II Pet. 3:4). "For since the fathers fell asleep," they reasoned, "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." The unbelieving ones asked this question with regard to *the apparently delayed fulfillment of the promise*.

The church in the first century was joyfully aglow with the lively expectation of Christ's imminent return. The great masses of religious organizationalism in our day, however, reason that the possession of such an earnest expectancy of the Savior's return from heaven is neither practical nor theologically fashionable. And thus, for all practical purposes, they do not engage in the expectant waiting. For the most part the greater number of religious devotees of our day have adopted the viewpoint of the evil servant that said, "My lord delayeth His coming" (Mt. 24:48; Lu. 12:45).

The infidels mentioned above scorned the early believers with the question that is the title of this article. But in our day, there is, by and large, no fervent expectation of Christ's return in that which calls itself the church for the world to ridicule. With all the talk in our day about restoration, namely of restoring the first century church, it seems to us that this fervent expectation of Christ's return would certainly be one of the items at the top of the agenda to be slated for restoration.

Here at the close of the twentieth century we must ask the same question that those ancient infidels posed, but with reference to *the embracement of the promise and to the fervent expectation that is normally associated with the promise*. Where is the promise of His coming? Where is the joyous expectation of Christ's blessed appearing, which ought to be manifestly present in the church? Where is the purifying hope? And where are those who are expectantly waiting and watching for the Lord Jesus to descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the

archangel, and the trump of God? Where are the ones who are preparing to meet the Bridegroom? In response to these queries, we would be quick to thank God that there are some here and there who are in possession of the blessed hope of which we speak. But such ones are generally not in great numbers even in that which is called the church. And this is a grievously deplorable matter.

Let us also say at this point that failure to reason according to revelation was the error, both of the infidels in the first century and, as well, of the professed church in our day. The scoffers cited by Peter greatly erred in their reasoning. Thus they tragically drew the wrong conclusions for themselves. But on top of this, they also engaged in making a laughingstock of those who were living in the momentary expectancy of Christ's return. They said, in justification of their derisive regard for the early saints, "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4).

But this was certainly not the case. All things have *not* uninterruptedly so continued since the creation, as the Apostle was swift to point out in verses 5 to 13 of the same chapter. The flood of Noah's day stands tall as a prosecution witness to every generation thereafter, testifying of a *specific divine intervention* into the course of nature *because of ungodliness*. For this cause *alone*, namely that of abounding wickedness on the part of men, "all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (Gen. 7:11) for "forty days and forty nights" (v. 12). And in consequence of this it is written that, "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died . . . and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (7:22-23). It comes as no great surprise, therefore, that godless humanistic philosophies, and education in general, have assiduously sought to discredit the flood, calling it a myth, or at least nothing more than a localized inundation.

By way of comparison, religious men of our day are impliedly saying the same thing as those who ridiculed the early church. "All things are continuing, and shall continue, as they always have," is the obvious inference that is drawn from their manner of living and from much of their teaching emphasis. And with regard to the coming of the Lord, if it is thought of at all, it is, for the most part, considered to be an event that is in the far distant future. "Christ will return to any generation except to the one in which we are living," they reason. For if they believed that Christ would possibly return to this generation, they would be earnestly preparing both themselves and their constituents to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. But of this such ones are "willingly ignorant," that "*the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*" (II Pet. 3:10; cf. v. 5).

In view of these things, let those of us, who delight in the prospect of the promise of His coming, pray that God will raise up many in our day who will be fervently looking for the Savior and who also "love His appearing" (II Tim. 4:8). For it is only "unto them that look for Him" that He shall "appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). Let us, therefore, seek to "turn many to righteousness" (Dan. 12:3) in this regard and to "persuade men" (II Cor. 5:11) of the urgency of this matter.

To pervert the understanding of the coming of the Lord is to contaminate the entire scope of Scripture. --*Given O. Blakely*

The people of God are an active people. They are continually about the work of their God. And they have hope that their tribulation shall end soon, and that they shall see Christ face to face. --*Robert Cobb*

We can know that we are dead to this world by our lack of response and non-conformity to it. --*Dean E. Boelt*

Ours is to focus on believing, and doing is the fruit of believing. --*Robert Cobb*

Everyday this present evil world challenges our faith. That makes the work of faith very relevant. --*Fred O. Blakely*

A Wide Firm Place

By Gene Hutchcraft

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father” (Col. 3:17)

The salvation which is in Christ Jesus brings us into a wide firm place. We “walk in the light as He is in the light” (I Jn. 1:7). It is true that Jesus described the way to heaven as being “narrow” (Mt. 7:14; cf. v. 13) in contrast with the way of the world. But the large place of which I speak pertains to the great salvation wrought out for us by the will of God. We find every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus here. This is more than all we ask or can imagine, according to His power that works within us (cf. Eph. 3:20). He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? This is the heavenly view. The words of our text (printed above) survey it from our perspective urging us to walk heartily in the new covenant blessings.

The redemption which is in Christ Jesus has delivered us from darkness. We now stand, by faith, in the brilliant light of God’s grace. In Christ we have confident access to the throne of God for help and mercy. Now we speak and walk as God has purposed for us for us to do (cf. Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:14-16; Eph. 2:10). Our old life is past. Jesus destroyed Satan’s power over us by taking the penalty for our sins in His body on the cross (cf. Heb. 2:14; I Pet. 2:24). We know that the wrath of God comes upon men because of the kinds of things which we once committed. Our past life was shameful, corrupt, and deceitful in our eyes, but now in Christ Jesus we can see clearly (cf. Eph. 4:17-19).

Robed in the garment of righteousness we now live in fellowship with the Father. This is according to His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. He is free to give all good things to us and we are free to live in them. We rest in the Son learning from His gentle humble heart (cf. Mt. 11:29-30). Grace teaches us all we need to know as we wait for His coming (cf. Tit. 2:11-14). In this freedom brought to us by the light of the gospel we speak and act as those who are judged by “the law of liberty” (Jas. 2:12). “The Light of the world” has filled us with light (Jn. 8:12; cf. Mt. 6:22).

Christ’s Name is above every name that is named in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Everything worthy of note that was accomplished by the early disciples was done in Christ’s name. Believers called upon His Name, and He heard from heaven sending them seasons of refreshing. And in His Name we are washed, sanctified, and justified (I Cor. 6:11). Let us therefore live in the power, love, and discipline which is afforded us through His Name and that by the Spirit of our God (II Tim. 1:7). On that day when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to God, we will do the same with the glad recognition that we have believed on His Name.

Now empowered by His Name we live in gratitude to Him for the lengths that He came to rescue us (cf. Tit. 3:3-7). “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8). And God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (cf. II Cor. 5:21). In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, and that according to the riches of His grace.

We now wait in anticipation of Christ’s return. “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Phil. 3:20-21, NIV). --304 Woodland Place, Carl Junction, MO, 64834-9542.

Divers Musings for the Times

Except Ye Repent. “Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Lk. 13:4-5).

The tragedy that occurred at 9:02 a.m. on April 19th of this year in Oklahoma City would, no doubt, be similarly interpreted by the Savior. Just as Alfred P. Murrah federal building suddenly came crashing down upon those several hundred individuals, so shall it be with *all* unrepentant sinners either at their death or when Jesus shall come again with power and great glory. Their world shall, without warning, come violently crashing down upon them, but with them there shall be no hope *at all* of healing, recovery, or escape *forever*.

But on the brighter side of this recent most tragic event, as Brother Dan Powers well observed, no doubt some of God’s people were there inside the government center in Oklahoma at the nine o’ clock hour. And many “little children” (cf. Mt. 18:3-10) also perished there in the day care center. For those individuals it was the dawning of a glorious day! They were inducted immediately into the presence of the Lord (cf. II Cor. 5:6-9), where there is “fullness of joy” (Ps. 16:11) and abounding pleasures forevermore.

In consideration of these things, we thank God for the blessed consolation that is the portion of the saints of God, that “whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:8). --Editor

Brochures Available. The Banner editor and Brother Dean Boelt have recently completed some brochures which are now available to interested parties. One is entitled *It is the Last Time*, the contents of which are urging men to be alert and watchful for the signs of Christ’s coming [that is, signs spoken of by Christ and the Apostles] and to be ready to go “in with Him to the marriage” (Mt. 25:10).

The second is entitled *On the Destiny of Men and Angels*. This originally was a communion meditation given by the editor and which has been expanded and adapted to a brochure format. The consideration of this topic is very intriguing to the renewed mind and heart as it shows somewhat of the greatness of the salvation to which we have been called through the gospel.

Dean Boelt also has a brochure that is entitled *The Unapparent Nature of God’s Rule*. In it Brother Dean labors to show how that the kingdom of God is presently hidden from the natural man and the natural mind, and that it now perceived only by faith.

Sample copies and small quantities are available free of charge. For larger quantities (11 or more), a small donation is requested to help cover the cost of publishing. --Editor

Regarding Christ’s Inheritance. “Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Ps. 2:8). “And now, saith the LORD that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and My God shall be My strength. And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isa. 49:5-6).

It can thus be seen that we Gentiles were a bonus that Christ received of the Father for the putting away of men’s sins by His cross. --Fred O. Blakely

“At our death we can say ‘it is finished’ with regard to the work of faith, just as Christ spoke those words with regard to the work of redemption.” --Fred O. Blakely

(COMING, Concluded from Page One)

in the sequence in which they have been mentioned, let us first consider the end of the present world and the revelation of the new one. How can we be sure that these developments shall occur at our Lord's coming? Simply because God's Word says so--expressly; and not once, but repeatedly.

Events Related to the Second Coming. In our basic text of Second Peter 3, the Apostle makes this clear declaration: "The day of the Lord will come . . . in the which . . ." and goes on to proclaim those two consequences. When, therefore, is the old world to be dissolved and the new one to be manifested? Why, the day in which the Lord comes, answers Peter.

As previously observed, this Scripture alone is conclusive. It should not be necessary to go further with those unprejudiced and willing to accept divine revelation. But there are other similar declarations of Scripture.

In Acts 3:19-21, the same Apostle makes a like assertion. Speaking to the rebellious Jews, he commanded, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

Two factors are outstanding in that statement: 1. The occasion of reference--the "times of refreshing" (cf. I Pet. 1:3-13); or the "times of restoration of all things," which, of course, is the same occasion.

That is an allusion to the liberation of "the whole creation" from "the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:19-23). It envisions the universal renewal of the world unto a state such as preceded the fall. That renewal Christ's mediatorial kingdom has as a part of its grand objective.

2. The point at which that glorious end is to be realized. "Whom the heavens must receive," says Peter in reference to Christ. Until when? Until "the times of the restoration," etc.

When, then, is our Lord to return? Why, at the last day--at the great consummation of "all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

According to Scripture--and that also is precisely the representation that Peter makes in his second epistle--Christ will remain in heaven until that time.

That plain declaration, thus, unquestionably excludes any literal coming of the Lord previous to the last day, as the Premillennial system requires.

To that impeachable apostolic testimony may be added the direct statement of our Lord Himself. In Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; and Luke 21:25-27 He expressly associates His coming with the end of the world. Two of the three questions which the Apostles had asked Him were: "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" In the course of answering these queries, He makes the statement previously cited concerning the dissolution of the natural creation. Then follows His declaration which establishes my point. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (cf. Rev. 6:15-16).

Christ, therefore, agrees with Peter in placing the second coming at the end of the world. "Then [when the old creation is dissolved] shall they see the Son of man coming . . ." That passage alone is sufficient for our purpose.

The Twelve had asked about His coming and the world's end. Incidentally, the question implies their association of the two events. He answered by saying that they would be virtually simultaneous. That ought to suffice for relating the manifestation to the consummation. THE END

It has the effect of spiritualizing your temptations when you see them as an impeachment of your faith. The church is built upon the proposition that Jesus is the Son of God. Temptations and enticements to sin, from this perspective then, are an assault upon your faith. --Fred O. Blakely

The Question is Still Asked Today

What is Truth?

By Rebecca McCormick

Jesus said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn. 18:37).

Pilate said to Jesus, "What is truth?" He was not the last one to question the Word of God or that of His Christ. One very precious truth to me is this. As Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32).

Freedom From What? What was I to be freed from? The truth liberates from the bondage of sin, from that of my old nature, and from spiritual death, which entails separation from God. As it is written, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). And again, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (6:22). Everlasting life! Just for believing the truth. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 23).

Obedying the Truth. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (6:17). "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (6:6). And as the Apostle said in another place, "If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (vv. 22-23). "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (v. 24).

Standing Fast in the Truth. This freedom is not automatic, but rather it must be maintained and continued in, as Paul said, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I Jn. 2:16). The world is that which continually beckons me and tries to draw me away from the Father and from the truth as it is in Jesus.

Of a truth, this is our warfare. Our new man is mortal combat with the old man, if we are in Christ. "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). Everyone that is of the truth, heareth My voice, Jesus said.

The Preciousness of the Truth. To be free from sin, self, and death, should be the desire of every man. And more especially precious is this truth to the household of faith. Lay hold of the truth, and the truth shall make you free. This is but one of the faithful sayings of our God and His Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Praise God for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. These thoughts have been penned by one that is in need of the truth. THE END

It is true that a live coal removed from the fire soon cools and dies, but it is no less a verity that a burning ember placed among dead coals also shortly will die if it remains there, unless it is able to ignite its comrades. --The Apostles' Doctrine, December 1943

There will be no moral cowards in that celestial metropolis which "lieth foursquare" (Rev. 21:16). --The Apostles' Doctrine, December 1943

If you know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that knowledge shall be to you a bulwark against the distresses that come your way. --Robert Cobb

"The night cometh, when no man can work!" (Jn. 9:4).

The Church Built by Jesus

By Fred O. Blakely

Its Characteristics Are Definitely Identifiable in the World Today

“Upon this rock [the fact of His Deity which Peter had confessed] I will build My church,” said Jesus; “and the gates of hell [that is, hades] shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18).

An Identifiable Society. It must be recognized that the church which our Lord established upon the earth is an identifiable society. It is of such nature as to be recognized today where it exists.

The Distinction of Its Nature. On the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, three thousand souls were added to the church. Soon thereafter the number had increased to five thousand.

The fellowship into which these people came was distinct and compelling. It is indicated that they virtually severed all earthly ties in their obsession with Christ. Possessing “the unity of the Spirit,” they were “of one heart and of one soul.”

There was an all-encompassing fellowship and a clear-cut breaking with the old natural life on the part of those who made up the church. That situation identified the people as members of a distinct society then new upon the earth.

Indeed, the word “church” itself carries the idea of a distinct society. In the original language it denotes the “called out,” or the “sanctified” ones--set apart to the Father and the Son.

Thus, as Christ built the church it is certainly identifiable. That is simply because He is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8). When we actually “restore the church of the New Testament,” there will no longer be heard the cry of “Lo, here; and Lo, there!” The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be apparent to all who truly seek it. And--bless God-- “all nations shall flow unto it” (Isa. 2:1-4). May God hasten the glad day when that is done.

Identifiable Characteristics. As a distinct fellowship in and under Christ, the church has identifiable characteristics. Among these the following are included:

The Foundation. As with physical structures, the foundation of the church is of primary importance. Its foundation, of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as Paul declares in Ephesians 2:20; cf. I Cor. 3:11). Ye “are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone,” he declares. Thus, “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (cf. Rom. 10:9-19).

As the Lord built the church He Himself is the Foundation. Whoever requires more than unfeigned belief in God’s Son as a matter of faith is not representative of the true church of Christ.

Conditions of Membership. The conditions of membership in the church are the same as those for salvation. Being the fruits of the faith that saves, they consist of the confession of Jesus before men, repentance of sin, baptism into Him, and a subsequent walk in the new life to which such obedience has brought one. Any response short of that falls short of the requirements for eternal salvation.

Let the people of God everywhere thoroughly familiarize themselves with the essential characteristics of the church. Then let them insist that the fellowship with which they are identified adopt and advocate those traits.

That having been done will contribute to a much-desired resurgence of the first-century faith and church.

May God help us to rediscover and perpetuate the church that His dear Son built and for which He died.

“Personality is the manner in which you express yourself. Christian stewardship is the way you give expression to Christ in you.”

The Matter of Perdition and Glory

By Given O. Blakely

“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10:39).

“The word ‘second coming’ indicates a final and different order of coming. It does not necessarily mean second chronologically. The Lord Jesus ‘appeared’ to Paul, Cephas, James, the Twelve, and some five hundred brethren (I Cor. 15:5-8) after He arose from the dead. However Christ’s ‘second’ coming, or appearing (Heb. 9:28), shall be the final one.”

“There are manners of life [which are presently being lived] that lead to both glory and perdition, and when Jesus comes again, they shall have led there. Right now all men are associated with either perdition of glory. Both perdition and glory shall come when Jesus comes.”

“Laying up treasures in heaven entails developing an appetite for the glory that is to be revealed.”

“A coveting, grasping life is leading to perdition (cf. I Tim. 6:9). Believing “unto the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10:39) is leading to glory.”

“The only way to avoid perdition is to be godly, which entails living by faith. Ungodliness is a manner of living that leads to the lake of fire, which is the second death.”

“It is presently hard to convince the sinner of perdition, and sometimes it is even difficult to persuade the believers of glory, because both perdition and glory are obscure now. They can only be perceived by faith. But both perdition and glory shall be experienced by men when Christ comes again the second time.”

“God did not call us for the ultimate purpose of being good neighbors, or for being a good husband or wife, but rather for the purpose of obtaining the glory that shall be revealed.”

“The ungodly shall be subject to “shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2) in every sense of the word when they enter into perdition.”

“Perdition is the worst thing that can happen unto men, and glory is the best thing. And when Jesus shall appear the second time [and not before then], the wicked shall go into perdition, and the saints shall enter into glory.”

“When Christ comes again, the eternal habitations shall at that time be occupied by both sinners and saints. For the sinners the habitations shall be in “outer darkness,” but for the righteous they shall be in the presence of the Lord.” “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Mt. 25:46).

“Both perdition and glory shall be the logical outcomes of the manner of living that preceded them. The identifications with both of these states are presently in the process of being made.” As it is written, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Rev. 22:11).

“Christ’s coming, like a battery, has both positive and negative points. It speaks of an ending and a beginning. It will end temporal existence and begin eternal existence. The saints will come out of tribulation, and the sinners shall go into it. He will take away from sinners, and bring to the saints. The objects of lust will be taken, the objects of hope will be brought.”

“He will take away the handicap and struggle from the righteous and give them to the sinner. He will take away liberty from the wicked, and give it to the saints. The saints shall exchange a cross for a crown, and the sinners shall exchange ease for tribulation.” --*Excerpted from a sermon entitled, The Perdition and Glory That Shall Follow Christ’s Coming*

God’s means are essential to the accomplishment of God’s ends for man. The traditions of men (Mk. 7:6-8) can never achieve the purposes of Christ. --*The Apostles’ Doctrine, December 1943*

The Way to Spiritual Victory

By Fred O. Blakely

"Forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:2). "In honor, preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10). That is how peace is kept in the church. It is by having "fervent charity," or love, "among yourselves" (I Pet. 4:8).

"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Ps. 119:11). It is as we hide that Word in our heart, and let it have free course in our life, that we shall be able to avoid sin. And so shall we be enabled to persevere in the faith unto eternal life in Heaven.

Let us not forsake the weekly assembly of the saints, in due recognition of the Apostle's exhortation (Heb. 10:25).

"He that loveth Him that begat loveth also him that is begotten of Him" (I Jn. 5:1). We thus know that we love the children of God "when we love God and keep His commandments" (vv. 2-3).

"Let not, therefore, sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12).

Here is a work for us to do. It is to be done by the power of God, it is true. But we must receive and use the power to that end, or the reign of sin within our members will not be stopped.

The overcomers of scriptural reference are those who accept that responsibility. And, in that acceptance, so receive God's power as to be freed from the dominion of sin.

"Let no man deceive you," as the Apostle counsels (I Jn. 3:7). Rather, "Let us not be weary in well-doing," recognizing that "we shall reap in due season, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

Let us, therefore, "cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart," and bring forth fruit unto Him with patience, as we are exhorted to do (Acts 11:23). By divine grace, let us give ourselves to that appointed task.

The Choice to Be Made

By Fred O. Blakely

The spiritual decision which every one of us must make is made clear by Scripture. It is whether to serve God, or mammon, or our own selves.

Thus, the ancient challenge of Joshua: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve" (Josh. 24:15). Since only Jehovah is God, serve Him.

It is written elsewhere: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8).

Let us, therefore, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as Scripture urges us to do, and "make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

Let us have grace whereby we may "let the peace of God rule in" our "hearts," as we are urged to do, and be thankful (Col. 3:15). The peace of reference is that "which passeth all understanding," as Paul calls it (Phil. 4:7). That, obviously, is a work for us to do. We must "let," or permit, that peace to rule in us, or it will not do so.

It is to be recognized that the Lord Jesus is the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). He, it will be recalled, "made peace through the blood of His cross." And then He came and preached it unto a lost world (Col. 1:20; cf. Acts 10:36).

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you," He said. "Let not," therefore, "your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn. 14:27).

The kingdom of God, it will be recalled, consists of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). And as it is written, "He that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men" (v. 18).

Let us, by His grace, seek to so serve God. THE END.

"The Devil and the world can laugh you into hell, but they can't laugh you out, said Brother C. B. Close, as he urged men to disregard the jeers and taunts of the carnally-minded. --*The Apostles' Doctrine*

The Present and the Prospect

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn. 14:19-20).

On the first day of the week we come together to worship our Lord, to break bread and to partake of the cup of remembrance of Him, and to edify one another in the most holy faith.

Now, indeed, "is Christ risen from the dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20). And "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the heavenly" (15:49). The present spiritual experience bespeaks the deliverance to come.

Thus, we--like Job--are eager to "fly away, and be at rest; where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest" (Job 3:17).

We praise God that, as it is written, there does remain "a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9). Let us, therefore, as Scripture urges us to do, labor "to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief"--that of the faithless Israelites in the wilderness (v. 11). --*Fred O. Blakely*

The Way of Non-Conformity

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

The emphasis is on God's Word as His instrument for man's salvation. Being in the world, we are not of the world, and are to live accordingly (Rom. 12:1-2).

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Tim. 2:15).

The vessels of honor favored by God are those who purge themselves of the love of the world and the defilements of the flesh; and, by grace, are in the process of perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Whereas, in time past, they walked "according to the course of this world" (Eph. 2:12), it is now different with them. "After that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared" to their hearts (Tit. 3:4), they turned from the world's idols, "to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Th. 1:9-10). --*Fred O. Blakely*

Our Spiritual Liberty

This is the time of our spiritual liberation in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. In Him, we are journeying to the blessed land which God has promised to us.

The Son is with us on the journey as we cleave to Him by faith and live and walk in the Spirit. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us (Heb. 13:15). That means that He is with us at all times, as we cleave unto Him with purpose of heart.

The person without Christ is without a wedding garment for the marriage of the Lamb. And he is spiritually naked before God. The wedding garment is the garment of salvation with which we are to be clothed before God.

The parable of the marriage feast makes clear that those without that garment will be rejected by the holy Father, and cast into "outer darkness" (Mt. 22:12; cf. vv. 13-24).

By all means, give diligence to see that you have on that garment of salvation. And let us see that we keep it on until the day of our death, or until Jesus shall come again. --*Jesse Stoner, Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Ladies' Fellowship. At our ladies' meetings we have a wonderful time in the Lord. We talk of the wonderful things Christ has done for us, and of the great glory that He has prepared and has waiting for us in Heaven. All of the women of the congregation are invited and urged to attend these meetings which are held the second Friday evening of each month. --*Betty Cobb*

They are Hidden from the Carnal Mind

Blessed Involvements of the Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the greatest single event which has occurred in the behalf of our race. Christ was "raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25), and He has been exalted as a Prince and a Savior to give repentance and remission of sins (Acts 5:31). And in spite of this, it is given very little consideration on the part of men, which is an evidence of Satan's blinding (II Cor. 4:4). The blessed benefits of the resurrection of Christ to us-ward, however, are perceived only by faith, and are not apparent to the mind of the flesh.

There is much lip service given to Christ's resurrection by religious men, particularly at the Easter season. Men acknowledge that there is greatness associated with the resurrection, but because of their unbelief, they fail to comprehend the great and marvelous which have been wrought for men thereby. And consequently such ones reproachfully return to normalcy of living in the flesh after their annual consideration of this blessed event.

The following comments are here offered with the intent of assisting us in properly considering the resurrection of the blessed Lord and Savior. His resurrection has accomplished a glorious salvational effect for all believing men and that for all time! May we glorify the God of our salvation as we devote ourselves to believing the record which He has given of His Son.

The Resurrection and Christ's Coming. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Here we see the direct connection of Christ's resurrection with His coming again with power and great glory. This single fact makes the resurrection of Jesus Christ supremely relevant to men living in the flesh today and always. He has "gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (I Pet:3:22). . He has now sat down in the place of all power. And the next time that men shall this One, who has ascended up far above all heavens, is when He shall come again in the glory of His Father, and of the holy angels, and in His own glory.

The One who has ascended into heaven is coming again! And as James declared, the Judge is standing at the door! The coming of the Lord is drawing nigh! (cf. Jas. 5:8-9). As it is written, "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eyes shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. 1:5). And again, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:12-13).

And the heavens shall and must receive the risen and ascended Lord until "the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time" (Acts 3:21, NASB). He will come quickly, and His reward [for men] shall be with Him (cf. Rev. 22:12).

The Pains of Death Now Loosed. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts 2:22-24).

And with regard to the pains of death and of death itself, that Christ should be holden of them did not lie in the realm of possibilities! This was He who did no sin, and therefore it was not possible. And this was He

who magnified the law and made it honorable (Isa. 42:21), and for this cause it was not possible. This was God manifest in the flesh and it was not possible that the cords of death should ultimately hold Him.

In the resurrection God delivered Christ from the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. Now consider this, that it would have been possible for each of the sons of Adam to be holden by the cords of death. As a matter of fact until the time that life and immortality had been brought to light through the gospel, death was swallowing all of them up. And in this same connection, it is also not possible for those who are in Christ to holden by death's cords. As the Savior Himself declared, "whosoever liveth, and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn. 11:25-26). For such ones death is a glorious entrance into the presence of God.

A Cause for Gladness. "Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope" (Acts 2:26).

This rejoicing was caused by the prospect of Christ's resurrection and ours. Consider this, that the godly from ages prior to ours greatly rejoiced in the prospect of Christ's resurrection, even though they lived in an age of comparative spiritual darkness. Let us see to it that those who lived in a time previous to ours do not excel us in understanding and in godly rejoicing. We have been favored to live in the day when life and immortality have been "brought to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10)!

The Deliverance from Hades. "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [that is, hades], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (2:27). "For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades" (RSV). And those who are in Christ make take comfort, for God will not abandon their souls there either. "Thou wilt not leave me in the unseen realm forsaken" (TCNT). And you, that are cleaving to the Lord with purpose of heart, He will not leave you forsaken there either.

Now that Christ is risen from the dead, He will not abandon your soul to Hades. Think of the spirits that were sometime in prison, for centuries prior to the resurrection of Christ their souls had been abandoned to the hadean world. But now in Christ Jesus our entire way of thinking in this regard has been forever altered! The Lord and Savior presently has the keys to hades and death. And for us that are in Christ, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Now we speak the time of our departure, when we shall depart and be with Christ, which is far better. This is a very practical thing that the resurrection of Jesus has wrought for us.

The Ways of Life. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance" (2:28). God has made known to us the ways of life, even more so than He did for David, because life and immortality have now been brought to light through the gospel.

The ways of life are now abundantly knowable now that Christ is ascended up on high, and has led captivity captive. He has given gifts to men (Eph. 4:8-11), all of which have the ministry of making known the ways of life, thus clarifying to men the way to heaven. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers all are for the purpose of preaching the Word and for assisting the people of God in going on to perfection.

The Connection with David's Throne. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption" (2:29-31).

Let us ever observe and consider this glorious connection between Christ's resurrection and His ascension to David's throne. David's throne is not an earthly dominion to be set up in Jerusalem some time yet in the future. This throne is the same as the right hand of God, which is the place of all power. And Christ has been seated there since His ascension there.

(BLESSED, Continued on Page Eight)

This throne is set to bring many sons unto glory and, in this connection, Christ's first kingly act, while being seated there, was to send forth the Holy Spirit to men from this throne. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). And having the Holy Spirit dwelling within is the appointed verifier of divine sonship (cf. Rom. 8:9).

Christ has been exalted, not as an earthly potentate, but as the great Prince and Savior, to give repentance and the remission of sins to Israel and to all men: to all, that is, who will receive it. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn. 1:12-13).

The Prince of Life. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (3:13-15).

It is written here that men killed the Prince of life. The resurrection of Christ by the Father, however, is the repeal of the death sentence given to Christ by men and for us it is a reversal of the death sentence given to our race because of sin. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22).

Christ Jesus is the Prince of life, and therefore it was not possible that death should hold Him captive! It was therefore impossible that He would be in the heart of the earth longer than the time appointed of the Father. Christ Jesus Himself is the quickening, or life-giving Spirit (I Cor. 15:45). The domain of death could not long contain the Prince of life.

He was killed by divine permission for our sakes and was delivered up "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Christ's death occurred because He laid down His life, that He might take it again (Jn. 10:17). And because Christ is the Prince of life, His time spent in hades, preaching to the spirits in prison, was of a relatively short duration. As it is written, "the third day He shall rise again" (Mt. 20:19; Mk. 10:34; Lu. 18:33).

The Keys to Hades and Death. Once God loosed the pains of death from the Savior, He forthwith ascended up from whence He descended, never to die again. As He said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell (hades) and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

And He did not rise for His sake alone, but for ours also who have believed on Him unto life everlasting. Therefore let us call to remembrance this word, when we are called upon to pass through the valley of the shadow of death. Jesus has the keys. He has released all of the captives of hades and death, as He has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Hades is the great swallower up of men and of earthly life. As it is written, "Hell [sheol, or hades] hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure" (Isa. 5:14). There is, however, a new element to this consideration now that Christ is risen from the dead. With regard to the church of the living God and the rock foundation upon which it is built, it is written that "the gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). The gates, mentioned above, would hold men captive in the unseen realm, if they could, but this is not possible, because Jesus has the keys to hades and death. He holds them in the behalf of redeemed and regenerated men. Therefore they "shall never see death" (Jn. 8:51), as He declared.

In the resurrection of Christ God has devised means "that His banished be not expelled from Him" (2 Sam. 14:14). Christ was banished from the presence of God at His death, and the resurrection was the means to summon Him back into the presence of God after He had suffered for our sins. And so is the resurrection's ministry to us as well. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept"

(1 Cor. 15:20).

The Chief Blessing. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26).

It is the resurrected Christ who has been given power to turn men away from their iniquities. And it is He who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. Now He sits in the place of all power turning men away from their sins and their iniquities. In this connection, let us walk in concert with Him, giving heed to this Word of the Apostle, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." This is made possible because Christ has been exalted as a Prince and a Savior constraining men to turn away from sin and iniquity.

What about the inclination and desire to sin not? This is not natural and did not originate from the mind of the flesh. Let us nourish and cherish such desires. That is the exalted Savior turning us away from our iniquities. Incidentally, this is the chief blessing, to be so turned. Let us ever regard it to be so.

The Great Reversal. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30-31).

Here we see again the reversal of the death sentence given to Christ by men. In the courts of men Jesus Christ was counted worthy of death. But in the court of heaven God threw out the death verdict given to Christ by men, and judged Him worthy to live forevermore! This doing He overthrew the death sentence for all men, "specially of those that believe" (I Tim. 4:10)!

And these are the primary benefits that the exalted Savior has to give to men: namely, repentance, and the forgiveness of sins. We can measure our standing before Him by our regard for these things. If repentance and remission of sins are lightly esteemed by men on a day by day basis, that is not a good sign. But if they are highly regarded by men, [and every man must be the judge of this for himself], this is an evidence of one's reconciliation to God.

The Present Effect of the Resurrection. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11).

This quickening is not that of the resurrection at the last day. It is a day by day enlightenment that enables those that are in Christ to serve the living and true God in spite of the mortal and sinful bodies in which they are presently housed. Thus the pressing need for acceptable service to God is not a strict regimentation of activities, but rather it is life! As we walk in the Spirit, we become quickened unto the service of God. And this life is vouchsafed to us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

The present workings of God with men through His Son are all towards life. "I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10)! But the bodies in which we are presently housed are mortal and tend towards death. That makes for conflict and incompatibility. And thus we see the need for the quickening of our mortal bodies for the rendering of acceptable service to God.

This day by day quickening is, however, a foretaste and forerunner of the resurrection at the last day, when we shall be forever enlivened to serve God day and night in His temple. Now the quickening must transpire again and again and day by day if we are to be acceptable to God. But there we shall be made alive forever without cessation or diminishment.

In Conclusion. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not

(BLESSSED, Continued on Page Sixteen)

The Enthroned Lamb Ensures our Acceptance There

God and the Lamb

It is a marvelous consideration to think of the Lamb of God where He presently is. John the Baptist saw Him while He was yet in this world in the days of His flesh (cf. Jn. 1:29, 36). But we bless God that Christ the Lamb of God has ascended "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). And in this capacity "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (7:25). Now--praise God!--there is a place of standing in the presence of God for redeemed men because the Lamb of God is presently in the midst of the throne.

Let us, therefore, consider some of the mentionings of God and the Lamb as they are recorded for us particularly in the Revelation. The due contemplation of this is a confidence and assurance builder for those who have started in the race to glory. And for those who have not yet obeyed the gospel, but yet who will duly consider these things, the presence of the Lamb in heaven will persuade them that the Father stands ready to blessedly receive them, if they will but receive the reconciliation that has been made. With these preliminary remarks, let us consider the following words given to John while he was exiled in the isle of Patmos:

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6). The slain Lamb is now conspicuously present there in the midst of the throne, particularly as we contrast this vision with those which were seen in the time of Moses and the Prophets (cf. I Kings 22:19-23; Isa. 6:1-8; Ezek. 1:1-28; Dan. 7:9-10). It ought to make our hearts to rejoice exceedingly to consider that the Lamb is now enthroned in glory!

"And [the great multitude, v. 9] cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10).

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (7:17).

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (14:4).

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (21:22). And incidentally, as Brother Fred Blakely well remarked, there will be no need of a temple there in that world, because a temple implies that there is a contaminated and unsanctified environment from which to be separated, and such is not the case with regard to the world to come. Nothing that defiles shall be able to enter into the new heavens and the new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:15).

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (21:23). All the illumination that is there in that world exudes the fragrance of sins forgiven and of the divine acceptance of men in the Beloved. *The Lamb* is the light there. Over in the world to come there will never be a thought or consideration that would make the Lamb of God to be irrelevant or of a secondary consideration.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (22:1). This is a figurative way of saying that there is an abundance of life for men to partake of because of the abundance of grace. Water is an essential element for the survival of men in this world. And the water of life conveys the similar thought that the life which is in the Son is essential for man's eternal life and well being. This river is said to be clear as crystal, thus indicating that there will be no false doctrines or even wrong emphases to filter out.

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him" (22:3).

The frequent mentionings of God and the Lamb together in the Revelation are vitally significant. This is a subject that ought to be of utmost interest to every one who has named the name of Christ (II Tim. 2:19). We shall be eternally indebted to the Lamb of God for our entrance into glory, and the blessed state of "at-homeness" that shall be our portion in the world to come.

It will be recalled that men from ages prior to ours were not so cordially affected by the visions of God and of the throne which they saw. For example, the prophet Isaiah, after beholding the Lord, high and lifted up, and His train filling the temple, said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa. 6:5). And this was the confession of one of "the holy prophets" (Lu. 1:70; II Pet. 3:2). And prior to the time of sins being put away, the Lamb was not seen to be in the midst of the throne.

It thus becomes readily apparent that the Lamb of God not only took away the sin of the world, and effectually so, but He also stands forever in the presence of God as the One who has redeemed us from sin and condemnation and who ensures for us a welcome place in the glory that is soon to be revealed.

Do You Know?

By Eva G. Campbell

Oh, do you know the Savior,
Who is everything to me?
I'd like to tell you how I came to know.
He said, "I'll break the cords of sin
And set your spirit free.
I'll share your burdens for I love you so."
Believing Him, I wept for joy,
That now I'd found the Way.
I laid my burdens at His feet,
His will mine to obey.
And now I'm happy with my Lord.
A Friend and Guide, so true.
Oh come to Jesus for He loves you, too.
There's nothing I'd like better
Than to lead you to the Lord,
His great desire is that you, too, may hear.
You'll find the story of His saving
Power in His Word,
'Twill show His love for you is ever near.
Believing Him, repent and follow
Him along the Way.
He'll take your burdens if you make
His will yours to obey.
Then you'll be happy with the Lord,
A Friend and Guide so true.
Oh come to Jesus for He loves you, too.

--Route 1, Box 104,
West Concord, MN 55985

The Brokenhearted. Where, in any hospital, have you ever seen a ward for the broken-hearted? These are the ones that Jesus came to minister to. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted" (Lk. 4:18; cf. Isa. 61:1). --*Dan Powers*

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn. 3:14-15).

Our Salvation in Christ

By Dan Powers

What we know as the gospel of John especially emphasizes the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Like that Apostle's epistles, it stresses that He is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

That, of course, is the essence of all scriptural witness. It is that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (II Cor. 5:19).

The blessed Lord thus came into the world that "whosoever believeth in Him should not abide in darkness, but should have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12; 12:46).

John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner, came to "bear witness of that light" which Jesus was to bring. That is "the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn. 1:8-9).

Thus, the Savior declared, "I am the Light of the world. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12).

We come to God through faith in Himself and His dear Son. Without that faith it is impossible to please God, as the Apostle declares (Heb. 11:6).

Faith is the belief of the witness to God given in the Scriptures. Or it can be said to be the hearty acceptance of the record in the Bible which God has given of Himself and His dear Son.

John asserts that Jesus was "full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). Those certainly are two qualities that we require in order to please God and glorify Him among men. Let us seek them from Him.

"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," our Lord declared (Jn. 8:31-32).

Thus, as He elsewhere said, are we sanctified by God's Word, which is "truth" (Jn. 17:17). As we know and walk in the truth, we are made free by the truth, as it is written in the verse mentioned above.

Let us, therefore, familiarize ourselves with the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus. Then obtain from God the grace to live and walk therein. That will glorify the Father and the Son, and make our lives effective in the divine kingdom.

Our Victory in Christ

In order to perceive the beauty and glory of the Lord Jesus, we must be in the Spirit. Such things are not adequately apparent to the carnal mind.

God raised up Jesus from the dead, "because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24). Neither is it possible that we should be held by death.

So is it written, "Death shall be swallowed up in victory." And we are enabled to exclaim with the Apostle, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:55).

Our blessed Lord has brought "life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). So to die in the Lord is to go to be with Him. And that is "far better" than any experience of Him that we can have in this life.

The Father's raising of His Son from the dead was a reversal of the death penalty imposed upon Him by men. Wicked men judge Him worthy to die, but God accounted Him worthy to live forevermore!

Through the Son the gracious Father has "devised means whereby His banished shall not be expelled from Him," or remain in alienation from Him, but be brought into His fellowship and service (cf. II Sam. 14:14). --*Albert G. Stoner, Jr., Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Sense of John 3:16. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to save it. That salvation for the world is on the condition of faith in and obedience to the Son. The salvation consists in preservation from eternal banishment from God in hell and eternal life with Him in the everlasting world to come. --*Fred O. Blakely*

The Demands of Christ Upon Us

By Robert Cobb

The gospel of Christ makes great demands upon those who believe and obey it. Yet the Scriptures say that salvation "is not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-10). Those who are saved are God's "workmanship," as the Apostle goes on to say. They are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We demonstrate our salvation by our good works in Christ. We do not earn it thereby.

Let us not, therefore, be either "dull of hearing" God's Word or slothful or negligent in maintaining "good works (Mt. 13:15; cf. 25:26; Rom. 12:11). It is by thus effectually hearing God's Word that we are to be saved.

Christ Himself, "though He were as Son," humbled Himself during "the days of His flesh," and "went about doing good," in obedience to the Father (Phil. 2:5-8).

Let us who have been reconciled to God by the death of His dear Son for our sins now glorify God by lives dedicated to His service. We live in a world where the majority of people are captivated by sin. Let us, as regenerated sons and daughters of the most High and Most Holy glorify Him by a manner of living that will point people to the Father and the Son, and so glorify Them.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate," is the divine call to us, in regard to the evil world and worldlings. The blessed promise is that, if we will do that, "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." Thus saith "the Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:7).

As the Apostle says, "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1). --*Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Triumph of Faith

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn. 5:24).

From the perspective of faith, life is superior to death. That is because, through Christ, death has been robbed of its terror and victory. Thus, we can exclaim with the Apostle, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" (I Cor. 15:55; cf. v. 56).

"I am come that they might have life," declared the Lord Jesus, "and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). There are no weak and beggarly elements in the new life which Jesus bestows.

That is as Paul represents the situation. The grace of our God is "exceeding abundant with faith and love, which in Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 1:14).

The blessed promise for due development in the grace of God is constraining, indeed. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:11; cf. v. 10).

We need, by faith, to lay hold on the exceeding great and precious promises of the Word, and thus assure our eternal triumph in Christ. The grace is available for us to do that, and we are urged by Scripture to fully claim and utilize it.

Bless God! we are not crawling or groveling in grace. We are standing therein, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God which that grace shall bring to us (Rom. 5:1-2).

So, as it is written of those of old time, we ask the way to Zion with our faces "thitherward" (Jer. 50:5). Thus, "to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). It provides "the victory that overcometh the world" (I Jn. 5:4). --*Albert G. Stoner, Jr., Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

Everything that we have that is adapted to the new order is by reason of the new birth. --*Fred O. Blakely*

We Have Been Blessedly Called Thereunto!

The Blessed Reign of Peace

By **Floyd M. Coffman**

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful” (Col. 3:15).

Introduction. We are faced with making several choices in life that affect our well being. But ultimately there are only two choices which are of any significant consequence. And those have to do with serving God, or mammon and thus be given over to things pertaining to this life. Let us take our stand with Joshua, who boldly affirmed to the children of Israel, “choose you this day whom ye will serve,” “but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh. 24:15).

Now by not choosing to serve God we are automatically left to serve mammon and the god of this world. Let us also state at the beginning that it is unprofitable to serve anyone but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is “the God of peace” (Rom. 15:33; 16:20; Phil. 4:9; I Th. 5:23; Heb. 13:20) and is noted for imparting peace to those who are reconciled to Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us choose to serve Him and it shall be well with our souls.

Let The Peace Rule. It is up to us for this dominion of peace to be accomplished in us. Our wills are involved, and we must choose to let it rule. To let peace rule is to let it control your heart. And if we do not let peace have the rule and dominion, other things will take its place such as envy, hatred, and every evil work. “God hath called us to peace” (I Cor. 7:15), and this is one of many incentives to let the peace of God rule within us. “As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:18). This, of course, is the natural outworking of the peace that is ruling within.

One of the chief benefits of letting the peace of God rule in our hearts is that it will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. This is a peace which “passeth all understanding” as it garrisons the heart and mind of the child of God.

Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (Jn. 14:27). And again He said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16:33). God is faithful, so let us take advantage of the peace that is available, and our hearts shall be kept through trials and tribulations.

The Significance of This Peace. What is meant by the peace of God that we are to let rule? To answer this question let us consider that man was separated from God by sin. We were “alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 4:18), and enemies in our minds by wicked works (Col. 1:21). Our condition was such that we stood in desperate need of reconciliation and of a Mediator between God and men. We were all strangers to the peace of God. Yes, and there is no peace to such alienated ones (Isa. 48:22).

Isaiah the prophet graphically tells us of Christ, God’s suffering Servant in chapter fifty-three of his book. “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: *the chastisement of our peace was upon Him*; and with His stripes we are healed” (v. 5).

As Paul the Apostle also said, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (II Cor. 5:19). “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (v. 21, NASB). “Therefore being justified by faith, we have *peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 5:1)

The Knowledge of This Peace. Thus knowing that our sins are forgiven gives us access to and peace with God. And this knowledge should energize us to let the peace of God rule in our hearts.

Christ made our peace with God and we must not forget that.

Without Christ and His redemptive work we would still be enemies of God, being yet alienated from Him. “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13). “For *He is our peace*, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, *so making peace*; And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: *And came and preached peace* to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh” (vv. 14-17).

The End of This Peace. For those who are continuing in the faith there is a glorious end to this peace. As it is written, “and, *having made peace through the blood of His cross*, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled, In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight” (Col. 1:20-22). Let us continue steadfastly in the faith, and in the peace of God, so that this glorious presentation by Christ to the Father may be ours as well. --*Slightly Adapted from a sermon preached by Brother Coffman at this place of assembly.*

The Everlasting Arms

(Deut. 33:27)

Art thou sunk in depths of sorrow,
Where no arm can reach so low?
There is One Whose arms Almighty
Reach beyond the deepest woe.
God the Eternal is thy Refuge,
Let it still thy wild alarms;
Underneath the deepest sorrow
Are the everlasting arms.

Underneath us, O how easy,
We have not to mount on high.
But to sink into His fullness,
And in trustful weakness lie,
And we find our humbling failures
Save us from the strength that harms,
We may fail, but underneath us
Are the everlasting arms.

Arms of Jesus, fold me closer
To Thy strong and loving breast,
Till my spirit on Thy bosom
Finds its everlasting rest.
And when time’s last sands are sinking,
Shield my heart from all alarms,
Softly whispering, “Underneath thee
Are the everlasting arms.”
--*Author Unknown, Taken from the December
1943 issue of The Apostle’s Doctrine*

The flesh seeks to be comforted. It spurns complication or inconvenience. Adam and Eve hid from God. Cain sought to escape responsibility. David sought to cover one sin with another. Pilate washed his hands. All were attempting to maneuver out of and around the spotlight of God’s gaze. --*Gene Hutchcraft*

This world offers no true comfort to the spiritual man. --*Gene Hutchcraft*

“Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” (I Cor. 6:3).

The Jeopardy of Falling

By Robert Cobb

There is nothing in this present evil world that will encourage us to fight the good fight of faith. This present world has been cursed by our God and He will burn it up one of these days. But there are false prophets that will attempt to persuade us that the world has a good side to it. They reason in this manner: "God made this world, and we should seek to love it and care for it, we should become one with it and search out its deep secrets." The point they miss, however, is that God will most certainly destroy this present evil world, along with its lusts and affections.

Christ warned us that these days would come. He said that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12). We are living in those days. Mens' hearts are "failing them for fear" (Lk. 21:26), and they have no real sense of what it means to worship and serve the living God. And the assembly is often a place were they go to sooth their seared conscience.

The assembly of the saints of God, as it is spoken of in Scripture, is a place of divine activity. God and Christ are in the midst of these ones who have separated themselves from the world. They are all bearing their cross and like the Lord Jesus (Isa. 49:2), their mouths are often found to be as a sharp sword as they speak the words of God.

According to the apostolic pattern for the assembly of the saints, all join in and contribute to the service (cf. I Cor. 12, 14; see also Rom. 12:3-8). They haven't come merely to hear a man speak, but rather they have come to assist their brothers and sisters in renewing the fight of faith and the warfare to the which they have been called. It is a time to remember the cost of their redemption from sin. Every member of the body ministers in some way to the other members.

Separation from the world has got to occur if men and women are to be accepted of the Father. God has made a way through His Son so that we may enter into this separation now. In this connection it is vital to see that all men will be separated from the cursed order sooner or later. When God destroyed the earth with water in the flood, men were separated from the world. Noah built an ark and he and his family went therein to the place of safety. And then the rains began to fall upon the earth.

Christ is our "Ark" of safety. We get into Him by believing the report that God gave of His Son and by obeying the gospel. In other words we believe that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and rose again from the dead (cf. I Cor. 15:1-3) and are baptized. Now if we believe that with all our hearts and continue in the faith, then we are, of a truth, in Christ.

All those who are in Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. They are, in fact, on their way to heaven. And along the way, God is purging from them the things that cannot enter into that world.

But what of those who say that they believe, yet are not warring against fleshly lusts? Well, the scriptures tell us that faith with out works is dead. This demonstrates that such ones are liars. They evidence that they really don't believe, regardless of what they say. On the brighter side, all those who do believe are in quest of heaven. They have seen something better than this temporal world and they are willing to gladly trade this one for the one which they can see by faith.

Sliding back into sin is the fruit of walking in the flesh. When we walk in the flesh we cannot be pleasing to God. The scripture says that we know that "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I Jn. 3:15). It matters very little how much a man may say that he has faith (cf. Jas. 2:14-18). If that faith which is professed hasn't given him the power to rule over his fleshly passions, then it is not the faith of God's elect. It should be forthrightly abandoned in order that he may acquire that saving faith which God wants to give to every man.

God cannot and will not force anybody to believe, and by the same token, He will in no wise turn anybody aside if they come unto the Savior. As it is written, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn.

6:37). But when men say that they have faith and then continue to live in sin, they are grieving the Holy Spirit and are in a very jeopardous situation.

"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Cor. 11:31). Take a moment and reflect back to the day when you first believed in Christ. Were you more zealous toward Christ at that time? If the answer is yes, then you have backslid. There is good news, however, and we do not have to remain in that condition. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (I Jn. 2:2). If we will but confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us, therefore, "judge righteous judgement" (Jn. 7:24) in these matters, and let us "lay hold on eternal life" (I Tim. 6:12).

God asks the question, "why will ye die?" (Ezek. 18:31; 33:11). It doesn't make sense that a man would choose to turn away from the God who gave His Son to save them, but it happens everyday! Satan is actively attempting to turn men away from God. And we are not in a spiritual vacuum. We must continue, steadfast in the faith. We must give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Heaven is certainly worth the struggle. And Christ is able to keep you from falling only to the degree that you are willing to be kept. In this matter strong faith is a must!

Let us therefore commit ourselves "unto Him that is able to keep" us "from falling, and to present" us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).

The Dominion Given to Christ

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre" (Ps. 45:6). In earth thrones are generally not noted for righteousness. Oftentimes they are noted for wickedness and mischief. But one of the chief characteristics of God's throne is its right scepter. It is a throne of righteousness and God's dominion and rule are set against all unrighteousness and iniquity. The throne of God has no fellowship with the throne of iniquity.

The verse above is speaking of the dominion that would be given to the Son of God. And one of the primary requirements for this dominion was that He loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

We should also be quick to add that if men are to participate in this dominion, it will be because they believed on God's Son, and so received the love of righteousness and hatred for iniquity which faith imparts. There will be none sitting upon thrones in the world to come, whose senses were not exercised in this life "to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). And none will be there who are not sitting upon thrones as there are no throneless corners in the world to come for men to occupy. Everyone who is there shall have been accounted worthy to obtain, and have dominion in, that world, wherein dwelleth only righteousness.

The Throne of Judgment

"Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne" (Ps. 89:14). This is what the throne of God is unswervingly noted for. There is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. 1:17) from the performance of justice and judgment as it pertains to this throne. It was so with all of God's dealings with the angels that sinned and, as well, with the sons of men throughout all ages. This throne in the heavens has never wanted for righteous judgments and just dealings.

And in these last days the justice and judgment wherewith God dealt with men's sins can now be plainly seen. "He (the Father) made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21, NASB). And this was so that He might be "just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:33-34).

The Opened Path of Life

Let us be thankful for the "path of life" which the Lord Jesus has opened for them that love and serve Him (Ps. 16:11). He Himself, of course, is that "path of life." As He declared, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (Jn. 14:6). Thus, if we are to have abundant and eternal, we must receive it from Christ.

"Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!" (Ps. 31:19).

It is in the due consideration of those divine blessings that we are to live and serve God. So we read of the blessings "laid up" for us in heaven (Col. 1:5), which are to nourish our faith and hope in the faith life.

"With Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light we see light," acknowledged David (Ps. 36:9). The blessing of ultimately being with God and serving Him in eternity is that for which we hope and labor.

The present work for us to do is to trust God and busy ourselves in doing "the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give Him shall never thirst, said Jesus (Jn. 4:14). There is, indeed, "a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Ps. 46:4).

Let us partake freely of that water of life, and so be refreshed and sustained to serve our God acceptably and well pleasingly. --*Albert G. Stoner, Jr., Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Necessity of Seeking

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk. 16:10).

People are dominated by one of two supernatural powers: that of Christ--the resurrection power; or that of Satan, the prince of this world, who wields his power in and through darkness.

We should earnestly desire and diligently seek what Christ called "the true riches" (Lk. 16:11), which can be our own. That consists of the enduring substance in Heaven available to us in the Savior. We are to "set" our affection on that, "not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-3).

In Christ, we have "tasted of the heavenly gift" (Heb. 6:4). And it has whetted our appetites for more. Let us, therefore, seek it with all the diligence and singleness of heart, as we are exhorted by the Lord to do.

The promise is that, if we seek it aright, we shall surely find it. And that reward of our spiritual quest will be worth far more than the effort demanded by the quest. --*Timothy McCulfor, Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Bearing of Fruit. Fruit bearing for God necessitates getting into and abiding in Christ, the divine Vine. Without that personal union with Him, no acceptable fruit can be borne.

That situation makes the work of faith indispensable to fruit-bearing. That is because we are now in Christ by faith.

Let us, therefore, major on this work of believing in and abiding in Christ. So may we be fruitful branches in Him who is the true Vine, and glorify both the Father and the Son. --*Fred O. Blakely*

A Gift of God. Faith is a gift of God, and we praise Him for it. Our faith and willingness to serve Him denotes our reconciliation to God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power (Ps. 110:3). Let us then give God the glory for that reconciliation to Himself which faith has brought to us. --*Dean E. Boelt*

Life's Futility Without God. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon expresses the futility "under the sun" of life without God. He bears personal testimony to the emptiness of wine, women, works, wealth, and worldly wisdom. There is no abiding happiness unless man places God at the center of his life. Any sustained happiness must be found in God Himself and in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. --*Fred O. Blakely*

We, that are in Christ Jesus, must take the faith which has been delivered unto us seriously, or the world will not take it at all (by obedience to the gospel). --*Excerpted from Edwin B. Strong, in The Apostles' Doctrine, December 1943*

The Day of God's Power

By Dean E. Boelt

There is a day of God's power and a day of His wrath. As it is written, His people shall be willing in the day of His power (Ps. 110:3). It is also said that He will "strike through kings in the day of His wrath" (110:5).

His power is now wielded through the Word of God. The great day of wrath for the ungodly--those who have not obeyed the gospel of Christ--will be at Jesus' second coming. They will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (II Th. 1:9).

The present world is also slated for destruction at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. By His grace we are reconciled to that situation. Thus, we say with John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). As regards their affection, it is as good as come. That is because they are dead to the present evil world and are alive unto God.

The power of God unto the salvation of people is wielded through the gospel of His dear Son. So "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21).

As custodians of the blessed gospel, let us proclaim it with power, and give due heed to it ourselves.

The gospel can change the heart and save the souls of those who believe and obey it. In full possession of that reality, let us continue to preach it with conviction and power. We can assuredly depend upon God to give the promised results from such faithfulness to Him and His dear Son. --*Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

Jesus, The Father's Spokesman

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him" (Deut. 18:15-18; cf. Acts 3:22-24).

"My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (Jn. 7:14-18).

"I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him" (Jn. 8:21-30).

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father" (Jn. 8:31-45).

"For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak" (Jn. 12:49-50).

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (Jn. 15:15).

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-4).

"While He yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Mt. 17:1-8).

Some Good Counsel. Why do not men realize that death is the result of their ways? Why are men so complacent? Why do they let themselves drift away from the Fountainhead of all that is decent and right? Before God, ask yourself what things in your life are slowly, but surely making your desire for spiritual things less and less. If it is your work, change it! No job is worth losing eternal life with God. If it is a pleasure, stop it! No pleasure is worth the price of hell. Only those who have a desire for spiritual things will seek to do the Father's will. Only those who do the Father's will will seek to be with Him in eternity. Seek the way of the Lord now. Your way leads to death. --*Randall Barnes*

The Children of the Light

By Robert Cobb

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness” (1 Th 5:5).

We, who have put on Christ, have entered into a new and living way. We are, by virtue of our new birth, children of the light and we are no more of the night. It is the desire of those who are in Christ to walk in the light. This is a benefit that is enjoyed by all those who are presently in the Savior. There is not one person who is in Christ and who also walks in darkness. These two situations are direct opposites of each other and they cannot be entered into at the same time.

The change that has occurred in us has been noticed by both heaven and earth. Both reactions have a part in your assurance of faith. We who were at one time darkness have been made light in the Lord (cf. Eph. 5:8). This occurred when we believed the gospel and obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered us. When we, by faith, saw what Christ accomplished on the cross for us, we confessed our sins and submitted to being baptized. Then God was just in forgiving us of our sins and giving us the Holy Spirit. This occurrence was met with at least two reactions. One was the reaction of this present world. The second is the response of heaven.

The Reaction of the World. Those who are still walking with the natural mind dominating their thinking do not think that it is wise to give up the pleasures of sin for a season. They are very well adapted to the god of this world and he is presently giving them what they want, which amounts to the gratifying of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. On their part happiness is something always going to be had by the acceptance of and indulgence in fleshly lusts. Although satisfaction of the lusts is never fully enjoyed, nevertheless Satan has persuaded the children of darkness that if they will keep living for themselves, seeking pleasures in the flesh, that they will be fulfilled someday. These are among those whose god is their belly, and who mind earthly things. Such were some (all) of you! We do not rely on human reasoning in order to be comforted in our walk to heaven. Jesus said, “the servant is not above his master” and we can clearly see what His faith cost Him. But look at what came of that cost. God has reconciled the world unto Himself because of the sacrifice of Christ.

The Reaction of Heaven. The angels rejoice over one sinner that repents. They desire to look into these matters of salvation. God and Christ come and take up residence in everyone who obeys the gospel. And because God has “given us of His Spirit” (1 Jn. 4:13) we can “know the things that are freely given us of God” (1 Cor. 2:12). “We have the mind of Christ” (2:16) and we can “walk circumspectly, not as fools” (Eph. 5:15).

Our God is presently giving us eternal life and we are being led into the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. By faith we are seated with Christ in heavenly places. And though we are pilgrims and strangers in this present world, we are looking for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein only dwells righteousness. There is a great cloud of witnesses that has gone on before us. They are presently watching us and cheering us on as we traverse this road to glory. There are the twenty-four elders and the living creatures that always behold the face of God. They are witnessing our present walk in the light, for they also are in the light of our Father’s presence. God has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5). There is only one reasonable choice to make when we see things from the eternal perspective. That is to put off the works of darkness, cast off the sin and the weight that so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

The Conclusion of the Matter. God has already done everything that is necessary for all men to be saved. He cannot do anymore. He has given them that believe to be “heirs of the kingdom which He hath

promised” (Jas. 2:5), and to be joint heirs with Christ. We have been given good news to spread abroad to everyone we meet. Let us be concerned with the proclamation of the blessed gospel of Christ. It is not only given to “believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Phil. 1:29). And let us rejoice when we are hated by all manner of men for Christ’s sake. This means that our reward will be great in heaven. for “the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not” (1 Jn. 3:1).

It Is Time To Awake!

By Robert Cobb

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom 13:11).

Let us do violence to the old man and his old ways. It is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. And if we don’t mortify him daily, then he will kill us. This is a life and death situation that we are in.

The new man is renewed in knowledge. When we believed the gospel and stood “before many witnesses” (1 Tim. 6:12) to make the “good” confession we were baptized into Christ. At our baptism we were given the gift of the Holy Spirit because God wanted us to be able to fellowship with Him. God is a Spirit and those who “worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:24). God has made us new in the Spirit. Now we can understand the purpose of God in Christ Jesus. This knowledge is our defense against the deception and wiles of the devil.

Your natural man hates the “new” creature that you have been made in Christ. God has raised you up into the heavenly realm where flesh and blood has no power. And as long as you live and walk in the Spirit, the flesh is not able to have the dominion. Satan is only able to appeal to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life in his temptation of us. Thus anyone who has “crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24) is free from the domain and dominion of Satan.

Satan is not an idle creature. Even after being restrained in the bottomless pit for some time he did not become reformed. Rather, when he was loosed from the pit he went immediately out to deceive the nations again (Rev. 20:1-3). Satan knows that his time is short, and because of this he is filled with wrath. He will stop at nothing as he attempts to turn the minds of men to the temporal order. The devil is very subtle and he has been somewhat successful with every last son of Adam (Lk. 3:38), but one, Jesus Christ.

We have an adversary (1 Pet. 5:8) but we also have the Comforter. We have an old nature, but we also have a new nature! we have to live in a defiled atmosphere filled with the temporal distractions, but we also have the ability to fellowship with “the Creator of the ends of the earth” (Isa. 40:28). The Scriptures tell us that all things are ours (1 Cor. 3:21), and that we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3). All we need do is receive of Him and then walk and live in the knowledge of the truth. By doing this we will have the mind of Christ, which means we will react the same as Christ. And if this doesn’t occur, then we need to do the first works (Rev. 2:5), which is “believing.”

Sleeping is needful for the old man, to keep the body alive. But for those that are in Christ to be asleep amounts to tempting God. He has given us ample warning with regards to this grievous sin. And if we sin willfully there remains no more sacrifice for sin. But believing the gospel will enable us to remain awake spiritually and also to do those things which are pleasing in God’s sight.

Jesus declared to Martha, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this? (Jn. 11:25-26) Let us search our hearts for the answer to that pointed question, and stay awake!

The World to Come, Our Goal

By Fred O. Blakely

“Ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name” (Isa. 65:15). “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth” (v. 16).

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (v. 17).

“But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (v. 18). “And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (v. 19). Praise God for that blessed prospect!

“And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (vv. 21-22).

“They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them” (v. 23).

So today the church should be constantly mindful of this glorious inheritance in Christ. It is only by such mindfulness that we can overcome the present evil world, and attain unto the glorious heavenly inheritance.

It is to be recognized that in the world to come God will abundantly recompense us for all that it has cost us to attain thereunto. Thus, our labor of faith and devotion to Him are “not in vain” (I Cor. 15:58).

Heaven is for those who, by submitting to Christ, have been adapted and made ready for the world to come. Thus, they look for that blessed inheritance in Christ. And, by His grace, patiently wait for its manifestation at Jesus’ second coming.

The Godly Work for Us to Do

By Fred O. Blakely

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me” (Jn. 14:1)

Here is a spiritual work for us to do--the principal one, in fact. It is that of believing in Jesus Christ as God’s Son and the Savior of the world. So specifically declared Christ: “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent” (Jn. 6:29). All the works that are acceptable to God must issue from faith in His dear Son.

The persons of record in Matthew 7:22-23 found that out too late. They had been busy doing “many wonderful works.” But, at the Judgment, they were rejected by the enthroned Christ.

The rejection apparently was because the works were done in personal dissociation from the Lord. They called them “wonderful works,” but the Lord termed them as works “of iniquity.”

The mansions referred to by Jesus were prepared “from the foundation of the world” (Mt. 25:34).

It needs to be recognized that the fellowship with Christ has begun for those who are to experience the fullness in eternity.

The double eye, like the double mind (Jas. 1:8) can expect no blessing from God. It is the “single” eye, heart, and mind (Mt. 6:22) that will get the blessing from Him, and be fruitful in His service.

Christ is coming back from Heaven. And His reward will be with Him, “to give every man according as His work” shall have been (Rev. 22:12).

We know that our “labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Cor. 15:58). We are also aware that He “has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (II Pet. 1:3). We more can we desire or ask?

So are we God’s workmen, “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph.

2:10).

Let us, therefore, fulfill God’s purpose for ourselves, and thus glorify Him. And at the same time greatly benefit and enrich our fellow men.

God’s Purpose for Us

By Fred O. Blakely

“I will do all My pleasure,” God has declared (Isa. 44:27). Thus He “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:11).

In view of that situation, it is good to know that He “would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:4). So God “is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance” (II Pet. 3:9).

Man was made for dominion. Let us, through faith and by grace, claim that dominion. And by it let us now “reign in life” by the Savior, as we are exhorted by Scripture to do (Rom. 5:17).

Now our rule is by faith and through the Spirit. Then--bless God!--it will be by sight and in the power of the literal resurrection and glorification.

Soon, it seems to some of us, Christ will break open the sky, and come back to earth for those who have received Him, and are waiting for His appearing. Our first responsibility is to be in readiness for that glorious appearing, and that eternal consummation of our faith and hope.

It is good of a truth to know that “the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary.” Furthermore, He “giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength” (Isa. 40:28-31). Praise Him!

So we read the blessed assurance given to the people of our Lord: “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deut. 33:27).

Let us lean heavily on those supporting arms, rely fully on the divine grace, and labor diligently in the faith for our blessed God and Savior. We have been authoritatively assured that such devotion is “not in vain” (I Cor. 15:58).

“Behold, I come quickly,” Jesus says. “And My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be” (Rev. 22:12).

The Walk with God

We are exhorted by Scripture to “walk worthy of God unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10; cf. Eph. 4:1). That can only be done as we live and walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16).

To so live and walk is to do so in view of the eternal verities made known in the Scriptures by the Spirit. It is God who thus enables us to will and to do “of His own good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). We please Him when we permit Him to do that willing and working in and through us.

Reconciliation to God, therefore, enables us to live and walk with Him here and now. And as by His grace we do that, our lives will be fruitful for Him and His Son Jesus Christ, and we shall live and reign with Them in eternity. --Robert Cobb, *Noted and recorded by Fred O. Blakely*

The Importance of Isaiah. “Not without reason has Isaiah been called the fifth Evangelist. According to Barton Payne, fifty-nine verses in the book are directly anticipatory of Christ. Forty-seven chapters in the book are directly quoted or alluded to in the apostolic writings. Something like four hundred allusions to this book appear in the New Testament. If usage is an indication of the value placed on an Old Testament book, Isaiah would rank second only to Psalms as the favorite of the early church.” --James E. Smith, *What the Bible Says about the Promised Messiah*, p. 224

The present time is preparing us to reign with Christ. We experience troubles but they work for us. Our task is to keep looking at the things that are not seen until Christ returns. --Gene Hutchcraft

Independence Hill Christian Church
2230 W. 78th Ave., Merrillville, IN 46410
Mailing Address Given Below
7903 Hendricks St., Merrillville, IN 46410

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 358
Gary, IN 464

About the Rule of God

God's throne is high and greatly exalted. He reigns over the heathen, and they presently do not perceive it. And much of His rule and dominion goes undetected by the masses of unregenerate men. The following verses from the prophet Ezekiel graphically illustrate God's rule and dominion over the heathen and over all. It is high! We cannot attain unto it.

"Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for Me, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 29:18-20).

In this dominion God works behind the scenes oftentimes, and yet He rules over all. "None can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou? (Dan. 4:35). This was He who opened the windows of heaven, and who broke up all the fountains of the deep in Noah's day. And this is He who rained down fire and brimstone upon the cities of the plain, making them an example unto all them who afterwards would live ungodly. This is He who called for famines, and it was so. He it was also who humbled the mighty Pharaoh, when he would not let the people go.

Finally let us be swift to affirm, this was also He who, having fully demonstrated His hatred of sin and iniquity in ages past, "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I Jn. 4:10). As it is written, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:5-7). And again, "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (I Jn. 4:10). In the examples mentioned in the paragraph above, we are given to see Him who sits upon "the throne of His holiness" (Ps. 47:8) and who has no fellowship with iniquity. But, bless His Name, in the fullness of time, the Creator of the ends of the earth has sent His Son to come and effectually put the sin away by the sacrifice of Himself.

Let all, therefore, who have tasted that the Lord, the Ruler of heaven and earth, is gracious, learn to regard sin as He does. He has provided a blessed remedy for sin in the gospel, for which we are deeply indebted. Let us, therefore, emulate the reign of our God by not letting sin reign in our mortal bodies (cf. Rom. 6:12). And let us also not permit our sins to alienate us from Him who has provided so great a salvation. Hear the word of the Apostle on this matter. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I Jn. 2:1-2). END

(BLESSED, Continued from Page Eight)

away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:3-5). Thus we see the comprehensive nature of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with its attending involvements reaching back to His resurrection from the dead and extending forward to His coming again with power and great glory. Let us earnestly wait for the risen Savior that we may be glorified together with Him at His appearing. --Editor

Miscellaneous Observations and Reflections

When Christ Shall Come. The saints (who are yet in the world) are not in glory yet, and therefore bad things still occasionally happen to them. And by the same token, unrepentant sinners (who are yet here in the body) are not in perdition yet, and therefore good things still, from time to time, happen to them. But when Jesus shall come again, the occurrence of apparent inequities will then forever past, and every man shall go to his own prepared place. The saints shall then enter into glory, never to be troubled again. And sinners shall enter into perdition, never again to be comforted. --*Given O. Blakely*

Christ Our Sanctuary. "Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Isa. 8:13-14).

Christ's cross is our way to escape God's wrath against sin. It shields us "until these calamities be overpast" (Ps. 57:1). We thus need to say, in the words of the dear old hymn, "Jesus, keep me near the cross." --*Floyd M. Coffman*

Much Appreciated Contributions. The following individuals have recently sent in contributions for *The Banner of Truth*. David and Jill Maddack, Fredonia, KS, \$50.00; Karen Cobb, Wheatfield, IN, \$30.00; Wanda Waugh, Highland, IN, \$20.00; Eva G. Campbell, West Concord, MN, \$10.00. And beside these, there were a number of contributors who wished to remain anonymous. Our heartfelt thanks is extended to all who have supported this ministry by their contributions and prayers. --*Editor*

This is the day of God's power. We are made willing to do His will because of that. Let us give thanks to Him for our reconciliation to God. And let us constantly worship and serve Him in that blessed state of reconciliation. --*Dean E. Boelt*

"Thank God for giving us a heart on which God can write His law, and for giving us His Spirit to guide us in living for Him." --*Karen Sankowski*

"Gospel and law cannot be mixed or combined. A legal system based on the cross of Christ is a monstrosity." --*Arnold Hardin, The Persuader, Vol. 24, No. 5, p. 1*

"I thank God for the Lord Jesus Christ, who in His enfleshment and death upon the cross, bore our sins, and brought us to the Father." --*Karen Cobb*

"The appointments of God do not miscarry." --*Fred O. Blakely*

"The prospect of presenting us faultless before the throne gives God great joy." --*Tina Cobb*

Spiritual things and spiritual men are correlatives. --*Spelman, in the Apostles' Doctrine, December 1943*