

**CONCISE BIBLE NOTES ON
THE FIRST EPISTLE OF FIRST PETER**

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



**The Christian Martyrs
Gustave Doré**

1 Peter 1:7

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

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The First Epistle of Peter

Human Author: Peter

Divine Author: God the Holy Spirit

Written c. AD 66

Audience: The churches of Asia Minor - present-day Turkey, with their largely Jewish, but also
Gentile membership

Key Word: Suffering

Key verses: 1 Peter 4:12-13

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”

1 PETER 1

1 Peter, an apostle [lit. *one sent*] of Jesus Christ, to the strangers [pilgrims] scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

1:1 Peter. The author designates himself by the name that Jesus gave him (Matt. 4:18; John 1:42) for his steadfastness in the sphere of faith.

1:1 scattered throughout. Paul had evangelized many of these areas; other areas comprising modern Turkey had churches that were started by the Jews who were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and heard Peter's sermon (Acts 2:9-11).

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1:2 elect. The doctrine of election is designed to teach that salvation is not a random act of chance but a divine undertaking of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The force of the word elect cannot and should not be minimized. From the sea of fallen humanity God in His great mercy has chosen or elected some to salvation. This choice or election was not and is not dependent upon human merit or ability but upon free grace.

1:2 foreknowledge. God does not look down the corridors of time to determine which way the volition of a person will go when presented with the gospel and on the basis of that elect the person to salvation. Such an understanding of foreknowledge makes God irrelevant. God certainly foreknows all matters of men. However the word is used here in another sense.

Matthew Henry explains. “Foreknowledge sometimes signifies counsel, appointment, and approbation [approval]. Acts 2:23, *Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*. The death of Christ was not only foreseen, but fore-ordained, as v. 20. Take it thus here; so the sense is, elect according to the counsel, ordination, and free grace of God.”

1:2 Father...Spirit...Jesus Christ.

The Divine Order

- Father Elects
- Spirit Sanctifies
- Son Secures the salvation of the elect

1:2 Through sanctification. A holy life is well worth living for it is the will of God and beyond that a life once spent is irrevocable. Adoniram Judson realized this truth and wrote the following. *“A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity. The same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever...Each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny...How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness...! It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly marked”* (E. Judson, *The Life of Adoniram Judson*, Anson, Randolph & Company, 1883, pp. 13-15).

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1:3 begotten us. While the death of Christ was sufficient for all it is efficient for the elect. The abundant mercy that begets spiritual life in “us” is limited to the elect of God.

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

1:4 inheritance. The concept of a Christian inheritance has reference to the gifts of divine grace and mercy, which will be given the believer because of the death of Christ. Specifically, the Christian is to receive the following—and much more.

- Eternal life John 3:16
- A dwelling place in heaven John 14:1ff
- A body suited for the eternal 1 Corinthians 15: 40
- A body suited for the resurrection 1 Corinthians 15: 23

**Four Characteristics of
the Christian's Inheritance**

- It is incorruptible which means it cannot perish.
- It is undefiled which means it cannot be spoiled.
- It will never fade away.
- It is reserved in heaven.

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1:5 kept by the power of God.

Biblical Reasons to Believe in the Eternal Security of the Believer

- The promise of God the Father. *Romans 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 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. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- The promise of God the Son. *John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
- The pledge of God the Holy Spirit. *Eph 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [testings]:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1:7 trial of your faith. At the second advent of Jesus, praise and honor and glory await those who suffer for the sake of righteousness according to gospel terms. The praise will come as the Lord says, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant*” (Matt. 25:21). Honor and glory will come when the Lord continues to say, “*I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord*” (Matt. 25:21, 23).

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

1:8 ye love. It is possible to love Christ though the believer has not yet seen Him in the flesh. Loving Christ is more than loving an idea or a memory. It is loving a living person. To love the name of Jesus is to love Him as the resurrected Savior.

*“There is a Name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in my ear,
The sweetest Name on earth.*

*O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
Because He first loved me!”*

Frederick Whitfield

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

1:9 the end of faith. The grand objective of living out the ethics of the Christian faith is to bring glory to God through gospel obedience and the salvation of the soul.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you.

1:10 salvation. Some think it hard that there should be nothing for them but ruin if they will not believe in Jesus Christ; but if you will think for a minute you will see that it is just and reasonable. I suppose there is no way for a man to keep his strength up except by eating.

If you were to say, “*I will not eat again, I despise such animalism,*” you might go to Madeira, or travel in all lands (supposing you lived long enough!), but you would most certainly find that no climate and no exercise would avail to keep you alive if you refused food. Would you then complain, “*It is a hard thing that I should die because I do not believe in eating?*” It is not an unjust thing that if you are so foolish as not to eat, you must die.

It is precisely so with believing. “*Believe, and thou are saved.*” If thou wilt not believe, it is no hard thing that thou shouldst be lost. It would be strange indeed if it were not to be the case. (Charles H. Spurgeon)

1: 10 grace unto you. While the common grace of God is extended to all in that God makes the sun to shine on the just and the unjust alike (Matt. 5:45), saving grace is reserved unto “you” the elect of God. O the wonder of it all!

*“O the wonder of it all,
The wonder of it all,
Just to think that God loves me.”*

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

1:11 the Spirit of Christ which was in them. No one in any generation has been saved, sanctified or sustained apart from the permanent indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 8:9 “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”*

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

1:12 it was revealed. One of the great questions that theologians wrestle with is how much of the gospel the *Old Testament* saints knew. The evidence seems to be they knew more than some will give them credit for.

1:12 the angels desire. The *Scriptures* do not indicate a way of salvation has been prepared for the angels. Jesus did teach hell was prepared for the devil and his followers (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9). The interest of angels into the gospel appears to have captivated their interest.

13 Wherefore gird [bind] up the loins [procreative powers] of your mind, be sober [watch], and hope [have confidence] to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1:13 wherefore. This transitional word explains why believers should not be discouraged but remain serious about living out the ethics of the Christian faith with hope. Grace will be brought to those who are faithful at the revelation or Second Advent of Christ. Dr. R. G. Lee preached a sermon over one thousand times called *Pay Day, Some Day*. While the main part of the message speaks to the lost the title of the sermon applies in a positive way to the Christian. There is a pay day, some day. On that special day the believer will be able to say, *"It has been worth it all."*

*"Ofttimes the day seems long,
Our trials hard to bear;
We're tempted to complain,
To murmur and despair.*

*But Christ will soon appear
To catch His bride away;
All tears forever over,
In God's eternal day.*

*It will be worth it all when we see Jesus;
Life's trials will seem so small
when we see Christ.
One glimpse of His dear face
all sorrow will erase,
So bravely run the race
till we see Christ.*

*Sometimes the sky looks dark
With not a ray of light;
We're tossed and driven on,
No human help in sight.*

*But there's one in heaven
Who knows our deepest care;
Let Jesus solve your problem
Just go to Him in prayer.
Life's days will soon be o'er,*

*All storms forever past;
We'll cross the great divide
To glory safe at last.*

*We'll share the joys of heav'n,
A harp, a home, a crown;
The tempter will be banished,
We'll lay our burden down."*

Esther K. Rusthoi

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

1:14 lusts. There are many passions in the heart, some of which move a professing Christian to act in opposition to the known will of God. The believer is instructed to mortify or put inappropriate lust patterns to death (Col. 3:5). Those who fail to do so will soon discover how controlling inordinate passions can be bringing secret shame, abiding guilt and self-loathing. A hypocritical life is fashioned in order to protect and provide opportunity for the expression of a particular lust.

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [life];

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1:16 be ye holy. There are many gospel motives for holiness not the least of which is that God Himself is holy. *"Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, enthusiastic fervours, or uncommanded austerities; it consists in thinking as God thinks, and willing as God wills"* (John Brown, nineteenth-century Scottish theologian).

Never to be forgotten are the memorable words written by Robert Murray McCheyne to the Rev. Dan Edwards on 2 October 1840 after his ordination as a missionary to the Jews: *"I trust you will have a pleasant and profitable time in Germany. I know you will apply hard to German; but do not forget the culture of the inner man, —I mean of the heart. How diligently the cavalry officer keeps his sabre clean and sharp; every stain he rubs off with the greatest care. Remember you are God's sword, —His instrument, —I trust a chosen vessel unto Him to bear His name. In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instrument, will be the success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God."*

17 And if [since] ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:

1:17 fear. Fear is a natural feeling of terror when danger is present. Fear can be good or bad. A healthy fear tempers the soul, which is why children are to be taught to fear and respect their parents (Lev 19:3), wives are to fear and respect their husbands (Eph 5:33), and slaves or servants are to respect their masters (Eph 6:5). The foundational cause for a healthy expression of fear is rooted in reverence awe and respect for God. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"* (Prov 1:7) as well as *"the beginning of wisdom"* (Prov 16:16). An unhealthy and harmful fear is that sense of terror or dread that immobilizes the soul and clouds rational judgment. God does not want His children to be burdened with this unhealthy and harmful expression of fear. *2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.* For this reason the commandment comes to the Christian not to fear any person for no man can do ultimate harm to the believer.

- *Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*
- *Philippians 1:28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.*

While the Christian is not to fear anyone but to trust in God it is interesting and instructive to learn that, from a divine understanding of the nature of the human heart, it is the wicked that fear the righteous. The wicked may boast and swagger and pretend to be in charge but deep in their hearts they fear the righteous.

- *Proverbs 28:1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*
- *Matthew 14:5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.*

Because the wicked fear the righteous they act in a deceitful manner and make every attempt to hide their sins (2 Sam. 11; Matt. 28:4-15). The wicked have every cause to be terror stricken at the thought of a righteous God taking vengeance upon evil for this He has promised to do. *2 Thess 1:7 And to you [Christians] who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* While the unbeliever fears the righteous and shall know the terror of the Lord such fear does not often lead to gospel repentance. Rather, a greater attempt is made to hide from God (Gen 3:8; Rev 6:15-17) or worse, to deny His existence and His claim on a person's life (Ps 14:1; Rom 1:18-28).

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain [empty] conversation [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers;

1:18 ye know. There is no presumptuous in believing and trusting what God has given permission to believe and trust. There is a know so salvation. An elderly man said to Dr. H.A. Ironside, *"I will not go on unless I know I'm saved, or else know it's hopeless to seek to be sure of it. I want a definite witness, something I can't be mistaken about!"* Ironside replied, *"Suppose you had a vision of an angel who told you your sins were forgiven. Would that be enough to rest on?"* *"Yes, I think it would. An angel should be right."* Ironside continued, *"But suppose on your deathbed Satan came and said, 'I was that angel, transformed to deceive you.' What would you say?"* The man was speechless. Ironside then told him that God has given us something more dependable than the voice of an angel. He has given His Son, who died for our sins, and He has testified in His own Word that if we trust Him all our sins are gone. Ironside read I John 5:13, *"You may know that you have eternal life."* Then he said, *"Is that not enough to rest on? It is a letter from heaven expressly to you."* God's Spirit used that to bring assurance to the man's heart.

1:18 redeemed. To purchase or buy back. Jesus Christ came into the slave market of sin to purchase or buy back with His precious blood those who are the heirs of salvation.

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1:19 precious blood. The price Jesus paid for our redemption was terrible indeed. When we think of the extreme suffering He endured to purchase our freedom from sin's penalty, our hearts should overflow with love for Him. Leslie B. Flynn told a story that illustrates this truth. An orphaned boy was living with his grandmother when their house caught fire. The grandmother, trying to get upstairs to rescue the boy, perished in the flames. The boy's cries for help were finally answered by a man who climbed an iron drainpipe and came back down with the boy hanging tightly to his neck. Several weeks later, a public hearing was held to determine who would receive custody of the child. A farmer, a teacher, and the town's wealthiest citizen all gave the reasons they felt they should be chosen to give the boy a home. But as they talked, the lad's eyes remained focused on the floor. Then a stranger walked to the front and slowly took his hands from his pockets, revealing severe scars on them. As the crowd gasped, the boy cried out in recognition. This was the man who had saved his life. His hands had been burned when he climbed the hot pipe. With a leap the boy threw his arms around the man's neck and held on for dear life. The other men silently walked away, leaving the boy and his rescuer alone. Those marred hands had settled the issue. Many voices are calling for our attention. Among them is the One whose nail-pierced hands remind us that He has rescued us from sin and its deadly consequences. To Him belongs our love and devotion" (*Our Daily Bread*, December 26).

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

1:20 before the foundation of the world.

Question. *"What is the ordo salutis (Latin, the order of salvation)?"*

Answer. “The ordo salutis is the theological doctrine that deals with the logical sequencing of the benefits of Salvation worked by Christ which are applied to us by the Spirit.”

Question. “Is the order of salvation important to Christian understanding?”

Answer. “It is.”

“In the degree to which the force of the original Reformation idea slackened, change came about with respect to it in the tradition emanating from [John] Calvin and from [Martin] Luther. Questions about the order of salvation (ordo salutis) came increasingly to receive attention in preference to questions about the history of salvation (historia salutis). While in [Martin] Luther and [John] Calvin all the emphasis fell on the redemptive event that took place with Christ's death and resurrection, later, under the influence of pietism, mysticism and moralism the emphasis shifted to the process of individual appropriation of the salvation given in Christ and to its mystical and moral effect in the life of the believer.”

Herman Riddderbos

Question. “Was this change in emphasis harmful?”

Answer. “Yes, and for this reason. If one focuses not on Christ and His work but on personal application then the believer becomes turned in on himself instead of turned out from Himself towards Jesus Christ. This way of looking at the ordo salutis has given rise to an overly subjective spirituality. Christ is lost sight of in my efforts to analyze my own spiritual condition.”

Sinclair Ferguson

Question. “What is the order of salvation?”

Answer. “The order of salvation, foreordained before the foundation of the world is as follows.”

- The death of Christ
- Election
- Predestination
- The gospel call
- The inward call
- Regeneration by the Holy Spirit
- Conversion (faith and repentance)
- Justification
- Sanctification
- Glorification

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

1:21 God. God the Father is the ultimate object of faith and hope. All that Jesus ever did and said was designed to direct the hearts of individuals to the Father.

- *Luke 11:2 “When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”*
- *Mark 11:22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.*

An Image of God

We like to think that we develop our image of God from the Bible and teachings of the church, not from our relationships—some of which have been painful. It’s easier if our God image is simply based on learning and believing the right things. Yet, intensive clinical studies on the development of peoples’ images of God show that it is not so simple.

One psychologist found that this spiritual development of the God image is more of an emotional process than an intellectual one. She brings out the importance of family and other relationships to the development of what she calls one’s “*private God*.” She says that, “*No child arrives at the ‘house of God’ without his pet God under his arm.*” And for some of us the “*pet God*” we have tied on a leash to our hearts is not very nice, nor is it biblically accurate. This is because our negative images of God are often rooted in our emotional hurts and destructive patterns of relating to people that we carry with us from our past.

Imagine a little girl of seven who has known only rejection and abuse from her father whom she loves dearly. At Sunday school she is taught that God is her heavenly Father. What is her perception of Him going to be? Based on her experience with her natural father, she will see God as an unstable, rejecting, abusing person she cannot trust. Consider just a few ways in which your image of your father possibly may have affected your perception of God, which in turn affects your self-image.

If your father was distant, impersonal and uncaring, and he wouldn’t intervene for you, you may see God as having the same characteristics. As a result, you feel that you are unworthy of God’s intervention in your life. You find it difficult to draw close to God because you see Him as disinterested in your need and wants. If your father was a pushy man who was inconsiderate of you, or who violated and used you, you may see God in the same way. You probably feel cheap or worthless in God’s eyes, and perhaps feel that you deserve to be taken advantage of by others. You may feel that God will force you—not ask you—to do things you don’t want to do.

If your father was like a drill sergeant, demanding more and more from you with no expression of satisfaction, or burning with anger with no tolerance for mistakes, you may have cast God in his image. You likely feel that God will not accept you unless you meet His demands, which seem unattainable. This perception may have driven you to become a perfectionist.

If your father was a weakling, and you couldn't depend on him to help you or defend you, your image of God may be that of a weakling. You may feel that you are unworthy of God's comfort and support, or that He is unable to help you.

If your father was overly critical and constantly came down hard on you, or if he didn't believe in you or your capabilities and discouraged you from trying, you may perceive God in the same way. You don't feel as if you're worth God's respect or trust. You may even see yourself as a continual failure, deserving all the criticism you receive.

In contrast to the negative perceptions many women have about God, let me give you several positive character qualities of a father. Notice how these qualities, if they existed in your father, have positively influenced your perception of God.

If your father was patient, you are more likely to see God as patient and available for you. You feel that you are worth God's time and concern. You feel important to God and that He is personally involved in every aspect of your life.

If your father was kind, you probably see God acting kindly and graciously on your behalf. You feel that you are worth God's help and intervention. You feel God's love for you deeply and you're convinced that He wants to relate to you personally.

If your father was a giving man, you may perceive God as someone who gives to you and supports you. You feel that you are worth God's support and encouragement. You believe that God will give you what is best for you, and you respond by giving of yourself to others.

If your father accepted you, you tend to see God accepting you regardless of what you do. God doesn't dump on you or reject you when you struggle, but understands and encourages you. You are able to accept yourself even when you blow it or don't perform up to your potential.

If your father protected you, you probably perceive God as your protector in life. You feel that you are worthy of being under His care and you rest in His security.

Always Daddy's Girl by H. Norman Wright, 1989, Regal Books, pp. 193-195.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned [sincere] love of the brethren, *see that* ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

1:22 purified your souls. "*The main work of a Christian lies in the right management of his heart and mind*" (Matthew Henry).

1:22 unfeigned love. The characteristics of biblical love that is without hypocrisy and is sincere may be found in 1 Corinthians 13.

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

1:23 incorruptible. Salvation is never based on the corruptible physical seed which implants only a sin nature and death into the soul. *Romans 5:12* “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Salvation is united with an incorruptible spiritual seed called the *Word of God* that lives and abides forever as it germinates in the soul to produce a new birth. Lives are changed by the *Word of God*. When evangelist John Wesley (1703-1791) was returning home from a service one night, he was robbed. The thief, however, found his victim to have only a little money and some Christian literature. As the bandit was leaving, Wesley called out, “*Stop! I have something more to give you.*” The surprised robber paused. “*My friend,*” said Wesley, “*you may live to regret this sort of life. If you ever do, here’s something to remember: ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin!’*” The thief hurried away, and Wesley prayed that his words might bear fruit. Years later, Wesley was greeting people after a Sunday service when he was approached by a stranger. What a surprise to learn that this visitor, now a believer in Christ as a successful businessman, was the one who had robbed him years before! “*I owe it all to you,*” said the transformed man. “*Oh no, my friend,*” Wesley exclaimed, “*not to me, but to the precious blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin!*” (*Our Daily Bread*, October 1, 1994)

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

1:24 The grass withereth.

*“So little time to say the things
You’d really like to say
Before you even find the words
The time has slipped away.*

*So little time to do the things
You feel you want to do
So treasure like the purest gold
The time God’s given you.*

*So little time to dream your dreams
For youth has passed its prime
And all too soon you realize
That there’s – so little time.”*

Priscilla Murrell
July 7, 1992

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

1:25 endureth forever. All that God has promised, all that the *Scriptures* predict will come to pass. There is a sure word of prophecy and so the Christian embraces the Bible as the wonderful book it is even the word of the Lord.

The Anvil

*“Last eve I paused before a blacksmith’s door
and heard the anvil ring
the vesper chime.
And looking in,
I saw old hammers on the floor,
Worn by the beating years of time.*

*“How many anvils have you had,”
said I, “To wear and batter
all these hammers so?”*

*“Just one,” said he,
then with a twinkle in his eyes,
“The anvil wears the hammers
out you know.”*

*And so I thought,
the anvil of God’s Word,
For ages skeptic blows
have beat upon.
Yet though the noise
of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed
—the hammers gone!”*

Source unknown

1:2 Elect.

**The Major Points are Suggested
Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary**

1. [Election is] the gracious and free act of God by which He calls those who become part of His kingdom and special beneficiaries of His love and blessings. The *Bible* describes the concept of election in three distinct ways.

- There is the election of a people. Election sometimes refers to the election of a physical nation such as Israel or a spiritual nation such as the church to be a people set aside for special service and privileges.
- There is the election of a person. Election may also refer to the election of a specific individual to some office or to perform some special service.
- There is the election to personal salvation. Still other passages of the Bible refer to the election of individuals to be children of God and heirs of eternal life.

2. Throughout the history of redemption, election has characterized God's saving activity.

- God chose and called Abraham from Ur to Canaan, making an everlasting covenant with him and his offspring.

Genesis 11:31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. 32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran. 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. 4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. 6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

Nehemiah 9:7 Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham;

Isaiah 41:8 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

- God also called Moses to lead His people out of bondage.

Exodus 2:24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them. 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. 7 And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. 10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: 22 And the Lord shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: 23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.

Psalms 105:1 O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

- God chose Israel from among the nations of the world to be His special covenant people

Deuteronomy 4:37 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

Deuteronomy 7:6 For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

Isaiah 44:1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: 2 Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

3. Election to salvation takes place "in Christ" as a part of God's purpose for the human race. As part of His eternal plan, God allowed man to use his freedom to rebel against Him. Thus, it is gracious of God to save those who find salvation through Jesus Christ.

- *Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*
- *Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

4. It is not unjust of God not to save everyone, since no one deserves to be saved.

- *Matthew 20:14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.*
- *Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*
- *Romans 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

5. Election is gracious; it is also unconditional and unmerited.

- *Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*
- *Romans 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*
- *1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*

6. It is an expression of the eternal, sovereign will of God who cannot change.
 - *Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*
 - *2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
7. Therefore, the salvation of the elect is certain.
 - *Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
 - *Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*
8. Election is a necessary condition for salvation; faith is the sufficient condition. The elect inevitably believe, but they do not believe against their will. They have a God-given desire and ability to trust in Christ for salvation.
 - *Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*
 - *1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*
 - *Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*
 - *Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*
9. The elect choose God because He effectively calls them through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ; they choose Him because He first chose and called them to Himself.
 - *Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
10. That initiating love of God is reflected in a statement made by Jesus.

- *John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

11. A careful study of the Bible's doctrine of man cures any romantic notion of a human will that is free to choose for or against God. Those who are slaves to sin and its power neither understand nor seek after God in and of themselves.

- *Romans 6:6 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.*
- *Romans 3:11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*
- *John 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*
- *1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

12. Outside of Christ, men are spiritually dead rebels who neither desire to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ nor are able to. Apart from God's gracious, free, eternal, and sovereign choice of such sinful men to become His children, none would be saved but would abide forever under His wrath (Rom 1:18)

1:3 His abundant mercy hath begotten us. The debate that exists within the Christian community over the extent of the atonement of Christ is one of legitimate concern for each theological presuppositional thought has a logical conclusion. If the position is taken that Christ died for all sins of all men then the question arises, "*Why are not all saved?*" The answer has to be that either Christ is not capable of securing the salvation for those for whom He died or that all people shall one day be saved, which is the essence of Universalism. However, if Christ died to secure the salvation of those whom the Father has given to Him then Peter can write with meaning of His abundant mercy which hath begotten us, the elect of God. Those who perish are righteously judged, not on the merits of the death of Christ which they have no part in by their own choice and by God's own choice, but on their good works which they do appeal to as the basis of salvation (Rev. 20:12). Those who are saved attribute salvation not to the will of man (John 1:13) nor to good works (Eph. 2:8-9) but to the Sovereign's grace.

*"What was there in us
that could merit esteem
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so Father, we ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."*

Doctrine of Suffering

Introduction

There are many reasons why believers suffer mentally and physically. The following list is given to help the hearts of God's people evaluate themselves when a meaning for tribulation is sought. Not all pain and suffering is meant to punish though some is. Much suffering is designed to correct character, guide the heart or teach the lessons of life God would have known. This means it is safe to say that some pain and suffering could be avoided. You will find this taught in specific passages such as 1 Corinthians 11:31. *"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."* But if and when we are judged there is another principle to keep in mind. Every form of discipline and every cursing is designed by God to be a source of blessing. This concept is found in 1 Corinthians 11:32 and Romans 8:28. *"But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world....And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Therefore consider the following reasons why Christians suffer.

1. Christians suffer when they engage in a frantic search for happiness in an inappropriate way.

The book of *Ecclesiastes* establishes this principle through the life of Solomon. Solomon engaged in a frantic search for happiness and then concluded in sorrow *"all is vanity and a vexation of spirit"* (*Eccl. 1:14*). Many have said this before and it still remains true. Happiness is not found in money, sex, drugs, fame, fortune or total freedom. Young people often believe that if they could only be free from parental control or counsel they would be happy. And so the moment comes when they throw off all restraints and there is a sense of euphoria. They are free. But not really for without the Lord *"all is vanity and a vexation of spirit"*. To rebellious young people I have this to say. Do not be surprised when the little blue bird of happiness flies away. You will only be happy when you obey your parents in acts of righteousness, for this is the will of the Lord.

2. Christians suffer from a guilty conscience.

- *1 Timothy 1:5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: 6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling.*

A conscience is God's gift to the heart. Without a moral compass the end result is a Michael Jackson, a Mondona, a Saddam Hussein. A gash in the conscience can disfigure the soul forever. A good conscience is the looking glass of heaven. A sanctified conscience is the holy whisper of God in the soul. Thank God for suffering from a violated conscience for it is possible for the conscience to be first violated, then silenced and then seared so that it is no longer sensitive to any form of moral restraint. In Galatians 2:14, when Paul came and rebuked Peter about the way the Gentiles were being treated, the conscience of Peter was smitten. He suffered from a guilty conscience and then changed his behavior to express grace.

3. Christians suffer from the suppression of sin in the self-consciousness of the soul.

When inappropriate attitude and actions are engaged in and then justified ecclesiastical judgment is a real possibility. The apostle Paul delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander over to Satan for physical and mental abuse to teach them to learn not to blaspheme. The story is told in 1 Timothy 1.

- *1 Timothy 1:19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: 20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

God wants His children to keep the truth in a holy vessel and with a pure conscience.

- *1 Timothy 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*

A man called once and asked me about women preachers. I told him I did not believe that women are authorized to be pastors over God's people. He agreed—and then confessed he was in a church that allowed women preachers. In fact, the associate pastor was a minister, and also the wife of the pastor. Some years ago I went to a Bible college in Manhattan, Kansas. I did not agree with the official position of the college on baptism. The school taught baptism regeneration. By *Scripture* and by reason I do not believe in it. Nevertheless, I suppressed the truth until it became sin in my soul. My conscience was defiled until I left that situation and I claimed the provision of 1 John 1: 9.

- *1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

4. Christians suffer because the *Word of God* is rejected.

- *Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

When the *Word of God* is rejected the Lord will allow individuals to engage in acts of “uncleanness with greediness” [i.e., “eagerness”]—and then the nightmare of pain and suffering really begins.

In 2 Kings 17:13 the prophet of God explains why there was going to be war with the nation of Assyria and Israel is going to lose the contest. “*Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. 14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.*”

Few things in life alarm me more than to find someone who is about to reject the *Word of God* for the traditions of men or for a system of believe that is logically contrary to sound Scriptural teaching. As a pastor I know something of Paul's heart when he wrote the church in Galatians 4:19 saying, "*My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.*" When I conduct a public ceremony beyond the Church such as a wedding or a funeral it is not uncommon to see in the audience individuals who have rejected the *Word of God*. It is my practice to use public occasions to warn and encourage individuals to listen to the voice of God and not reject His Word.

5. Christians suffer and inflict emotional and physical pain on others when particular acts of sin are not isolated and mortified or put to death.
 - *Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

Constant expressions of anger are a terrible burden to bear for self and for others. Individuals who are angry for whatever reason become bitter and then vindictive. The mental attitude sins of the soul bring nothing but division and distress for self and for others. And it is all so unnecessary. A man called. He was going through a divorce and the final papers arrived in the mail. What was he to do? Years and years of marital conflict were brought into the public arena and the courts. And he was angry. Had this couple sought spiritual help early on, they could have found pastoral counsel. But particular acts of sin were not isolated and put to death and now there is pain and suffering for themselves and many others—just as the Bible teaches.

6. Christians suffer when divinely established authority is rejected reflected in the story of Dathan and Abiram as recorded (*Num 16:1-35; Deut. 11:6; Psalm 106:17*).

Dathan whose name means "*strong*" was a chief of the tribe of Reuben who, along with Korah and others tried to overthrow Moses and Aaron. The earth swallowed up him and his conspirators and their households. While not all revolts against established authority have such a dramatic ending this event has been recorded to remind people that God takes seriously subtle and open assaults upon the name and character of leaders on any level. Children are not to revolt against their parents or to speak evil of them. Christian citizens are encouraged not to revolt against their leaders or to speak evil of them. And of course pastors are always pleased – and astonished – when people listen to their counsel and follow it in the will of the Lord.

7. Christians suffer pain and sorrow by marrying the wrong person.
 - *Ezekiel 16:1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, 3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite [i.e., people married outside a covenant relationship].*

One of the controversies God had with His covenant people is that they chose sensual pleasure and marital happiness over Him when they married people outside the covenant relationship. When Christian people are unequally yoked by marrying a person of no faith or a person of a radically different faith there will be only heartache and sorrow. The temptation comes to think that a person can be easily converted to a particular way of thinking. That is not true. The temptation comes to think that doctrine is not important. That is not true for false doctrine can lead to eternal judgment. Historically the Church is surrounded by “*a noble army, men and boys, the matron and the maid,*” who “*climbed the steep ascent to heaven*”, “*mid peril, toil, and pain.*” Shall Bible doctrine be dismissed or downplayed today through ignorance or for personal pleasure? God forbid. Some women spend more time in selecting their wedding gown than they do in selecting a husband. It is far better to wait upon the Lord or be single if such is God’s will than to marry the wrong person. The sea of matrimony is filled with hardships unless there is doctrinal harmony in the home for only then can a woman hope to find a man who will love her as Christ loved the Church.

8. Christians suffer because they are interrelated to others in the body of Christ who hurt.

- *1 Corinthians 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

There are several great metaphors of the Church in the *New Testament* and each one illustrates the essential unity of believers to one another and to Christ. Romans 14:7 explains. *For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.* One of the reasons why I believe a formal church membership is healthy is because it helps to crystallize this concept. Each person who joins can say in essence, “*I am not on the outside looking in. I am committed to a particular expression of the body of Christ. There is an essential spiritual unity that I recognize and partake of.*” When someone shares their pain and suffering Christians do not dismiss them, roll their eyes in exasperation at their stories or wish they would go away. Christians enter into suffering with others in the body of Christ to some extent so that their burdens are lifted. Galatians 6:2 says, “*Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*” It is easy to talk about the law of love. It is harder to fulfill it. And so Christians suffer because of association with others.

*“Days are filled with sorrow and care,
Hearts are lonely and drear;
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,
Jesus is very near.*

*Cast your care on Jesus today,
Leave your worry and fear;
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,
Jesus is very near.*

*Troubled soul, the Saviour can see,
Ev’ry heartache and tear;*

*Burdens are lifted at Calvary
Jesus is very near.*

*Burdens are lifted at Calvary,
Calvary, Calvary,
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,
Jesus is very near."*

9. Christians suffer from divine discipline.

- *Proverbs 3:11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*

While this is the type of suffering most Christians fear the most, it is not to be despised for it is a sight of God's great love. One question that arises is how to tell the difference between suffering and pain, which is part of life, and what is a direct result of God's judgment. There is a very simple answer. It may not please everyone but I would suggest that the Holy Spirit will reveal to the heart whether or not pain and suffering in the life is the direct result of God's divine displeasure. Moses knew that he could not go into the land of promise because he struck the rock, which was a type of Christ. Saul knew that the kingdom was taken from him because he did not finish the task God assigned to him. David knew that his child died because of his inappropriate relationship with Bathsheba. The list is long of those who knew why God was judging them. However, it must be kept in mind that God does not judge every transgression or to the same degree for He is full of mercy and long suffering. God has been pleased to hide many of sins if the truth were told and for good reason. Who could stand under total public revelation? No one. To remember this truth is to understand that among the attributes of God, although they are all equal, mercy shines with even more brilliance than justice. Therefore, when the Lord does move in judgment and tells you for what reason He is doing so, do not despise His corrections. He loves you.

10. Christians suffer as part of the angelic conflict.

- *Job 2:3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. 4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. 6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. 7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.*

Because of the constraints of time your attention is drawn to the story of Job as outlined in the opening chapters. The angels are interested and involved in the affairs of men for a variety of reasons. And so men are caught up in an angelic conflict. Remember how Jesus told Peter that Satan wanted him in particular. *“But I have prayed for you Peter.”* Christ prays for His own. Meanwhile, the angelic conflict continues. Some Christians like Paul will be buffeted by Satan. Others, like Daniel will have the answer to their prayers delayed. Satan has the ability to induce sickness and sorrow. And he has the ability to stir up trouble in the body of Christ by unleashing evil spirits of jealousy, gossip, bitterness, anger, and hatred. Therefore Christian, test the spirits. Test the emotion in your heart lest you be subject to demonic suggestion as Ananias. Acts 5:3 *“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?”*

11. Suffering is designed to demonstrate the power and grace of God.

- *John 9:2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

With this point we come full circle for the grace of God will be revealed in all that is done in the lives of individuals be it evil or be it good. If upon examination of the heart it is discovered there is no cause and effect relationship between sin and the suffering, then look for the glory of God to be revealed. Paul discovered this principle in his life for after he prayed and asked the Lord to take away his affliction the apostle was told, *“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”* John Wesley said of the early Methodists, *“We die well.”* Mr. Wesley could say that only because he had taught his people well to submit to the Father in all matters of life. Christians can live well, they can withstand pain well by God’s sufficient grace and they can die well with an eye to the glory that is yet to come. And so we shall. Amen.

12. Some suffering is designed to cause the believer to learn the value of the Word and will of God.

- *Psalms 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*
- *Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

13. Christians suffer in order to have patience produced in their life.

- *James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*

14. Christians suffer from bad political decisions of rulers. Jesus predicted a period of great tribulation for the nation of Israel. In the summer of AD 66 Jewish leaders encouraged a revolt against Rome. Soldiers marched against the city. Many Christians were caught up in this national calamity.

- *Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand;) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

15. Christians suffer when their own standards of morality are violated.

- *2 Tim 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

16. Christians suffer from the ravages of war.

- *Matthew 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. (cf. Deut. 21; 24).*

17. Christians suffer by not knowing or not remembering the promises of God.

- *John 20:9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. 11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher.*

18. Christians suffer in the process of dying as a result of the fall.

- *Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one-man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

19. Christians suffer when the Lord's Supper is taken in an inappropriate manner.

- *1 Corinthians 11:29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

20. Christians suffer because they exercise their spiritual gift.

- *2 Corinthians 11:24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

21. Christians suffer due to religious jealousies.

- *Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*

22. Christians suffer because they love Christ more than family or friends.

- *Matt 10:36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

23. Christians may suffer in order to be kept from more sin.

- *Matthew 5:29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

24. Christians suffer in order to empathize with others.

- *Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

25. Christians suffer in order to preserve the life of others.

- *Genesis 45:5 [And Joseph said unto his brethren] Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*

26. Christians suffer to demonstrate the theological truth that God is the sovereign Ruler of the universe and can dispose of it as He pleases.

- *Exodus 4:11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD?*

27. Christian can give thanks to God for the privilege of suffering.

- *Acts 5:41 And they [the apostles] departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

28. Christians are to thank God even in their sickness and sufferings if not for their sickness and sufferings.

- *1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

29. But the time might come when thanksgiving can come for the sickness and pain and sufferings of life.

- *Psalms 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*
- *Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.*

30. No suffering and no sickness can come into the life of the believe apart from the sovereign will of God for He works all things after the counsel of His own will.

- *Exodus 4:11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD?*
- *Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*

31. God ordained the following people to suffer and or to be sick.

- God ordained that Adam and Eve suffer sorrow in childbirth and death. *Genesis 3:16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*
- God willed that Job suffer satanically induced sickness in order to test his faithfulness. *Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. 6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. 7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. 8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.*
- God ordained that a man be born blind and suffer many years in life in order to demonstrate the power of His Son. *John 9:2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. 4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*
- God ordained that Jacob should be touched in his thigh so that he limped for many years in life in order to learn to lean upon the Lord. *Genesis 32:25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*

31 And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. 32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.
- Christ ordained that His disciples be beaten and hurt knowing that disease and sickness would accompany these ordeals.
- God ordained that Paul should be sick and to suffer in order to humble him and demonstrate His own divine faithfulness. *2 Corinthians 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- God ordained that *New Testament* Christians suffer in time. *Acts 9:16 For I will shew him [Saul of Tarsus] how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Acts 14:22 [Paul went about] Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

32. In light of the place of pain and suffering in the plan of God what should be said in response to the Word of Faith movement that instructs its people to disbelieve or down play their sickness and sufferings in order to magnify faith with a view towards healing?

- First, our brothers and sisters must be challenged not to verbalize a non-truth in the name of spiritual truth thereby denying objective reality. Words become a mockery in the mouth of someone dying of cancer who declares he is healed in the name of Jesus. Words become a mockery in the mouth of someone who denies I have no need of glasses while putting them on to read the Bible. Such dualistic thinking is not healthy and breeds spiritual pride at its worst; non-sensible thoughts at its best.
- Second, our brothers and sisters must be invited to return to the *Bible* to see that God is sovereign over sickness and suffering not by its removal but by what He can accomplish in weakened vessels. The paradox of the Christian message is not that God uses the healthy and the wealthy but he uses the sick of this world to accomplish His purposes. *Isa 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. 1 Cor 1:27-2:1 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*
- Third, our brothers and sisters must be taught to consider the whole counsel of God in a given passage for spiritual balance and to avoid entering into heresy, which is extreme error.

Doctrine of Grace

1. The first mention of grace in the Bible is found in Genesis 6:8 where we read *"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."*
2. As used in the *Old Testament*, grace is often used in the sense of special favor being held based upon a high estimation of someone by another person. Joseph, for example, found grace in the eyes of an officer of Pharaoh the captain of the guard. Ruth found grace in the presence of Boaz.
 - *Genesis 39:4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*
 - *Ruth 2:10 Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?*
3. In the divine economy grace is what God is freely able to do and indeed what He does do for those for whom Christ has died. Mercy, the compassion of God, and love, the motive of God, unite when expressed to manifest grace, which is undeserved favor.
4. The grace of God rules out human merit for salvation.
 - *Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*
 - *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
5. Grace perfects forever the salvation of the elect in the sight of God.
6. Grace bestows Christ's merit so that the believer remains Christ's forever.
 - *Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*
 - *Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*
 - *Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
7. Grace removes any obligation to gain merit with God by legal duties.
 - *Romans 4:14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:*

- *Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

8. Once man was in Adam but now he is in a state of saving grace, baptized into Christ, dead unto sin but alive unto God.

- *Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 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. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

- *Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

9. Saving grace is a free gift of God

- *Romans 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*
- *Titus 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

10. Grace can abound or be diminished.

- *Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:*

11. There is the reign or ruling principle of grace under the New Testament economy.

- *Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:*

12. Grace can be abused.

- *Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

13. The election to salvation is based upon the principle of grace.

- *Romans 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

14. Paul never ceased to marvel that he was the object of God's redeeming grace.

- *Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*
- *Romans 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*
- *Romans 15:15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,*
- *1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*
- *Galatians 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,*

15. What we have received from God should be desired for.

- *1 Corinthians 1:3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *2 Corinthians 1:2 Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

16. In times of personal tribulation God's grace is sufficient.

- *2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

17. It is possible to fall from the sphere of grace if dependency is made upon salvation by good works or if there is excessive sin in the life that is not repented of and not mortified.

- *Galatians 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

- *Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

18. Praise should be offered to God for His great grace.

- *Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*
- *Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

19. Gracious words should characterize the speech of a Christian.

- *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*

20. There is a throne of grace before which the Christian is to pray.

- *Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

21. More grace is given to the humble.

- *James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

22. Christians are to grow in the sphere of grace.

- *2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

1:20 foreordained. Concerning the order of salvation, "Regeneration, faith, conversion, renewal, and the like, often [in the Bible] do not point to successive steps in the way of salvation but rather summarize in a single word the entire change which takes place in a man" (Herman Bavinck). "When we speak of an *ordo salutis* [order of salvation], we do not forget that the work of applying the grace of God to the individual sinner is a unitary process, but simply stress the fact that various movements can be distinguished in the process, that the work of the application of redemption proceeds in a definite and reasonable order, that God does not impart the fullness of his salvation to the sinner in a single act..." (Louis Berkhof).

1 PETER 2

1 Wherefore laying aside all malice [depravity], and all guile [deceit], and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2:1 laying aside. As a person takes off dirty clothing so the believer is to take off or lay aside spiritual clothing soiled by depraved acts of making trouble for others, deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy and inappropriate conversations.

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby [by it]:

2:2. the word. An appetite for the Word of God must be cultivated in order to be desired.

Five Ways to Cultivate a Desire for the Word

- Have a pure conscience that is undefiled by secret sin. When a person is living in secret or open sin fellowship with the Lord ceases and holy matters are not desired.
- Spend time meditating on the Word. Make a holy commitment to do this and honor that commitment. Promise the Lord by saying, *"I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways"* (Ps 119:15).
- Remember the promise of blessing for those who meditate on the Word. *Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*
- Pray and ask the Lord to teach you spiritual truths from the Word. *Ps 25:4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.*
- Speak to others about the spiritual truths the Lord has shown you. *Mal 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

3 If so be [because] ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious [kind].

2:3 gracious. The graciousness of God in giving His Word and the kindness He has shown to the believer should be a good motive to desire to know more of the Word. The heart naturally loves those who have shown them kindness.

Despite his busy schedule during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln often visited the hospitals to cheer the wounded. On one occasion he saw a young fellow who was near death. *"Is there anything I can do for you?"* asked the compassionate President. *"Please write a letter to my mother,"* came the reply. Unrecognized by the soldier, the Chief Executive sat down and wrote as the youth told him what to say. The letter read, *"My Dearest Mother, I was badly hurt while doing my duty, and I won't recover. Don't sorrow too much for me. May God bless you and Father. Kiss Mary and John for me."* The young man was too weak to go on, so Lincoln signed the letter for him and then added this postscript: *"Written for your son by Abraham Lincoln."* Asking to see the note, the soldier was astonished to discover who had shown him such kindness. *"Are you really our President?"* he asked. *"Yes,"* was the quiet answer. *"Now, is there anything else I can do?"* The lad feebly replied, *"Will you please hold my hand? I think it would help to see me through to the end."* The tall, gaunt man granted his request, offering warm words of encouragement until death stole in with the dawn. Oh Christian, would you not want to ask in prayer, *"Jesus, are you really my Savior? Would you please hold my hand and lead me through this dark night of the soul when tempted to sin? Would you stay with me to the end?"*

*"Take my life,
and let it be consecrated,
Lord, to Thee.*

*Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.*

*Take my hands,
and let them move at the impulse
of Thy love.*

*Take my feet, and let them be swift
and beautiful for Thee.*

*Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King.*

*Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from Thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.*

*Take my intellect,
and use every power
as Thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will, and make it Thine;
it shall be no longer mine.*

*Take my heart, it is Thine own;
it shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love, my Lord,
I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.*

*Take myself, and I will be ever,
only, all for Thee.”*

Frances R. Havergal
February 1874

4 To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

2:4 To whom coming. When a person comes to Christ in faith He comes to the most interesting and unique person.

- Christ is a Living Stone though an outcast of society
- Christ was chosen of God
- Christ is precious

*“Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;*

*Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light:
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me home.*

*When my way grows drear,
Precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call,
Hold my hand lest I fall:*

*When the darkness appears
And the night draws near,
And the day is past and gone,*

*At the river I stand,
Guide my feet, hold my hand:
Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand.”*

Thomas A. Dorsey

The Story Behind the Song

Mr. Dorsey wrote this song in Chicago, Illinois, after his wife Nettie died while giving birth to a child who also died shortly thereafter. Dorsey sang the song for his friend, Gospel singer Theodore Frye, and Frye’s choir sang it the next Sunday at the Ebenezer Baptist Church.

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

2:5 lively stones. Once the Lord dwelt in a physical structure of beautiful but dead and decaying material. Now He dwells in a spiritual house. Every Christian can say, *“My heart is Christ’s home. I am to function as a believer priest in a holy manner in order to offer up spiritual but acceptable sacrifices to God.”*

Seven Acceptable Spiritual Sacrifices

- Offering Prayers. *Rev 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*
- Expressing Praise and Adoration. *Rev 5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*
- Giving thanks. *Psalm 105:1 O give thanks unto the LORD.*
- Witnessing. *Ps 105:1 “make known his deeds among the people.”*
- Singing unto the Lord spiritual song. *Psalm 105:2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.*

- Remembering. *Psalm 105: 5* Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;
- Talking often about the Lord. *Mal 3:16- Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. 17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded [ashamed].

2:6 elect. The concept of Christ being “*chosen of God*” (1 Pet. 2:4) and the elect One is set forth against the decision of divine mercy to save sinners by allowing a substitute savior. Though a noble individual might have volunteered to die for others, none would be found worthy to be a suitable savior “*for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23). Thus, all are in need of a savior. Though an angel confirmed in righteousness might have volunteered to die for mortals such an offer would be without merit for angels differ from men. Certainly no animal would be a suitable sacrifice, “*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” (Heb 10:4). Finally, in His infinite wisdom the Father choose a course of action and decreed His begotten Son could be the One to accomplish the grand goal of redeeming souls from the slave market of sin. And so the Son was chosen by God to come into the world, not as an animal, not as an angel, but as the God-man, perfectly suited to mediate between God and man for He would be both. Jesus is Immanuel, “*God with us.*”

*“Immanuel, we sing Thy praise;
Thou Prince of Life,
Thou Fount of Grace,*

*With all Thy saints,
Thee, Lord, we sing;
Praise, honor, thanks,
to Thee we bring.*

*E’er since the world began to be,
How many a heart hath longed for Thee!
And Thou, O long expected guest,
Hast come at last to make us blest!*

Now art Thou here:
 we know Thee now:
 In lowly manger liest Thou:
 A Child, yet makest all things great;
 Poor, yet the earth Thy robe of state.

Now fearlessly I come to Thee:
 From sin and grief
 O set me free!

Turn wrath away,
 dread death destroy,
 And turn my sorrow into joy.

Thou art my Head,
 my Lord divine:
 I am Thy member, wholly Thine;
 And by Thy Spirit's gracious power
 Will seek to serve Thee evermore."

Paul Gerhardt, 1653

2:6 confounded. The apostle Paul wrote, *"I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"* (2 Tim 1:12).

7 Unto you therefore which believe *he* is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

2:7 believe.

*"I know not why God's wondrous grace
 To me He hath made known,
 Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love
 Redeemed me for His own.*

*But I know Whom I have believèd,
 And am persuaded that He is able
 To keep that which I've committed
 Unto Him against that day.*

*I know not how this saving faith
To me He did impart,
Nor how believing in His Word
Wrought peace within my heart.*

*I know not how the Spirit moves,
Convincing us of sin,
Revealing Jesus through the Word,
Creating faith in Him.*

*I know not what of good or ill
May be reserved for me,
Of weary ways or golden days,
Before His face I see.*

*I know not when my Lord may come,
At night or noonday fair,
Nor if I walk the vale with Him,
Or meet Him in the air.”*

Daniel Whittle, 1883

2:8 disobedient. *“There are two kinds of people: those who say to God ‘Thy will be done’ and those to whom God says, ‘All right then, have it your way’ ” (C. S. Lewis).*

2:7 head of the corner. The importance of the first or foundational block in a building is well known. The importance of Christ is foundational in the plan of redemption for *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).*

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed [assigned, placed].

2:8 a stone of stumbling.

Five Reasons why Christ is a Stumbling Block

- The natural birth brings souls into the world physically alive but spiritually dead. *Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*
- The cares of time consume all thoughts and energy. Jesus said *“the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful” (Mark 4:19).*

- The Evil One comes to distract and blind the heart from spiritual realities by either appealing to a lust pattern or by giving false hope through religion. Those who are consumed with lust know they are worthy of judgment but they do not care. *Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.* Those who are self-righteous do not believe they must be born again.
- God the Father has administered divine judgment. *Matt 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*
- The desire to have one's own way. Peter speaks of those who are disobedient. The lordship of Christ leaves no room for disobedience. Elisabeth Elliot told the story of her brother Thomas Howard. Their mother let him play with paper bags she'd saved if he put them away afterwards. One day she walked into the kitchen to find them strewn all over the floor. Tom was out at the piano with his father singing hymns. When confronted, he protested, "*But Mom, I want to sing.*" His father stated, "*It's no good singing God's praise if you're disobedient.*"

2:8 they were appointed. The Doctrine of Divine Appointment remains a great mystery but the *Scriptures* indicate in the plan of God souls are appointed to eternal life or eternal judgment.

- *Rom 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*
- *Mark 14:21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man [Judas Iscariot] if he had never been born.*
- *Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Furthermore, based upon the acceptance or rejection of the gospel there are those who are appointed to hell.

- *Luke 12:5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.*
- *Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

In civilized societies laws have been passed appointing those disobedient to the government to pay fines, be incarcerated or even face death. God is not unfair or unjust in appointing those who disregard His moral law and plan of salvation.

9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [purchased] people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

2:9 Be ye. In contrast to those who have been appointed to be offended at Christ are those individuals who make up a chosen [spiritual] generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar or blood bought people. If a person were to ask, “*How did I come to be chosen and made a member of a blood bought people?*” the divine response is found in Ephesians 2:8. “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*” Without this biblical perspective a person might be tempted to answer differently and say, “*One day I made a decision for Christ and was regenerated.*” Or a person might respond, “*I was born in a Christian country and had Christian parents and so grew up as a Christian.*” Again, a person might argue and say, “*I was baptized and thus I was made a Christian and a member of the church.*” Still someone else might answer, “*I have lived a good life since my youth and believe my good works shall save me.*” If the ground of one’s salvation remains a reliance upon decisional regeneration, family heritage, free will, water baptism, church membership or good works then there is no room for grace for in some way the soul has found a way to merit the righteousness of God. But what saith the Scripture?

- *John 1:12 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: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- *Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

I plead with you do not put your trust, your confidence or your weight upon any of these broken reeds. Put your trust in Christ alone. From his early boyhood, John Paton wanted to be a missionary. Before studying theology and medicine, Paton served for ten years as a Glasgow City Missionary. After graduation, he was ordained and set sail for the New Hebrides as a Presbyterian missionary.

Three months after arriving on the island of Tanna, Paton's young wife died, followed by their five-week-old son. For three more years, Paton labored alone among the hostile islanders, ignoring their threats, seeking to make Christ known to them, before escaping with his life. Later, he returned and spent fifteen years on another island. Paton was working one day in his home on the translation of John's Gospel—puzzling over John's favorite expression *pisteuo eis*, to "believe in" or to "trust in" Jesus Christ, a phrase which occurs first in John 1:12. "*How can I translate it?*" Paton wondered. The islanders were cannibals; nobody trusted anybody else. There was no word for "trust" in their language. His native servant came in. "*What am I doing?*" Paton asked him. "*Sitting at your desk,*" the man replied. Paton then raised both feet off the floor and sat back on his chair. "*What am I doing now?*" In reply, Paton's servant used a verb which means "*to lean your whole weight upon.*" That's the phrase Paton used throughout John's Gospel to translate to "believe in."

2:9 called you. There is a universal call to salvation as per *Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

This divine call is a genuine offer of the gospel to all without distinction. But the question is not is the gospel sincerely and universally offered, it is. The question is this, "*Who will avail themselves of the divine provision and drink of the living waters?*" To that inquiry there can only be one conclusion. In addition to the universal call of the gospel there is a secret effectual call which is heard by those whom the Father has given to the Son and are designated His "sheep." Jesus put the matter this way. *John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one."*

Have not all men been given to the Son? Jesus plainly taught, "No." *John 10:24 "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."*

When the Jews who questioned Christ heard Jesus say He and the Father were one the Jews were angry and sought to kill Christ. *John 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.* Abandoning the matter of the call to salvation the Jews wanted to argue a secondary religious matter leading to murder and a feeling of doing "God's work."

Such is the same reaction today. Individuals would rather argue over secondary doctrinal issues than fall down before Christ and plead for forgiveness and mercy. In this matter the doctrine of the divine call is confirmed. Even when told plainly of their eternal danger and status the heart of the unbeliever is so hard it does not comprehend or care. Yet it remains religious and self-righteous even to the point of committing murder in the name of defending the honor of God. *John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? 33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*

The question comes, *“Have you heard the voice of the Shepherd calling your name?” “Has God called you personally out of darkness into his marvellous light?”* If not why not come to Jesus now, at this very moment. Why not pray and on bended knees say, *“Lord Jesus, I have heard the gospel. I realize no decision of mine, no baptism, no church membership, no good work, no religious heritage can save me. Only Jesus can save and right now I trust Him and Him alone as my Lord and Savior. Father, forgive me for my sin. I have heard the voice of Jesus calling to me saying, ‘Come unto me and I will give thee rest.’ Now I come. Thank you for calling me out of darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel. Amen.”*

*“While we pray and while we plead,
While you see your soul’s deep need,
While our Father calls you home,
Will you not, my brother, come?”*

*Why not now? Why not now?
Why not come to Jesus now?
Why not now? Why not now?
Why not come to Jesus now?*

*You have wandered far away;
Do not risk another day;
Do not turn from God your face,
But today accept His grace.*

*In the world you’ve failed to find
Aught of peace for troubled mind;
Come to Christ, on Him believe,
Peace and joy you shall receive.*

*Come to Christ, confession make;
Come to Christ, and pardon take;
Trust in Him from day to day,
He will keep you all the way.”*

Daniel W. Whittle, 1891

10 Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

2:11 fleshly lusts. With a pastor's heart Peter speaks to the church as "*dearly beloved*". Though saved every soul is still in need of sanctification. The apostle pleads for God's people to abstain from fleshly lusts because they war against the soul.

War Against the Soul

- Fleshly desires war against the soul by multiplying and growing like a mighty conquering army. Sensual desires unite with Pride, Covetousness, Greed, Willfulness, and Evil Communication to grieve the Holy Spirit, subdue any expression of true spirituality and eventually harden the heart to any form of divine rebuke resulting in the sin unto death. *1 Cor 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [are dead].*
- Fleshly desires war against the soul by suggesting invisible spiritual treaties which prove to be deceitful and eventually bind the will to enslave it with a sense of helplessness. The main provisions of these unholy alliances of the soul with the flesh is a promise the will shall prevail against God followed by pleasure. The pattern established in the Garden of Eden with Eve has not changed. Despite the known will of God "*when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat*" (Gen. 3:6). Because sin enslaves the soul Christ must come to set the captives free (Luke 4:18).
- Fleshly desires war against the soul by demanding to be served as lord and master. The attempt is to dethrone Christ. Those who have only a form of godliness but no vital spiritual power will yield their bodies as instruments of unrighteousness with predictable results. Some will "*creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts*" (2 Tim 3:6). Others will be "*ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*" (2 Tim. 3:7). Those who are losing the war against the soul will be marked with some or all of the following characteristics.
 - ❖ Lovers of their own selves
 - ❖ Covetous
 - ❖ Boasters
 - ❖ Proud
 - ❖ Blasphemers
 - ❖ Disobedient to parents
 - ❖ Unthankful
 - ❖ Unholy
 - ❖ Without natural affection
 - ❖ Trucebreakers
 - ❖ False accusers
 - ❖ Incontinent
 - ❖ Fierce

- ❖ Despisers of those that are good
- ❖ Traitors
- ❖ Heady
- ❖ High-minded
- ❖ Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God

12 Having your conversation [manner of life] honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

2:12 glorify God. Once more Peter contrasts evil with good in order to exhort the church to good works while providing two strong gospel motives for a life of holiness.

- Gospel motive one. Those who speak evil or in an injurious manner against the Christian will have no legitimate basis for their accusation when a holy life is lived. *Isa 54:17 "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD."*
- Gospel motive two. A good life can lead to the conversion of someone. It was the teaching of Christ to love all and to pray for those who lashed out to hurt. A passive response to evil is not natural to the flesh for the law of the spiritual jungle is "*eye for eye*" and "*tooth for tooth*." Only by having the love of God shed abroad in the heart can there be any hope of a proper gospel response and effective witnessing leading to the conversion of the sinner. *Jude 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

13 Submit [obey] yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

- 2:15 the will of God. The laws of a federal, state or local government may be harsh and unreasonable but when civil authorities are submitted to with a sweet spirit in the name of Jesus the soul is well pleasing to the Lord. The poet Cowper said, "*Behind a frowning providence He hides a shining face.*"

16 As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness [badness], but as the servants of God.

2:13-16 submit. The relationship between the believer and the state is basically one of submission. There is precedent in the scriptures for civil disobedience when the law of God has been violated. When forbidden to preach the name of Christ at the sake of being punished Peter let it be known he planned to do what was right and suffer the consequences.

- *Acts 5:27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 Saying, Did not we straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name? And, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

In the name of conscience and for the sake of Christ the believer must never use political liberties and Christ's freedoms for a cloke of maliciousness. It is possible for the gospel to be abused which is why many restrictions and prohibitions are given to the church not only for consideration but for implementation as servants of God and also to silence the voice of foolish individuals who oppose the gospel. Sometimes Christians are their own worse enemies for they want to provoke needlessly or remain willfully stubborn or unwisely obstinate.

17 Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

2:18 fear God. The fear of God is something that must be taught.

- *2 Kings 17:28 Then one of the priests whom they [the Assyrians] had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the LORD.*
- *Psalms 34:11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.*

Six Ways to Show God is Feared

- God is feared when it is remembered He is able to destroy both body and soul. *Luke 12:5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.*
- God is feared when there is a rational and emotional response to natural elements and animals divinely directed.
- ❖ *Ex 14:31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.*
- ❖ *1 Sam 12:18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.*
- ❖ *2 Kings 17:25 And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.*

- God is feared when the threats of men fade before knowledge of the divine will and the heart knows it is better to obey God than to violate His know will. *1 Kings 18:3 And [King] Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: 4 For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)* John Witherspoon wrote, *"It is only the fear of God that can deliver us from the fear of man."*
- God is feared when the absence of His presence is threatened to be withdrawn. Following his great sin with Bathsheba king David pleaded with God saying, *"take not thy holy spirit from me"* (*Psalms 51:11*).
- God is feared when a particular temptation is fled knowing it will offend the Lord. When Joseph was tempted to sexual immorality he asked Potiphar's wife, *"how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"* (*Gen 39:9*)
- God is feared when He is spoken of to others with reverence and awe. *Mal 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

18 Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward [warped].

2:18 servants be subject. The relationship between labor and management can be strained if laborers are exploited and just compensation is not given for work done. Realizing injustices will be generated the gospel instructs Christians to bear patiently these reproaches in order to receive the praise of God.

19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

2:19-12 For what glory is it. The apostle clearly teaches that what is acceptable and pleasing to God is when a verbal or physical injustice has been borne by the Christian that endures grief and wrongful suffering without seeking revenge or an audience to vent to. While the Christian suffers wrongfully the believer must be careful not to inflict wrong on others.

*“As I watched them tear a building down
 A gang of men in a busy town
 With a ho-heave-ho, and a lusty yell
 They swung a beam and the side wall fell
 I asked the foreman,
 “Are these men skilled,
 And the men you’d hire
 if you wanted to build?”*

*He gave a laugh and said, “No, indeed,
 Just common labor is all I need.”*

*“I can easily wreck in a day or two,
 What builders have taken years to do.”*

*And I thought to myself,
 as I went my way
 Which of these roles have I tried to play?*

*Am I a builder who works with care,
 Measuring life by rule and square?*

*Am I shaping my work
 to a well-made plan
 Patiently doing the best I can?*

*Or am I a wrecker who walks to town
 Content with the labor of tearing down?*

*“O Lord let my life and my labors be
 That which will build for eternity!”*

Author Unknown

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

2:21 Christ also suffered. The way Christ accepted suffering as part of the will of the Father is for our example. The Father has many lessons to teach the Christian, some of which can only be learned through the process of suffering. *"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world"* (C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*).

2:21 follow his steps. For those who do not think God wants Christians to suffer, this passage alone should silence that concept. There is a place for pain and suffering in the will of God over which He is sovereign and directs it for His own good purposes.

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

2:22-23 reviled not again. One of the most difficult courses of actions in the face of unjust criticism is to remain silent. The natural tendency is to defend, explain and justify. The gospel command is to decline to return the rhetorical rhetoric in kind, and make no threats but commit the matter to the Father who will judge righteously. If any type of retributive justice is in order God has taken that responsibility upon Himself. *“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Rom 12:19).*

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

2:24 bare our sins. During the time of the *Old Testament* economy on the Day of Atonement a goat was brought to the high priest. The sins of the nation were confessed over the goat and the animal was taken away by an escort into the desert. (Lev 16:10, 21). The person who released the goat was to wash his clothes and bathe afterwards (Lev 16:26). The “Scapegoat” (Azazel) was meant to represent the Messiah who would come to bear the sins of His people.

- *Leviticus 16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat...10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar...26 The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

Another goat also present on the Day of Atonement was sacrificed as a part of the sin offering (Lev 16:9). Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for sinners as He carried far far away the sins of the elect.

2:24 dead to sin. In the divine economy the moment a person is given eternal life and lives in the sight of God is the moment a death to sin takes place. While positionally, in the sight of God the believer has died in Christ, experientially the mortification of sins through the Spirit continues (Rom. 8:13; Col 3:5).

*“Take time to be holy,
 speak oft with thy Lord;
 Abide in Him always,
 and feed on His Word.*

*Make friends of God’s children,
 help those who are weak,
 Forgetting in nothing
 His blessing to seek.*

*Take time to be holy,
 the world rushes on;
 Spend much time in secret,
 with Jesus alone.*

*By looking to Jesus,
 like Him thou shalt be;
 Thy friends in thy conduct
 His likeness shall see.*

*Take time to be holy,
 let Him be thy Guide;
 And run not before Him,
 whatever betides.*

*In joy or in sorrow,
 still follow the Lord,
 And, looking to Jesus,
 still trust in His Word.*

*Take time to be holy,
 be calm in thy soul,
 Each thought and each motive
 beneath His control.*

*Thus led by His Spirit
 to fountains of love,
 Thou soon shalt be fitted
 for service above.”*

William D. Longstaff, 1882

Ultimate death to sin and its harmful expressions will come in the glorification of the soul either through a departure of this life to be in the presence of the Lord or when Jesus comes the second time and individuals are transformed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

- *Rom 8:30 “and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”*
- *1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

2: 24 By whose stripes ye are healed. The death of Christ is the ultimate foundation for all healing, spiritual, physical and material. Because of Christ souls are healed of the plague of all plagues, sin. Because of Christ the heart can hope for a resurrected body. Because of Christ the universe will one day cease to groan for there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Christ has come with “*healing in His wings*” (Mal. 4:2).

*“Heal us, Emmanuel, here we are
We wait to feel Thy touch;
Deep wounded souls to Thee repair,
And Savior, we are such.*

*Our faith is feeble, we confess
We faintly trust Thy Word;
But wilt Thou pity us the less?*

*Be that far from Thee, Lord!
Remember him who once applied
With trembling for relief*

*“Lord, I believe,”
with tears he cried;
“O help my unbelief!”*

*She, too, who touched Thee in the press
And healing virtue stole,
Was answered,
“Daughter, go in peace;
Thy faith has made thee whole.”*

*Concealed amid the gathering throng,
She would have shunned Thy view;
And if her faith was firm and strong,
Had strong misgivings too.*

*Like her, with hopes and fears we come
To touch Thee if we may;
O send us not despairing home;
Send none unhealed away.”*

William Cowper, 1779

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Doctrine of the Royal Priesthood of the Believer

1. Every person born of God is born into royalty. The believer is in Christ who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus is of the lineage of David according to the flesh; He is very God of very God according to the spirit.
 - *1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - *1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*
2. All that Christ is and all that Christ has, the believer is and shares. Christ is a priest and so is the believer. Christ is a king and those who love Him shall rule and reign with him.
 - *Revelation 1:5-6 ...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - *Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*
3. The royal reign of Christ and His priestly function is a present reality.
 - *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
 - *Hebrews 6:20 ...Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*
4. The Christian has the right and the responsibility to function in the royal priesthood of the New Testament era. The prerogatives of the priesthood are best done in the following manner.
 - *In holy boldness the believer is to draw near the throne of grace in faith. Hebrews 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

- In sincere humility and repentance the believer is to confess all known sin in order to be cleansed. *1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
 - The believer is to apply the blood of Christ to His conscience. *Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
 - The believer is to perfect holiness in the fear God. *2 Cor 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* To fear God is to dread putting a frown upon His face. To fear God is to tremble in remembrance of His awesome majesty for He holds in His power life and death. To fear God is to honor Him so highly that the heart does not want to sin lest it be a reproach against His holy character.
 - The believer is to offer praises and thanksgiving along with personal petitions. *Phil 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*
 - The believer is to express adoration to God the Father and God the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the beauty of holiness. *1 Tim 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - The believer is to intercede on behalf of others. *1 Thess 5:25 Brethren, pray for us. 2 Thess 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: 2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. Heb 13:18 18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.*
5. As priestly functions characterize the *New Testament* era believer, so do kingly functions. The kingly functions of every believer priest are best done in the following manner.
- The believer is to render righteous judgments in spiritual matters. *1 Corinthians 6:2-3 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*
 - The believer is to execute church discipline. *Matthew 18:15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.*

- The believer is to show royal benevolence by exercising excessive forgiveness. *Matt 18:21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.*
 - The believer is to generously bestow bounty on others. *2 Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*
 - The believer is to protect and safeguard the Word of God. *Jude 1: 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*
 - The believer is to protect and safeguard the future of the Church. *2 Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*
 - The believer is to be stately and dignified in speech and behavior. *Heb 13:5 5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
6. The concept of Christians being kings and priests unto God must not be thought of in fleshly earthly terms but heavenly spiritual ones for the dignity of each office is determined not by outward ceremony but by inward integrity.
 7. In recent years much shame and reproach has been manifested by members of the household of Queen Elizabeth II. The private conduct of family members has brought great public shame and embarrassment. There is nothing truly noble about course conduct. And so the Christian has the true nobility of soul and character in as far as the heart reflects Christ.
 8. In order to avoid bringing shame and dishonor to the name of Christ, in order to function in a courtly manner that reflects the King of kings and Lord of lords, in order to function in a worthy manner in a holy priestly office, the Christian must remember who he or she is and to whom he or she belongs.
 9. To think of one's self in terms of royalty and in terms of priestly conduct, the Christian is not under self-delusions of grandeur. The God of the universe has decreed that such exalted terminology and concepts be applied to the Church.

Years ago, an Archbishop of Canterbury was rushing to catch a train in London. In his haste, he accidentally jumped on the wrong passenger car and found himself on a car full of inmates from a mental hospital. They were all dressed in mental hospital clothing. Just as the train pulled out of the station, an orderly came in and began to count the inmates, "1-2-3-4." when suddenly he saw this distinguished looking gentleman there wearing a business suit and a clerical collar and he said: "*Who are you?*" The answer came back: "*I am the Archbishop of Canterbury!*" And the orderly said: "5-6-7-8." The world may not know who Christians are. The world may mock when the Church proclaims to exercise a royal priesthood. But it is the gospel truth and so must be embraced for behavior follows belief as form follows functions.

2:8 they were appointed. If objections are raised against the Doctrine of Divine Appointment and comments are made that it is not fair that God should appoint individuals to be offended by Christ, let the spiritual leader rejoice for the same objections were anticipated in the teaching of the apostle Paul.

- *Rom 9:19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?*

Writing to Erasmus the German Reformer, Martin Luther commented that it takes more grace and more faith to love God as He is revealed than as the heart wants Him to be. While the secret counsel remains hidden, what is revealed is to be acted upon in gospel obedience so that all are without excuse and none without hope. *Deut 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

Doctrine of the Fear of the Lord

1. *Fear of the Lord can be instilled as an act of the sovereign will of God*
 - as a motive for service. *1 Samuel 11:7 And he [Elijah] took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.*
 - as a form of divine judgment. *2 Chronicles 14:14 And they [the armies of Judah] smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the LORD came upon them [the enemies of Israel]: and they [the Hebrews] spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.*
 - as a form of divine protection. *2 Chronicles 17:10 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.*
2. *The fear of the Lord is commanded to be found in the heart of those who profess to know Him.*
 - *2 Chronicles 19:7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.*
 - *2 Chronicles 19:9 And he [Jehoshaphat] charged them [the people of Israel], saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.*
3. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*
 - *Psalms 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever.*
 - *Job 28:28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*
 - *Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
 - *Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*

4. The Fear of the Lord is defined biblically.

- *Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.*
- *Proverbs 14:27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*
- *Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.*

5. The fear of the Lord is characterized.

- *Psalms 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

6. Great mercy and grace is extended to those who fear the Lord.

- *A longer life. Proverbs 10:27 The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.*
- *A better quality of life. Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.*
- *A stronger faith. Proverbs 14:26 In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.*
- *Material prosperity. Proverbs 22:4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.*
- *Better understanding of spiritual realities. Isaiah 11:3 And shall make him [the Messiah] of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:*
- *Grace under pressure. Isaiah 33:6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure.*
- *Social stability. Acts 9:31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.*

7. The soul that possesses little of this world's goods but much of the fear of the Lord is far better off than a rich person with much silver and gold.

- *Proverbs 15:16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.*
8. The fear of the Lord produces holiness of life.
- *Proverbs 16:6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*
9. The Scriptures warn the believer never to stop fearing the Lord.
- *Proverbs 23:17 Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.*
10. Fear of God was a mark of the Messiah.
- *Isaiah 11:2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;*

1 PETER 3

1 Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

3:1 likewise. Turning his thoughts to the unjust suffering of many Christian women, Peter patterns their experience after Christ. The exhortation is given to be loving and obedient with the purpose of winning a lost husband to Christ. The power and price of a virtuous woman is immense (Prov. 31:10). .

2 While they behold your chaste [clean, pure] conversation [manner of life] *coupled* with fear.

3:2 chaste conversation. All women as all men need to be redeemed by God's sovereign grace and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. That grace can transform any woman no matter how desperately they have sinned is reflected in the life of Bathsheba for it was she who is behind the words of Proverbs 31. "*The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.*" If Lemuel is another name for king Solomon then his mother was Bathsheba. Solomon merely recorded what a great lady of grace taught him. No woman is beyond the reach of redeeming grace for no woman sinned to any greater degree than Bathsheba. She who betrayed her husband, conceived a child in sin, agreed to cover up the crime though it cost the life of her husband through murder, became a trophy of infinite mercy and a contributor to the *Word of God*.

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

3:3 Whose adorning. A literal and absolute prohibition against fixing the hair in an attractive manner, dressing well or wearing jewelry is not in view. Rather, emphasis is placed on the internal riches of the heart.

4 But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement [alarm].

3:6 whose daughters ye are. It is instructive how often in *Scripture* the Lord looks beyond a person's faults to honor their faith. Though Sarah sought a promised child in an inappropriate manner the time came when her faith flourished and was rewarded.

- *Hebrews 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

Peter would have Christian women emulate the faith of Sarah and her relationship with Abraham insofar as it conformed to gospel standards.

Christian Characteristics of a Daughter of Sarah

- A daughter of Sarah will manifest a meek spirit
- A daughter of Sarah will cultivate a quiet spirit
- A daughter of Sarah will esteem and honor the husband
- A daughter of Sarah will do well to all
- A daughter of Sarah will not be afraid

These virtues are of great value to God.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

3:7 according to knowledge. As Christian women have gospel duties and holy goals to seek after so men have an important responsibility. Men are to know their wives and respect what they know. Whenever anyone takes the time to know what is going on in the life of someone else it is deeply appreciated. Mamie Adams always went to a branch post office in her town because the postal employees there were friendly. She went there to buy stamps just before Christmas one year and the lines were particularly long. Someone pointed out that there was no need to wait in line because there was a stamp machine in the lobby. “*I know,*” said Mamie, “*but the machine won’t ask me about my arthritis.*”

3:7 be not hindered. If there is no marital harmony in the home, the prayer life will be affected. More likely, it will be non-existent.

8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful [sympathetic], *be* courteous:

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile [with deceit]:

11 Let him eschew [avoid] evil [injurious], and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue [pursue] it.

3:8-11

**Twelve Ways to Help
Have Harmony in the Church**

- Seek to be one mind and let that mind be the mind of Christ
- Have compassion
- Love the members of the royal family of grace
- Be sympathetic
- Express common courtesies
- Do not render evil for evil
- Do not render railing for railing
- Bless those who are mean spirited and hurtful
- Speak nothing in a deceitful manner
- Avoid anything that is injurious to someone else or self
- Do good
- Seek peace

12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.

3:19-12 eyes of the Lord. Gospel motives are stated in a positive and negative way.

**Seven Positive Gospel Motives
for Living Righteously**

- There is doctrinal understanding that a life of righteousness is a natural part of the divine call to salvation.
- There is a blessing to receive for righteous living not the least of which is to hear the Lord say, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matt 25:21).*
- There will be a joy in living.
- More good days will be experienced than bad days.
- The Lord is watching.
- Prayers will be answered.

**A Negative Motive
for Living Righteously**

- The face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

3:13 harm you. The answer to this rhetorical question is, “*Lord, no one can harm me if I follow that which is good. This is your promise and I believe it.*”

- *Isa 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.*

Sheltered in the Arms of God

*”I feel the touch of hands
so kind and tender.
They're leading me in paths
that I must trod.*

*I'll have no fear
for Jesus walks beside me
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God.*

*So let the storms rage high,
The dark clouds rise,
They won't worry me;
For I'm sheltered safe
within the arms of God.*

*He walks with me,
And naught of earth shall harm me,
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God.*

*Soon I shall hear the call
from heaven's portals
Come home my child,*

*It's the last mile you must trod
I'll fall asleep
And I'll wake in God's new heaven
Sheltered safe within the arms of God.*

*So let the storms rage high,
The dark clouds rise,
They won't worry me;
For I'm sheltered
within the arms of God.*

*He walks with me,
And naught of earth shall harm me,
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God."*

Dottie Rambo

"For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."

Psalms 61:3

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy [blest] *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

3:14 happy are ye. According to Peter the believer who suffers for the sake of righteousness is blessed or fortunate. While this sounds strange Peter teaches what he has been taught. Jesus said, *"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. 23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets"* (Luke 6:22-23).

**Four Blessings Associated
with Suffering for the Sake
of Righteousness**

- It is better to be persecuted than to be the one doing the persecuting.
- The believer gets to be like Jesus, as prayer has been made to that end. *Phil 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.*
- When suffering takes place for the sake of righteousness the reward in heaven increases. *"behold, your reward is great in heaven"* (Luke 6:23).
- There is identification with the prophets of old *"for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets"* (Luke 6:23).

3:14 be not afraid...neither be troubled. By hiding God's Word in the heart, fear will be dispelled and calmness of soul will be maintained so the heart is not troubled.

- *Psalms 56:4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*
- *Psalms 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*
- *Hebrews 13:6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

*“Jesus, lover of my soul,
let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
while the tempest still is high.*

*Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last.*

*Other refuge have I none,
hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! Leave me not alone,
still support and comfort me.*

*All my trust on Thee is stayed,
all my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head with the shadow of Thy wing.*

*Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not accept my prayer?
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall—Lo!
on Thee I cast my care;*

*Reach me out Thy gracious hand!
While I of Thy strength receive,
Hoping against hope I stand,
dying, and behold, I live.*

*Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
more than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
heal the sick, and lead the blind.*

*Just and holy is Thy Name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.*

*Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound;
make and keep me pure within.*

*Thou of life the fountain art,
freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart;
rise to all eternity.*

Charles Wesley, 1740

The Story behind the Song

Mrs. Mary Hoover, of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, whose grandmother was the heroine of the story, has related to her pastor this family tradition: Charles Wesley was preaching in the fields of the parish of Killyleagh, County Down, Ireland, when he was attacked by men who did not approve of his doctrines. He sought refuge in a house located on what was known as the Island Barn Farm. The farmer's wife, Jane Lowrie Moore, told him to hide in the milk house, down in the garden. Soon the mob came and demanded the fugitive. She tried to quiet them by offering them refreshments. Going down to the milk house, she directed Mr. Wesley to get through the rear window and hide under the hedge, by which ran a little brook. In that hiding-place, with the cries of his pursuers all about him, he wrote this immortal hymn

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

3:15 sanctify the Lord God.

*"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.*

*Look how we grovel here below,
Fond of these trifling toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys.*

*In vain we tune our formal songs,
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.*

*Dear Lord! And shall we ever live
At this poor dying rate?
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee,
And Thine to us so great!*

*Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning powers;
Come, shed abroad the Savior's love
And that shall kindle ours."*

Isaac Watts, 1707

3:15 give an answer. It has been said that a pastor should be ready to "*preach, pray or perish on a moment's notice.*" Peter said that all Christians should be prepared to give a word of testimony concerning their faith. The best testimony is that which does not argue but says in humility and utter astonishment, "*Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*" (John 4:29).

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation [manner of life] in Christ.

17 For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

3:17 the will of God. It is the will of God that some Christians suffer for well doing in order to test the soul, in order for others to follow a godly example of endurance and in order to exercise divine sovereignty. Any attempt to find an ultimate cause for a given situation must eventually come to rest in the sovereignty of God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11).

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

3: 18. bring us. The death of Christ was with purpose and definition. Christ died to secure the salvation of souls, not to merely make souls savable. He accomplished a definite redemption, which is now being applied to the lives of those who will be made alive by the same Holy Spirit that brought Christ back from the sphere of the dead. *Eph 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

*“Deep in the everlasting mind
The great mysterious purpose lay;
Of choosing some from lost mankind,
Whose sins the Lamb should bear away.*

*Them, loved with an eternal love,
To grace and glory He ordained;
Gave them a throne which cannot move,
And chose them both to means and end.*

*In these He was resolved to make,
The riches of His goodness known;
These He accepts for Jesus’ sake.
And views them righteous in His Son.*

*No goodness God foresaw in His,
But what His grace decreed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from Him receive.*

*Faith and repentance He bestows
On such as He designs to save;
From Him their soul’s obedience flows,
And He shall all their glory have.”*

Isaac Tucker
1761-1825

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

3:19-20 the spirits in prison. There is an interesting but speculative teaching that advocates Jesus went and made a victorious proclamation to souls in hell following His death at Calvary. A better understanding is that Christ, by the Holy Spirit, once offered the gospel of redeeming grace to another generation though few souls were saved. A parallel is found between the ministry of the church in the first century and the labors of Noah. Great faith does not always produce great results.

21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

3:21 baptism doth also now save us. Peter is not teaching a doctrine of baptism for regeneration because he is careful to define the term baptism in a metaphorical sense. Baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God. The only way a person can have a good conscience toward God is to be identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. The Holy Spirit comes to effect regeneration and identifies or baptizes the soul into the body of Christ. With that being said it can be noted, as Matthew Henry does, *“the sacrament of [water] baptism, rightly received, is a means and a pledge of salvation. “Baptism now saveth us”. God is pleased to convey his blessings to us in and by his ordinances” (Acts 2:38; 22:16).*

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities [magistrates] and powers [miracles] being made subject unto him.

3:22 gone into heaven. The ascension of Christ to heaven is one of the great doctrines of the Christian faith though it is surrounded by mystery. The location of heaven cannot be located with the human eye, or instruments, for the universe is too vast and too complex. Nevertheless, there is a Man in heaven today, the God-Man, who sits on the throne of majesty where angels and authorities and forces are made subject to Him.

3: 21 baptism doth also now save us

If....

1. If water baptism is needed for salvation than the teaching of the Catholic Church is correct and there was and is no need for the Protestant Reformation. *Sola fide* (by faith alone), is at the heart of the Reformed Doctrine of Justification.
 - *Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
2. If water baptism is needed for salvation then Catholic Dogma of works plus faith resulting in salvation is correct, and passages such as Ephesians 2:8-9 is overthrown. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*
3. If water baptism is needed for salvation then the Law need never have been abolished for a new set of laws have replaced them and Christ can no longer say, *“It is finished”*. Some more must yet be done.
4. If water baptism is needed for salvation then the great parallel emphasizing faith is made void.
 - *John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*
5. If baptism is necessary for salvation then the misguided practice of the early church whereby individuals delayed being baptized until near death is justified. But what does the Bible say about baptism? It exhorts an immediate obedient response to the gospel. Baptism is to be done sooner rather than later.
 - *Acts 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*
 - *Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*

6. If water baptism is needed for salvation than another foundation is laid on which faith rests. *1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
7. If water baptism is needed for salvation then a good work has been added to the atoning work of Christ and the heart is left to wonder and worry about other good works to be enacted in order to be saved. The end result will be nothing but fear and despair for who can merit the merits of Christ?
 - *Galatians 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*
8. If water baptism is essential for salvation then the importance of the Spirit baptism is reduced.
 - *Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*
 - *1 Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

1 PETER 4

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh [His human nature], arm [equip] yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh [corrupt nature] hath ceased from sin;

4:1 ceased from sin. As death brings an end to human sinning so the believer's identification with the death of Christ is designed to put to death the motions of sin in the soul. Cessation of sin comes when the mind of the Lord is exercised. Cessation of sin comes by self-denial and mortification of the flesh.

*"I heard an old, old story,
How a Savior came from glory,
How He gave His life on Calvary
To save a wretch like me;
I heard about His groaning,
Of His precious blood's atoning,
Then I repented of my sins
And won the victory.*

*O victory in Jesus,
My Savior, forever.
He sought me and bought me
With His redeeming blood;
He loved me ere I knew Him
And all my love is due Him,
He plunged me to victory,
Beneath the cleansing flood.*

*I heard about His healing,
Of His cleansing pow'r revealing.
How He made the lame to walk again*

*And caused the blind to see;
And then I cried, "Dear Jesus,
Come and heal my broken spirit,"
And somehow Jesus came and bro't
To me the victory.*

*I heard about a mansion
He has built for me in glory.
And I heard about the streets of gold Beyond the crystal sea;
About the angels singing,
And the old redemption story,
And some sweet day I'll sing up there The song of victory."*

E.M. Bartlett

2 That he [the believer] no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

4:2 no longer live. One of the grand goals of salvation is to move individuals from living for self centered passions to living to please God.

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice [satisfy] us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked [traveled] in lasciviousness [moral filth], lusts [desires], excess of wine, revellings [carousals], banquetings, and abominable [unlawful] idolatries [image worship]:

4:3 when we walked.

Characteristics of the Unconverted

- Lasciviousness which is moral filth
- Lusts referring to passionate desires
- Excess of wine or drunkenness
- Revellings manifested in carousals
- Banquetings by being a party animal
- Abominable idolatries which includes the unlawful worship of images

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot [debauchery], speaking evil of *you*:

4:4 ye run not. *"Those that are once really converted will not return to their former course of life, though ever so much tempted by the frowns or flatteries of others to do so. Neither persuasion nor reproach will prevail with them to be or to do as they were wont to do"* (Matthew Henry)

5 Who shall give account to him [Christ] that is ready to judge the quick [living] and the dead.

4: 4 give an account. *“The malignant world shall in a little time give an account to the great God of all their evil speeches against his people, Jude 14-15. They will soon be called to a sad account for all their curses, their foolish jests, their slanders and falsehoods, uttered against the faithful people of God” (Matthew Henry).*

6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are [spiritually] dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

4:6 but live. A great mystery is how the gospel is preached to dead men for every unbeliever is physically alive but spiritual dead. The natural man has no strength to receive the gospel nor is there any inclination to please God. Nevertheless, like Christ speaking to Lazarus in the grave, the gospel calls forth to souls in the spiritual sphere of the dead. And they hear and live in new gospel obedience according to the will of God.

*“Thee is a period known to God
When all His sheep, redeem’d by blood
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in.*

*At peace with hell, with God at war,
In sin’s dark maze they wander far,
Indulge their lust, and still go on,
As far from God as sheep can run.*

*But see how Heaven’s indulgent care
Attends their wanderings here and there:
Still near at hand, where’er they stray,
With pricking thorns to hedge the way.*

*Glory to God, they ne’er shall rove
Beyond the limits of His love:
Fenced with Jehovah’s shalls and wills,
Firm as the everlasting hills.*

*Th’appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to propose but call by grace;
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn their feet to Zion’s hill.”*

John Knox
1766-1843

- The mortification of sins and living to God are the expected results of the gospel preached and received.
- God will eventually call to account all those who have had the gospel preached to them to determine whether or not it has been received in vain or to no purpose.
- It does not matter how others may judge the believer if a life is lived for the glory of God by means of the Holy Spirit.

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

4:7 at hand. The idea of an imminent return of Christ must give way to the concept of an impending return. The difference is one of raising expectations beyond a reasonable point. Since 1830 the imminent return has been widely proclaimed so that each generation has believed it is the terminal generation. I have some simple words to Dispensational brethren who have high expectations that Christ will come in their lifetime. “*Prepare to die.*” I also have some simple words to anyone living in a careless manner morally and spiritually. “*Don’t die.*” The balance to the doctrine of the second coming of Christ is to remember the following.

- One day Jesus Christ shall return to earth the second time for all that believe (Heb. 9:28).
- Of that day and hour no one knows. Therefore, any appeals to signs of the time is meaningless. An evil and adulterous generation seeks after signs (Matt. 12:39).
- When Jesus comes the world will know He has arrived for His return will be no secret silent coming (1 Thess 4:16).
- Because no one knows the day or hour or year or generation in which Christ will return every believer is to live in a sober and watchful manner accompanied by much prayer.

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

4:8 shall cover. While love has covered sin it has never covered up sin. The atonement provided by Jesus is a covering for sin but the death of Christ made sure no sin would ever be covered up. Christ drank fully the dreaded cup of divine fury against evil by His substitutionary death. Now his love must be shed abroad in the heart of the redeemed.

*Jesus, Thy boundless love to me
No thought can reach, no tongue declare;
Unite my thankful heart with Thee
And reign without a rival there.*

*To Thee alone, dear Lord, I live;
Myself to Thee, dear Lord, I give.*

*O, grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell but Thy pure love alone!
Oh, may Thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
All coldness from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love.*

*O love, how cheering is thy ray!
All pain before thy presence flies;
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away
Wherever thy healing beams arise.*

*O Jesus, nothing may I see,
Nothing desire or seek, but Thee!*

*“This love unwearied I pursue
And dauntlessly to Thee aspire.
Oh, may Thy love my hope renew
Burn in my soul like heavenly fire!
And day and night be all my care
To guard this sacred treasure there.*

*My Savior, Thou Thy love to me
In shame, in want, in pain, hast showed;
For me, on the accursed tree,
Thou pourest forth Thy guiltless blood;
Thy wounds upon my heart impress,
Nor aught shall the loved stamp efface.*

*More hard than marble is my heart,
And foul with sins of deepest stain;
But Thou the mighty Savior art,
Nor flowed thy cleansing blood in vain;
Ah soften, melt this rock, and may
Thy blood wash all these stains away!*

*O that I, as a little child,
 May follow Thee, and never rest
 Till sweetly Thou hast breathed Thy mild
 And lowly mind into my breast!
 Nor ever may we parted be,
 Till I become as one with Thee.*

*Still let Thy love point out my way;
 How wondrous things Thy love hath wrought!
 Still lead me, lest I go astray;
 Direct my word, inspire my thought;
 And if I fall, soon may I hear
 Thy voice, and know that love is near.*

*In suffering be Thy love my peace,
 In weakness be Thy love my power;
 And when the storms of life shall cease,
 Jesus, in that important hour,
 In death as life be Thou my guide,
 And save me, Who for me hast died.”*

Paul Gerhardt
 1607-1676

Translated from German to English
 John Wesley
 1703-1791

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

4:9 hospitality. Generosity is to characterize the Christian. Freely individuals have received, free believers must give, and with a sweet spirit.

*“Some folks make you feel at home.
 Others make you wish you were.”*

Arnold H. Glasow

“Treat your guest as a guest for two days; on the third day, give him a hoe.”

Swahili proverb

10 As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

4:10 the gift. At the moment of salvation God the Father determines what function a believer shall have in the body of Christ. *1 Cor 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.* God the Holy Spirit assigns a spiritual gift suitable for that function. *1 Cor 12:8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.*

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles [utterances] of God; if any man minister, *let him* do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

4:11 that God. The purpose for each spiritual gift is to minister to the church while glorifying God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as a thief*, or *as an evildoer*, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

4:15 none of you suffer. Sometimes individuals suffer as a consequence of their own sin.

- The murderer must not say they killed in the name of God. Christian militant and murdering anti-abortion activists and others of like mind and activity find no divine blessing upon their criminal conduct.
- Finding ways to take from others without due process of law, political, judicial or by robbery will find no divine blessing even if the objective has a noble cause.
- A person who plots evil or injurious behavior against others in the church or outside the assembly will find no divine favor upon their schemes.

- A person who hears only one side of a discussion and takes action without a fair and balanced investigation will find no divine blessing upon their unethical conduct.

If an individual is arrested for murder or attempted murder, if a person is apprehended or exposed as a thief, if a person plots injurious behavior and then finds his own fortunes reversed, if a person discovers too late they have said and acted in a hasty manner to their own shame suffer the consequences of their actions they must not believe they are suffering for the cause of righteousness. That is not the case.

16 Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

4:16 not be ashamed.

*"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend His cause,
Maintain the honor of His Word,
The glory of His cross.*

*Jesus, my Lord! I know His name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Or let my hope be lost.*

*Firm as His throne His promise stands,
And He can well secure
What I've committed to His hands,
Till the decisive hour.*

*Then will He own my worthless name,
Before His Father's face,
And in the New Jerusalem,
Appoint my soul its place."*

Isaac Watts
1674-1748

17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first *begin* at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

4:16-17 as a Christian. As there is a just suffering for those who murder, steal, plot and interfere in matters that do not concern them so there is unjust suffering for the cause of Christ. When such suffering comes, and come it will (John 13:16) the believer is to remember the following.

- Do not be ashamed.
- Give glory to God
- Remember that God is purifying His people
- Remember that judgment must begin in the house of God
- Remember how difficult it is to be saved
- Remember those who do not obey the gospel shall not go unnoticed, unchallenged or unaccounted for
- Remember to commit the soul to God

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

4:18 scarcely be saved. Salvation is rare and difficult. *Matt 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Several famous people were asked what they felt was the saddest word in the English language. Here's what some of them said.

- Poet T. S. Eliot: *"The saddest word in the English language is, of course, 'saddest.'"*
- Lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II: *"But."*
- Writer John Dos Passos quoted John Keats: *"Forlorn! the very word is like a bell."*
- Psychiatrist Karl Menninger: *"Unloved."*
- Statesman Bernard M. Baruch: *"Hopeless."*
- President Harry Truman quoted John Greenleaf Whittier: *"For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: 'It might have been!'"*
- Alexandra Tolstoi: *"The saddest word in all languages, which has brought the world to its present condition, is 'atheism.'"*

When all of these words and concepts are united they present the state of a soul *"...without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world"* (Eph. 2:12).

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

5:19 a faithful Creator. To the agnostic God is a joke. It is said that the French unbeliever Voltaire tipped his hat as a funeral procession went by. A friend said, *"I didn't know you acknowledged God."* Voltaire replied, *"We nod, but we don't speak."* To the atheist God is non-existent though this plunges the soul into dark despair.

The Plight of the Atheist

"Man has never been the same since God died. He has taken it very hard. Why, you'd think it was only yesterday, the way he takes it. Not that he says much, but he laughs much louder than he used to. And he can't bear to be left alone even for a minute and he can't sit still."

Edna St. Vincent Millay

To the Believer God is a Faithful Creator and a Constant Delight

*"They who seek the throne of grace
Find that throne in every place;
If we live a life of prayer,
God is present everywhere.*

*In our sickness and our health,
In our want, or in our wealth,
If we look to God in prayer,
God is present everywhere.*

*When our earthly comforts fail,
When the woes of life prevail,
'Tis the time for earnest prayers;
God is present everywhere.*

*Then, my soul, in every strait,
To thy Father come, and wait;
He will answer every prayer:
God is present everywhere."*

Oliver Holden
1765-1844

1 PETER 5

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

5:1 elders. Since the passing of the apostles the highest ruling authority in the local assemble are elders, not deacons and not auxiliary boards. The usurpation of pastoral authority has brought shame and division to the body of Christ and broken the biblical pattern. The Lord has a right to organize the church as He sees fit and He has decreed that pastors have ultimate oversight and shall rule the assembly according to gracious gospel terms.

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

5:1 feed the flock. God has called individuals to feed, not fleece the flock which means that no pastor has a right to be in the ministry for financial profit or to lord it over God's people. Pastoral accountability comes from the biblical pattern of having a plurality of elders in leadership position.

3 Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

5:3 being ensamples.

Ten Basic Statements about Ministry

- The foundation of ministry is character.
- The nature of ministry is service.
- The motive for ministry is love.
- The measure of ministry is sacrifice.
- The authority of ministry is submission.
- The purpose of ministry is the glory of God.
- The tools of ministry are the Word and prayer.
- The privilege of ministry is growth.
- The power of ministry is the Holy Spirit.
- The model for ministry is Jesus Christ

Warren and David Wiersbe,
Making Sense of the Ministry

The Perfect Pastor

Author Unknown

After hundreds of years the perfect pastor's been found. He is the church elder who'll please everyone. He preaches exactly 20 minutes and then sits down. He condemns sin, but never steps on anybody's toes. He works from 8 in the morning to 10 at night, doing everything from preaching sermons to sweeping. He makes \$400 per week, gives \$100 a week to the church, drives a late model car, buys lots of books, wears fine clothes, and has a nice family. He always stands ready to contribute to every other good cause, too, and to help panhandlers who drop by the church on their way to somewhere. He is 36 years old, and has been preaching 40 years. He is tall on the short side, heavy-set in a thin sort of way, and handsome. He has eyes of blue or brown, (to fit the occasion) and wears his hair parted in the middle - left side, dark and straight, right side, brown and wavy. He has a burning desire to work with the youth, and spends all his time with the senior citizens. He smiles all the time while keeping a straight face, because he has a keen sense of humor that finds him seriously dedicated. He makes 15 calls a day on church members, spends all his time evangelizing non-members, and is always found in his study if he is needed. Unfortunately he burnt himself out and died at the age of 32.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

5:4 a crown of glory.

- The Crown of Incorruption. *1 Corinthians 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*
- The Crown of Righteousness. *2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a 'Crown of righteousness', which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
- The Crown of Life. *James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the 'Crown of life,' which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*
- The Crown of Rejoicing. *1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or 'Crown of rejoicing?' Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*
- The Crown of Glory. *1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a 'Crown of glory' that fadeth not away.*

- The Crown of Gold. *Revelation 4:4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

5:5 humility. *“Humility does not mean thinking less of yourself than of other people, nor does it mean having a low opinion of your own gifts. It means freedom from thinking about yourself one way or the other at all” (William Temple, “Christ in His Church”).*

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

5:6 humble. A truly humble man is hard to find, yet God delights to honor such selfless people. Booker T. Washington, the renowned black educator, was an outstanding example of this truth. Shortly after he took over the presidency of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, he was walking in an exclusive section of town when he was stopped by a wealthy white woman. Not knowing the famous Mr. Washington by sight, she asked if he would like to earn a few dollars by chopping wood for her. Because he had no pressing business at the moment, Professor Washington smiled, rolled up his sleeves, and proceeded to do the humble chore she had requested. When he was finished, he carried the logs into the house and stacked them by the fireplace. A little girl recognized him and later revealed his identity to the lady. The next morning the embarrassed woman went to see Mr. Washington in his office at the Institute and apologized profusely. *“It’s perfectly all right, Madam,”* he replied. *“Occasionally I enjoy a little manual labor. Besides, it’s always a delight to do something for a friend.”* She shook his hand warmly and assured him that his meek and gracious attitude had endeared him and his work to her heart. Not long afterward she showed her admiration by persuading some wealthy acquaintances to join her in donating thousands of dollars to the Tuskegee Institute (*Our Daily Bread*).

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

5:7 He careth for you.

*“Does Jesus care
when my heart is pained
Too deeply for mirth or song,*

*As the burdens press,
and the cares distress
And the way grows weary and long?*

*Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.*

*Does Jesus care when my way is dark
With a nameless dread and fear?
As the daylight fades
into deep night shades,
Does He care enough to be near?*

*Does Jesus care
when I've tried and failed
To resist some temptation strong;
When for my deep grief there is no relief,
Though my tears flow all the night long?*

*Does Jesus care
when I've said "goodbye"
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches
till it nearly breaks,
Is it aught to Him?
Does He see?"*

*Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.*

Frank E. Graeff
1901

The Story Behind the Song

Frank Graeff went through some very difficult trials. The period before writing this song was one of great despondency, doubt and physical pain. When he turned to God's Word, 1 Peter 5:7 gave wonderful comfort: "*He cares for you.*" After meditating on that truth, Mr. Graeff wrote these verses with the faith affirming chorus, "*O yes, He cares...*"

8 Be sober [discreet], be vigilant [on guard]; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour [swallow up]:

5:8 the devil. The devil is a real person and not just an evil force. *“That there is a devil is a thing doubted by none but such as are under the influence of the Devil” (Cotton Mather)*. The main objective of the devil is to devour souls, which he does in many ways including addictions. Addiction is characterized by an obsessive indulgence of any substance or thought. Some people are swallowed up by the lust for power in that they must have their own way in any given situation. Others are swallowed up by coveting money or indulging in sensual pleasure by way of pornography. Still others are swallowed up with food, drugs or alcohol.

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

5:9 resist. Resistance to the devil is to take place in the sphere of faith. This means that no confidence is to be place in the flesh to conquer sin in the soul. *Rom 8:13 “if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

5:10 make you.

Six Works of Divine Grace

- The believer is called to salvation, sanctification and service.
- The believer is to suffer in order to be like Christ.
- The believer will be perfected or made complete. What was broken in the Garden of Eden has been repaired by the work of Christ at Calvary.
- The believer will be established in the sphere of faith. The child of God will stand firm in the faith.
- The believer will be strengthened in the inner man.
- The believer will be able to function under pressure and will be stabilized in every situation in life. Bible doctrine, stored in the soul will be the defense erected against the world, the flesh and the devil.

11 To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

5:11 Silvanus, a faithful brother. Silvanus is another form of Silas (person of the woods) who was an honored leader in the early church at Jerusalem. Because Silas was willing to go on a missionary journey with Paul the two ventured to Antioch of Syria. There they shared the decision of the Jerusalem Council to receive Gentile Christians into the church (Acts 15:22, 27, 32) with only limited conditions. On a second missionary journey Paul as a traveling companion chose Silas. It was during this period that Paul and Silas were imprisoned at Philippi (Acts 16:19, 25, 29). Silas and Paul were also together when a riot broke out in the city of Thessalonica (Acts 17:4). Following that incident they were sent to Berea, where Silas remained with Timothy; both Silas and Timothy soon followed Paul to Athens (Acts 17:14-15), although they may not have caught up with him until reaching Corinth (Acts 18:5). Silas played a vital part in promoting the gospel in Corinth. In his letters, Paul referred to Silas as Silvanus (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1). The time, place, and manner of his death are not known, and it does not matter. The message is more important than the man.

13 The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus [John Mark] my son.

5:13 Babylon. Babylon is used in Scripture as a symbol of tyranny and evil and worthy of destruction. *Revelation 14:8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.* Here, the cryptic reference may be to the Church of Rome or it may refer to the ancient city of Babylon on the Euphrates as the Nestorian (Persian) church maintains. Many Jews had been deported to Babylon over the centuries. When the gospel went into all the world (Rom. 1:8) some came to faith and Peter ministered to them. There is a third possibility. The Coptic Church of Egypt believed Babylon referred to a new Babylon in Egypt near the present city of Cairo.

Note. The Nestorians. The Nestorians held that there were two separate persons in Christ—one divine, the other human. Its members venerate Nestorius as a saint, deny the Virgin the title Mother of God while otherwise honoring her highly, and reject the ecumenical councils after the second council was held. The ancient Persian church was the only one to espouse the cause of Nestorius; as a result it lost communion with the rest of Christendom.

Note. The Coptic Church. For two thousand years, the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt has maintained a faithful witness for Christ. Her sons and daughters pride themselves on being the unyielding defendants of the Christian faith. The *Nicene Creed*, which is recited in many churches throughout the world, has been authored by one of her favorite sons, Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria in 325 AD. Egypt was the place of refuge the Holy Family sought in its flight from Judea (Mat.2:12-23).

14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

5:14 greet one another. It is the custom in some countries for there to be no physical contact between the opposite sexes in public. The gospel comes to change not only hearts but also lives and customs. Long established traditions must give way to biblical commands and practices. A display of affection among brothers and sisters in the body of Christ is appropriate and needed. The only expression of love some people get is the touch they receive by members of the Royal Family of God.

5:1 the elders. Concerning church leaders, God can use the most unlikely of candidates. The following imaginary letter captures this point.

Rev. Saul Paul
Independent, Missionary
Corinth, Greece

Dear Mr. Paul:

We recently received an application from you for service under our Board.

It is our policy to be as frank and open-minded as possible with all our applicants. We have made an exhaustive survey of your case. To be plain, we are surprised that you have been able to pass as a bonified missionary.

We are told that you are afflicted with a severe eye trouble. This is certain to be an insuperable handicap to an effective ministry. Our Board requires 20-20 vision.

At Antioch, we learn, you opposed Dr. Simon Peter, an esteemed denominational secretary and actually rebuked him openly and publicly. You stirred up so much trouble at Antioch that a special Board meeting had to be convened at Jerusalem. We cannot condone such actions.

Do you think it seemly for a missionary to do part-time secular work? We hear that you are making tents on the side. In a letter to the church at Philippi, you admitted that they are the only church supporting you. We wonder why.

Is it true that you have a jail record? Certain brethren reported that you did two years time at Caesarea and were imprisoned at Rome.

You made such trouble for the businessmen at Ephesus that they refer to you as "*the man who turned the world upside down.*" Sensationalism in missions is uncalled for. We also deplore the lurid "*over-the-wall-in-a-basket*" episode at Damascus.

We are appalled at your obvious lack of conciliatory behavior. Diplomatic men are not stoned and dragged out of the city gate, or assaulted by furious mobs. Have you ever suspected that gentler words might gain you more friends? I enclose a copy of the book by Dailus Carnagus, "*How to Win Jews and Influence Greeks.*"

In one of your letters you refer to yourself as "*Paul the Aged.*" Our new mission policies do not envisage a surplus of super-annulated recipients.

We understand that you are given to fancies and dreams. At Troas, you saw "*a man of Macedonia*" and at another time "*were caught up into the third heaven*" and even claimed the "*Lord stood by you.*" We reckon that more realistic and practical minds are needed in the task of world evangelism.

You have caused much trouble wherever you have gone. You opposed the honorable women at Berea and the leaders of your own nationality in Jerusalem. If a man cannot get along with his own people, how can he serve foreigners?

We learn that you are a snake handler? At Malta, you picked up a poisonous serpent which is said to have bitten you, but you did not suffer harm. Tsk, tsk.

You admit that while serving time at Rome that "*all forsook you.*" Good men are not left friendless. Three fine brothers by the names of Demas, and Alexander the coppersmith have notarized affidavits to the effect that it is impossible for them to cooperate with either you or your program.

We know that you had a bitter quarrel with a fellow missionary, Barnabas. Harsh words do not further God's work.

You have written many letters to churches where you have formerly been pastor. In one of these letters, you accused a church member of living with his father's wife, and you caused the whole church to feel badly; and the poor fellow was expelled.

You spend too much time talking about the "*second coming of Christ.*" Your letters to the people of Thessalonica are devoted almost entirely to this theme. Put first things first from now on.

Your ministry has been far too flighty to be successful. First Asia Minor, then Macedonia, then Greece, then Italy, and now you are talking about a wild goose chase to Spain. Concentration is more important than dissipation of one's powers. You cannot win the whole by yourself. You are just one little Paul.

In a recent sermon you said, "*God forbid that I should glory in anything save the cross of Christ.*" It seems to us that you ought also to glory in our heritage, our denominationalism and program, the unified budget, and the World Federation of Churches.

Your sermons are much too long at times. At one place, you talked until after midnight and a young man was so asleep that he fell out of the window and broke his neck. Nobody is saved after the first twenty minutes. “*Stand up, speak up, and then shut up*” is our advice.

Dr. Luke reports that you are a thin, little man, bald, frequently sick, and always so agitated over your churches, that you sleep very poorly. He reports that you pad around the house praying half the night. A healthy mind in a robust body is our ideal for all applicants. A good night’s sleep will give you zest and zip, so that you wake up full of zing.

We find it best to send only married men into Foreign Service. We deplore your policy of persistent celibacy; Simon Magus has set up a matrimonial bureau at Samaria, where the names of some very fine widows are available.

It hurts me to tell you this, Brother Paul, but in all of my twenty-five years experience, I have never met a man so opposite to the requirements of our Foreign Mission Board. If we accepted you, we would break every rule of modern missionary practice.

Most sincerely yours,
J. Flavius Fluffyhead
Foreign Mission Board Secretary

J. Harold Smith, “*Your Good Neighbor*,” November 1952

Doctrine of the Devil

1. The Devil is a real spiritual entity with power, emotions, and intellect.
2. The word Devil means "*accuser*" or "*slanderer*".
3. The Devil is called by various names:
 - Abaddon and Apollyon. *Revelation 9:11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*
 - Adversary. *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
 - Beelzebub. *Matthew 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out Devil s, but by Beelzebub the prince of the Devil s.*
 - Belial. *2 Corinthians 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*
 - Satan. *Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*
 - Old Serpent. *Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*
 - The Dragon. *Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil , and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*
4. The Devil was the original sinner.
 - *1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.*
5. The Devil was cast out of heaven.
 - *Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*
 - *Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

6. The Devil appeared as a serpent to Eve.

- *Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

7. God cursed the snake, the instrument, the Devil used to lead men into sin.

- *Genesis 3:14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:*

8. The Devil still has access to heaven.

- *Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.*

9. The Devil desired to possess the apostles,

- *Luke 22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*

10. The Devil filled Ananias' heart with sin.

- *Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*

11. The Devil perverts the truth.

- *Matthew 4:6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

12. He opposes the advancement of the gospel by circumventing events and by snatching the gospel seed that has been sown in the heart. .

- *1 Thessalonians 2:18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.*
- *Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*

13. The Devil is able to produce lying wonders.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

14. The Devil can appear as an angel of light.

- *2 Cor 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.*

15. The Devil is to be resisted.

- *James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.*

16. Christ has judged the Devil.

- *John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

17. An eternal fire has been prepared for the Devil and his angels.

- *Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels:*

18. The Devil is doomed.

- *Revelation 20:10 And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

19. The Devil can entice to do evil (Matthew 4:1) while arguing persuasively for His position (Matthew 4:5-11).

- *Matthew 4:5 Then the Devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the Devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

20. The Devil is so arrogant he dares to tempt the Father and then the Son (Luke 4:2-13). From the testing of Christ it can be observed that there are prolonged periods of temptation as well as momentary times.

- *Luke 4:2 Being forty days tempted of the Devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. 3 And the Devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. 4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. 5 And the Devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the Devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. 7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. 8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: 10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: 11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 13 And when the Devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*

21. The Devil has the ability to take away the gospel seed from some souls lest it should bear fruit.

- *Luke 8:12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

22. The believer is instructed not to give the Devil a stronghold in the soul.

- *Ephesians 4:27 Neither give place to the Devil.*

23. The Devil has many tactical ways to maneuver in spiritual warfare which is why Ephesians 6:11 commands believers to “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.”

24. Chief among his weapons is that of deception by a twisting of the truth reflected in various world views such as natural theology, evolution, self-esteem theology, moral and cultural relativism, universalism and nationalism. Notice eight ways the Devil can deceive the heart.

- *First Deception.* According to the Bible we are deceived if we are hearers of the Word of God, but do not practice what we hear. *James 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*
- *Second Deception.* The Devil can deceive the soul into believing it does not sin. *1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*
- *Third Deception.* One of the most effective methods of deception is pride. *Galatians 6:3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.*

- *Fourth Deception.* The wisdom of this world is effectively used by the Devil to deceive individuals. *1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.*
- *Fifth Deception.* The inability to be gracious in speech reveals a deceived heart. *James 1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*
- *Sixth Deception.* A belief that the Devil can be entertained in the cellar of the heart while Christ is entertained in the living room is a deceptive faith. *Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*
- *Seventh Deception.* Those who believe they can engage in specific sins and be converted or saved are deceived. *1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortionists, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*
- *Eight Deception.* A belief that evil can be associated with and there be no affect on the soul is a heart that is deceived. *1 Corinthians 15:33-34 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*

25. The Devil is said to be the spiritual father of all natural men.

- *John 8:44 Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*
- *1 John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*

26. Judas was numbered among the Twelve Apostles and yet he was a Devil.

- *John 6:70 70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?*
- *Luke 22:3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.*

27. The Devil can put evil thoughts into the minds of men.

- *John 13:2 And supper being ended, the Devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;*

28. Individuals can emulate satanic pride and so fall into a just judgment.

- *1 Timothy 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the Devil.*

29. The Devil seeks to bring reproach and bondage to ministers in particular.

- *1 Timothy 3:7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the Devil.*

30. There is a way to escape from the snare of the Devil for those who have fallen into grievous sin.

- *2 Timothy 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

31. The Devil once had power over death.

- *Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.*

32. Resistance is a key factor in spiritual victory over the Devil.

- *James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.*

33. The Devil is relentless in seeking to destroy a soul for he is a real enemy of the soul.

- *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

34. Those who engage in willful sinning apart from gospel evangelical repentance shall share the ultimate fate of the Devil.

- *Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels:*

35. Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil.

- *1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil*

36. When Moses died the Devil tried to take possession of his body.

- *Jude 9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*

37. The Devil can cause persecution to come upon the Church from secular sources.

- *Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

38. Sometimes the Devil personally invades a region.

- *Revelation 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

39. The ultimate destruction of the Devil is certain.

- *Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*
- *Revelation 20:10 And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*