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A PSALM OF THE CROSS

Psalm 22

GRAND -- --

Introd. This psalm one of that unique trilogy having to do with our Lord: Cross, Crook, and the Crown. This is a Messianic Psalm in it we learn more about the agony of Calvary than is pictured in the gospels. Christ our sin offering. 1000 years before death by crucifixion was used by the Romans, this Psalm describes in exact terms this type of death.

I. THE CRY OF THE ONE ON THE CROSS--v.1-5

Who is the sufferer mentioned here--none other than Jesus!
Do you know the answer to the question of verse 1???????
God does not forsake righteous men in the hour of their death! The answer to the question was that He was forsaken because He was taking the sinners place! We have a little more insight into this in the word "holy" of verse 3--a holy God must deal with sin! Even when His Son volunteers to take the penalty for our sin! (Suppose a young man commits a crime and comes into a courtroom where his father is judge-- the law stands or it is nothing more than a sham or farse.) A "holy" could not ~~appear~~ spare His own son when He became a sin offering for us-- do you think you and I can escape the wrath of God apart from Christ?

v.1-- "roaring"-- the image of a roaring wild beast in the
v.2-- "hearest" agony of a severe wound.

The word hearest is the ~~a~~ idea of "answer!"

The whole point of the first five verses is this: In the O.T. Israel called upon God and he heard them-- the cry is to unchanging God that He will hear and save! (This is the very point-- Because God is unchanging He must deal with the sin problem before the prayer of the one on the Cross is answered-- and it will be--He will be delivered from the grave!)

Verse 6 "I am a worm and no man"

"In Palestine and Syria they use the "tola" worm by crushing them in a basin in order to make a beautiful permanent scarlet dye. It was very expensive and worn only by the rich and noble. In fact the word scarlet in some places in the Bible literally mean "the splendor of the worm" Notice that Our Lord says "I am a worm" that is in the imagery before us He had to be crushed in death that we might wear the royal robes of His righteousness. The garments of our salvation were purchased by His death on Calvary. As Ironside points out that in the story of the marriage-feast and the wedding garment that the king had provided the wedding garment (Matt. 22:12) but some would not avail themselves of it. Where is the garment of your salvation? Either clothed in Christ's righteousness or naked before the Lord.

II. THE CROWD THAT STOOD AROUND THE CROSS--v.6-8 and 12-18

- v.6--"despised" "reproach"--not considered as a man with feelings etc. regarded as an animal--no sympathy.
- v.7--"the jeering taunts of ridicule and insult that came from this heartless crowd.
- v.8-- They made fun of Him for completely trusting in the Father. "He saved others--himself He cannot save." "He bragged about being so great--lets see him do something for himself."
They laugh because he "rolled himself" upon ^uod.
- v.12-- Bashan was a region northeast of Palestine noted for its pastureland and fine cattle--but wildness of the stock.
- v.13--"ravens"--tear to pieces
- v.16--"dogs"--in the Orient a savage wild dog ran the streets to kill and devour.
- v.17--"stare"-- "look with delight" rather than turning from the horror of the cross they loved to look at it.
- v.18-- "seamless undertunic"
Note in the A.O.T. "Contrary to the age-long custom of speaking of Jesus "robe"--the seamless garment which was not divided, but for which the soldiers cast lots....It was a long shirt-like garment worn next to the skin. It was probably that fact that gave it special value in the eyes of the soldiers. Jesus was known as a healer, and one person at least had been touched from touching the hem of his garment. Might not the garment be absorbed with some magic healing power. This could have been in their minds.

Thought:

1. Soldiers remind us of those who want the "garment" of Christ but not Christ. They want what ^{He} can give them, foundations for all that is right and good--freedom, humanitarianism, government under God, churches...but not Christ! *Welding - Zerkow*

- v21. "unicorn"--better trans. a "wild-ox" sharp horns. Executioners use to lay hold of the poor victims, bind them by feet and shoulders upon these horns and set the beast loose in the desert til death came. Crucifixion was like the horns of a wild ox.

III. THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF THE CROSS--v.24 and 31

1. Resurrection an evidence God did hear Him.

2. "It is finished" --
Salvation...forgiveness

John 19:30
"PAID IN FULL"
p.104

" THE KING OF THE JEWS "
Matt. 27:37

Every Gospel records this statement. Mark as might be expected is the shortest with: "The King of the Jews"--Mark 15:26
"This is the King of the Jews" Lk. 23:38 and "Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews" John 19:19.
Let me suggest three aspects of our Lords Kingship.

I. THE COMING KING—Matt. 21:5

This phrase could be used to refer to the early ministry of Jesus and in truth this was what John the Baptist was preaching...The King Is Coming...get ready to receive Him! However, there is a very specific reference in Scripture to His public presentation of Himself as King to the nation of Israel just a week or so before His death. *Palm Sunday - Jr. 12*
A. This Passage Speaks of The Courage of The King v.1
Matt. 20:18-19

Our Lord knew what was in store for Him at Jerusalem. He was not the victim of a mob. Someone suggested that there are 2 kinds of courage: (1) The courage of the moment, that which is required in a moment of danger when a hero steps forward without thought to the consequences of his actions. (2) The courage of deliberation when a man knows what the outcome will be to a certain course of action to which he could readily escape but steadily refuses to do so. William Tyndale who put the Bible into English for the common man. The authorities burned his Bible. "I doubt not but they will burn me too, if it be God's will." They finally did burn him as he had predicted they would.

B. This passage Speaks of the Concern for the King for Bible Prophecy v.4

Zech. 9:9 was a prophecy re Israel's Messiah. Now this Jesus Of Nazareth is entering Jerusalem publically and announcing Himself to be that one of whom Zechariah, spoke. The interesting feature is to notice that He did not come to Jerusalem as one would expect a king to come....as too re His birth!

"Thy king"...Isa. 9:6

"just"--no unrighteousness at all! How these wonderful verses re His kingdom have been applied mistakenly to the social movements of our day! The problem is the need for a leader such as our Lord.

"lowly"-- on an animal of peace not the war horse. In marked contrast to the proud of earth. There never has been such an event ... Pride was as foreign to Him as it is common to the world's kings."

Jesus had been to Jerusalem before but never publically to say---I am your king!

To be sure a strange scene: a king without the royal trappings home made garments, beast of burden, fishermen for courtiers, no display.

Ans. To
the
Scriptures!

A Septic or Righteousness
is the spirit of the kingdom.
Thou hast loved righteous-
ness, and hated iniquity
... Heb. 1:8-9

II. THE CRUCIFIED KING--John 19:14-19

The question of whether Jesus was a king or not was a problem in Pilates mind--Pilate kept pursuing this question:

18:33..!"Art thou the King of the Jews?"

18:37..!"Art thou a king then?"

18:39..But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews."

19:12..."If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar."

A. The Declaration of Pilate--v.15

The action of Pilate during the trial and death of Jesus is sometimes very puzzling. Sometimes we think he wants to release Jesus and makes an attempt to do so. Then looks as if he has no will to do the right. There are some indications that he would have been happy to refuse the case or release another in Jesus place, and too the scourging seemed to be a desperate attempt to compromise a bad situation--to play on the pity and mercy of the crowd. But the grim truth remains that Pilate had to make his own decision--the crowd and their cries no basis to determine truth.

Wm. Barclay has suggested that Pilates unfortunate background in Palestine bears on the question: Palestine a political powder keg. Pilate had made several bad political moves: He had infuriated the Jews over Emperor images in the palace and on the shields of the soldiers in the city. Had resulted in killing of many Jews--grave unrest in the city. Jerusalem's water supply--he had determined to build an aqueduct. To pay for it took money out of the Temple treasury. The people had rioted in the streets. Rome did not tolerate riots.

Barclay suggests the Jews blackmailed Pilate. Your record is not good. One more major political disruption and you will be out of a job. He did what he did not because truth was at stake but to keep his miserable job. (Application)

B. The Rejection of the People--v.15

The Jews had been crying to get out from under the Roman heel. They had refused even to pay taxes--God was their king. To hear this cry is astounding. They were ready to abandon every principle--even to forget God--to get rid of Jesus. The insanity of sin.

C. The Inscription on the Cross

Here again something beyond the mind. This man who a few hours before weakly on the matter of Christ's death is now adamant and inflexible, unyielding on a name place.

Lesson:

People who can be stubborn about trivia and weak about the important things. (Took a stand for wrong thing!)

D. The Implication of the Soldiers Act--v.23

The ~~indifference~~ of the world for the suffering Saviour.
They want his garments but not him! They want what He brings
to civilization but not Him!

III. THE CROWNED KING-- Rev. 19:12ff.

There seems to be some irony in comparing the two crowns.
The only crown ~~an~~ mankind ever gave the Saviour-- a crown
of thorns.

The context of this passage does not suggest peace it suggests
war.

1. Heaven opened
2. White horse
3. Judge...war...
4. fire
5. blood
6. armies
7. sword
8. wrath
9. King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Those who will not have Him in peace(Rom. 5:1) will taste
the justice of absolute righteousness.

" RESURRECTION GREATNESS"

Matt. 28:19-20

Within the pages of human history, there have been many men who thought they could cheat the experience and return from the grave. ^{of death} ~~Many~~ ^{Some} religious leaders have led their followers to think they would return from the grave, as did a famous magician a few decades ago, make such a bold prediction. In all of these instances the friends and followers have waited in vain--death remained the victor. Only in one instance in all of history did a Person literally return from the grave as He had predicted-- this was Jeus Christ. He had said during the days of His earthly ministry that this was exactly what He would do:

1. " Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. " John 2:19-21
2. " And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Mark 8:31
3. " ...an evil and adulterous generation seeketh ~~x~~ after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Mt. 12:39-40

Today, I would ask you to consider three of the great and profound statements made by our Lord after His resurrection from the dead.

I. THE GREAT CLAIM OF JESUS CHRIST--v.18

When one thinks of all of the claims of sinful men we are reminded of the attitude people have adopted toward much of advertizing today--we listen to their claims but we don't really expect the product to do what they say it does---remember a certain cigarette commercial whcih made the claim "they satisfy" a youngster heard the commercial and commented. "If they satisfy, why do people keep on smoking one after another and buying more and packs." A good question.

However, when we come to the daims of Christ--- none of the deceit, doubletalk, half-truths, what He claimed to do/be correct.

This person who was crucified on a Cross will be the Judge. The Saviour becomes the Judge. We would assume the Judge to be the Father. But it is right in the counsels of God that This One who became a man and suffered at the hands of men should be the Judge. None will be able to say---JUDGE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND MY SITUATION!

II. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF JESUS CHRIST--v.19-20a.

This Scripture has been called to our attention many times by missionaries. In it the Lord sets forth His program for this age. The Lord gave His own a task to do in this world---today many who claim to belong to Him are doing everything else but seeking to obey the great commission. He told us in clear, understandable language what He wanted His disciples to do:

A. The What of the Commission

1. "Go"--

MT. 21:28 The inaitive rest with us to go with the gospel. "Lord send in the sinners so we can preach at them.."

The reason we are to go...men are lost.

Carey's experience:

Before his church...a question for discussion--Carey: "Whether the command given to the Apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent."

Dr. Ryland: "Young man, sit down: when God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine!"

2. "teach"--"disciple ye" (μαθητευατε)

The first of 2 different words for teach in the passage. The word means to "disciple". The challenge to make disciples of all men everywhere. A church/believer who misses this misses the burden of the New Testament.

Soul Winning Churches/believers don't have time to fight and squabble over petty things---the work too great.

Illus to make a disciple--Acts 9:26

3. Baptizing

An act of obedience/identification

4. "teaching" (διδασκαλιες)

No lasting work without Biblical instruction. Answer to the hosts who profess but in time lose out---

There is a tendency in some localities to minimize the importance to teaching. But never forget, our Lord was known as a great teacher as well as a great preacher.

The tense of the word suggests a continuous process. A believer never gets too old for instruction. A believers who does not learn, does not grow.

III. THE GREAT COMPANIONSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST--v.20b

Someone asked David Livingston what was it that had sustained him thru the years to labor so faithfully and effectively for the Lord...it was the ever present reminder that He had said "I am with you always."

Notice the text does not say: "I have been/ I shall be--" it says "I am"

There is a translation of the word "always" which says "all the days." This is a very wonderful thought:

In days of sickness....I am with you.

In days of disappointment....I am with you

In days of failure....I am with you

In days of joy...I am with you.

In days of every kind...I AM WITH YOU.

Isa. 41:10

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

I have not thought the song "In The Garden" was too theological in the stanzas--but the chorus has been real help:

"And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own, and the joy we
share as we tarry there, None other has ever
known.

" THE UNFOLDING OF A SACRED SCENE"

Mark 14:32-42

The events of life which stir us most deeply are not usually matters we care to discuss. How can one adequately describe those tender moments in life when the human emotions are touched beyond the ability of words. The joy of Christian courtship, the birth of a child, others which defy description.

It is with a sense of inability and reverence we come to the scene of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

I. THE SACREDNESS OF THE PLACE--v.32

There are several terms used with reference to the place.

A. It Was Called Gethsemane.

This word literally means "oil press" in fact in some Jewish writings it was called the "mount of oil."

The reason was because this place was on the lower slopes of Mt. Olivet and a place where oil was extracted from olives. This oil used extensively in Palestine, 1. For cooking. 2. For anointing 3. lighting. - MATT. 25

B. It Was On The Mount of Olives

This was the place where David had resorted in that time of distress during Absaloms uprising. Ezekiel had some of his visions here and it was the mount to which Messiah will return. (Zech. 14)

Luke tells us: "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives." Lk. 21:37

This to our next idea.

C. It Was Called A Garden

Immediately ones mind goes back to the first man--in a garden. Here the last Adam in a garden enroute to Calvary where man would be Redeemed.

Jesus loved to get away from the press of the crowds at times. He came to this spot, to the little house in Bethany, other places "solitary places". The disciples knew of this garden--so did Judas. Someone has suggested that it was owned by some wealthy person who permitted Jesus to go there since public places of this nature were not available. Anyway, Jesus loved to go there away from the crowded streets of Jerusalem.

Application:

There are those "sacred places" where men get very close to God. Moses found it so at the Burning Bush. You and I know the "place" where we meet God. **Jiggs had a favorite place when out in his pasture. **Cherry tree in the back yard. A certain spot when home in the summer--go there to strengthen the soul for another year. Often resorted there with the burdens of life.

II. THE SELECTION OF THE INNER CIRCLE--v.33

This was not any type of desecration. Jesus had not "pets" among the 12. But it is a fact of life, there are those in any group who feel the burdens of the work more than others. Any pastor has found this out early in his ministry. Not any more saved, but those with whom he can work and upon whom he can depend--with the least amount of disruption.

A. A Revelation Of His Humanity

In the most difficult day of his life to this point, He wanted his "most confidential friends" those who loved him most to stand near Him. (A human trait.) Us

B. A Lesson In Discipleship

In the group of 12 all men could be classed.

1. Judas-- the traitor, the materialist, the man who sides with the crowd, the world against the Saviour.
2. The Eight-- They came to the gate of the garden. But were unaware of the inner conflict in the heart of the Saviour. They were on the fringe. Those who are saved, follow the Lord but never with intensity, deep interest, and with little capacity to enter into the real service of the Lord.

3. The Three

Those who though they fail the Lord often, they do press a little nearer to Him. They are aware of the spiritual conflicts of the Christian experience.

C. An Admonition To Us All

In v. 38 the "term--watch!" What does it mean to watch? We are admonished to do so often in the Bible.

1. In the Old Testament --2Kings 11:6-7

2 Kings 9:18

20 *
"watchman"

One who was a sentinel on the city walls. One who guarded another.

2. In the New Testament-- to be alert in prayer--Eph.6:18

false doctrine--Acts 20:31

Satan's activities--1Pet. 5:8

To be alert, awake, wide awake ~~xxx~~ spiritually.

In his most trying hour--to be aware, to sympathize BUT they like we failed.

III. THE SUFFERING OF OUR LORD--v.34-36

A. The Sorrow of Soul

There is much misunderstanding about the sorrow and death of Christ. Often the details are on the physical aspects. But there have been many men who have gone to their death with not one word of fear or cry for mercy.

There has to be more to this scene than the idea of martyrdom.
2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Pet. 2:24, Isa. 53:6 "the Lord made the iniquity
"2alls" of us all to meet on him."

B. The Significance of the Cup--v.36

This cup was the hour of his death. His experience on the Cross. Long had he known that his hour was coming.
Gospel of John:

2:4, 7:30, 12:27, 13:1, 17:1

But there was nothing easy about it. Heb. 12:2

Heb. 5:7 (ck.)

His holy soul shrank from the experience of separation
from the Father and sin for us.

IV. THE SUBMISSION OF THE SON--v.36

Progress for Prayer
There is one fact about His submission not noticed before.
It was instant obedience. In Philippians ..and became
obedient unto death even the death of the cross. Phil. 2:8
Jesus was concerned about the will of God: The subject too
detailed to consider every passage, let us restrict to the
Gospel of John:

5:30 "I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father
which sent me."

6:38 ..not to do mine own will, but the will of him that
sent me. cf. 39-40

The great problem in the moral universe today. Two wills
where once there was one.

The day when His will will be done in earth.

This is our basic difficulty. His will is seldom considered.

It is worth every sacrifice to do the will of God. No cost
too great for it cannot be measured in tangible things.

What do we receive from doing the will of God?

SATISFACTION How? To make one aim in life--
to honor Jesus Christ.

**Experiment:

A management school. What are your long range
goals in life. Church. Next 10 years.

Next year. Next week. Same in will of God.

* What can I do to honor Christ---then, now.

V. THE SLEEPINESS OF THE DISCIPLES--v.37-40

What is the distressing part of these verses? They had
missed their greatest opportunity to be of real help to the
Lord. They slept while He underwent His most trying moment.

Question:

It has never occurred to us that we may be asleep.

What do I do to promote the message of Christ...

What did I do today? This may answer the question.

*Dr. Ironside or diplomat - "I've been in the
country 6 yrs. yours - * Gove Handley to Burr
Lak.*

"CRUCIFIED WITH HIM"

Mk.15:32 and Lk. 23:39ff.

Crucifixion was an unspeakably horrible way to die. Cicero said it was the most cruel and shameful of all punishments. It was the instrument of death for slaves and criminals. Nothing could be more shameful and painful than to suspend a living man to a stake to let him die slowly over the course of 2 or 3 days with burning pain and agony which is beyond description. Every movement of the body brought on new pain. Someone has remarked that our Lord took the symbol of slavery and shame and transformed it into a symbol of mercy.

Crucifixion as a punishment probably had its early beginning with the Phoenicians and was adopted and "improved" by the Romans. Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment. Jews modes of execution were: 1. strangulation, beheading, burning and stoning.

There were 3 kinds of crosses: (1) so called St. Andrews of x type (2) one in the form of a T and then the (3) latin cross as is commonly held today as the type Jesus was nailed to. The bulk of church fathers--Justin Martyr, Irenaeus held this view.

There is something to remember about the crucifixion which is often forgotten. The horror of the Cross is not the physical side of the question--it is the spiritual separation of God from His son--who can understand the words "forsaken of God???"

These events bring us to the very summit of Calvary. The betrayal of Judas has been enacted--Judas is not dead. The disciples have forsaken him--only a few stand at the foot of the Cross. The mockery of a trial has taken place. Jesus sole possession in life has been taken away and gambed for--now bleeding, and faint he who was ~~executed~~ delivered that a criminal might go free now hangs between two thieves. In this last hour we see a picture of all mankind represented in the thieves.

I. THE RAILING THIEF--v.39

The word "rail" has several meanings in English.

1. A bird related to the crane family
 2. Piece of timber or steel
 3. To revile, scold in harsh insolent language.
- He was called a "malefactor" Lit. an "evil doer."
A man who was aggressively evil.

A. He Was Angry With God And Man--

"railed" has a perticular tense which suggests the idea of "keeping on." Time after time.

It was common practice to curse the crowd who came to watch and scoff.

What could possibly make this man turn his hatred toward Jesus?? Christ had said nothing, except to pray for his executioners.

***Men have not changed--what makes a man fly into a rage and curse God ~~now~~ today??? Heart of sin.

B. He Was Interested In Correcting His Situation But Not His Sin. "If thou be the Christ.."

This man was not sorry for his sin...sorry he got caught. Many folk like this---sorry for what sin has done to them but not sorry enough to quit their old life.

*Lord make me good, but not too good--just good enough not to get a whipping.

Had he been freed he would have gone back to the old life. ***Seen this over and over again.

C. He Was More Interested In The Here and Now Than The Hereafter. "save thyself and us"

This man more interested in body than the soul. Lk.12
Jesus did not answer this man. There is no answer to the scoffer and the critic. Leave them to themselves. Those who reject the truth and the Son of God.
If a man refuses Christ no answer to hereafter.

II. THE REPENTING THIEF--v.40-43

A. He Realized Judgment Was Near-- "Doest thou not fear God?...condemnation?"

The forgotten truth of our day. In a day of "love" everybodyism we forget there is but a heart-beat between us and judgment.

B. He Realized His Own Guilt -- "We indeed justly..reward."
This is the first step to salvation. No man will ~~never~~ ever be saved until he realizes he is lost and guilty before God.

*** Men claim their own morality as a way to heaven.
Rom. 3:10 and 19

C. He Recognized Christ's Innocence. --"nothing amiss"

D. He Realized His Own Need--"remember me"

God remembers sinners. He has them ever in mind. This very Cross an eternal reminder of the fact that God remember that man cannot save himself. We are spiritually needy people.

III. THE REDEEMING SAVIOUR-- v.43

In the hour of deepest grief--Jesus takes time to save a sinner. He answers this thief.

The Lord answers the call of faith. This poor man could do nothing to save himself.

Time will not permit us to go into the many wonderful lessons of this portion of the Scripture.

"In the Bible there is one man who was saved at the last moment. There is one that none might despair; only one that none might presume." Ironside.

A. A Present Promise-- "Today"

John 5:24

Not tomorrow if or even someday but today. 2 Cor. 6:1

B. A Precious Promise--"paradise" (paradiseo)

Originally an ~~enclosed~~ park. Term given to the parks of Persian nobles and kings. In Jewish theology that department of Hades where the blessed dwelt. Same as Abraham's bosom.

Why paradise and not kingdom. Acts. 1:6

During a series of meetings and evangelist saw a young man who appeared to be concerned about his salvation. The preacher went to him and asked him if he were ready to die, to which the young man replied: "No, I am not ready to die; I hope to come someday--like the dying thief. "Which thief??" was the reply. The Young man was startled and said--"Oh I had forgotten, there were two weren't there. Yes, one went to be with the Lord--the other to a Christless eternity. Which thief will you be like. "I'd better come now."

U.S. "WITCH TRIALS"

THE DEATH OF CHRIST
Luke 23

Plot: 3 Stages: 11:53
1. Annas - Jn 18:12-17
2. Caiaphas - Mt. 26:15
Dawn - 3. Sanhedrin, Lk. 22:66

The black marks of any country or civilization are their malfunctions of justice. Often it is discovered that someone has been sent to prison or even executed wrongly. These are the evils of society we fear. However, when Christ our Lord was killed at the hands of wicked men they did it knowing He was not guilty yet supposed educated, intelligent men nailed Him to the Cross. The situation has not changed in the day in which we live---men's hearts have not changed concerning God---they still hate Him. Before we look at this chapter think of the events which led Him to this hour.

- (1) Judas had betrayed him \$19.50 (2) The Sanhedrin condemned unfairly and without cause violating every rule of procedure. (3) Pilate we will see shall give up integrity and conscience to maintain position and keep the crowd. (4) The crowd will dog the heels of this innocent man till they have taken his very life.

Picture the scene in your mind:

Bleeding-- from the terrible scourging of Pilate, weakened beyond belief.

Bound-- by the burden of his own Cross

Faint-- from the horrible ordeal of the experience of unmerciful, godless men. Garden.

The Son of God in this chapter is enroute to the summit called Calvary to die for the sins of men--not his own for He had none. "HIS HOUR HAS COME" as this expression appears so frequently in John.

In dealing with this chapter let us deal with the people involved--their attitudes and reactions and if any implications and application for us today.

I. PILATE "Provential Roman Governor" v.1-6

The Sanhedrin ruled in the affairs of the Jews but had no power to put to death. Pilate and the Jews hated ea. other as did Pilate and Herod. On one occasion history records how Pilate sent soldiers armed with daggers into a Jewish mob to break it up. Massacre.

(So Pilate no nieve school boy--experienced in crime) Another time Pilate put shields dedicated to the Emperor Tiberious in his residence in Jerusalem. The Jews called it idolatry..hated him.

The crowd knew Pilate would only listen to an accusation which affected Rome...so v.2 "perverting the nation"---trying to get the people to not give allegiance to Rome. (Not true--remember what Christ said to Peter--fish taxes)

Paul accused like wise..Acts 24:5 disproves their charge.

Jn.6:15

AT ALL COSTS!

The declaration of Pilate in v.4 is more that a casual remark it means---HE IS NOT GUILTY...ROMAN SENTENCE. THIS IS THE JUDGE SPEAKING. Matthew tells how he washes his hands and says his blood be upon you and your children. A.D. 70.

II. HEROD --Another Roman Ruler v.7-12

Built the city of Tiberias. Had married Aretas the daughter of an ~~EXXKXKX~~ Arabian king, but afterward divorced her and took his half-brother Philip's wife, Herodias. (John Baptist) She led him to ruin. Made him go to Rome to secure the title of King of his territory. He was dismissed from his rule banished to Gaul and died in exile. This man a murderer of the greatest preacher of the day--Jn. Baptist, living in open ~~MAN~~ sin had one reason to see Jesus---curiosity.

III. PILATE***BARABBAS----SIMON. v.13-26

A. Barnabas-- a murderer should go free not Jesus. The reasoning of intelligent men (Jesus the dividing ground--God o.k.)

B. Simon --v,26

Before you condemn
Privileged man of the ages. The disciples --- where is strong powerful Peter? Hiding. Running from little maidens who recognize his Galilean accent.

IV. DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM-- v.27- 32

Someone swears - where were you?
v.30--70 A.D. Titus

Many died by hiding in sub. caves which fell in on them.

v.31--"If they, the Romans do these things to me who am innocent, and blameless, if they punish me in this matter in the face of justice, what will they do to this guilty nation?"

V. MALEFACTORS--v.32-45

These two thieves represent every class or person who has ever lived and their relationship to Jesus Christ.

1.39
A. REJECTION; People who want to get out of the trouble they are in ... v.39 *wrong reason*

In his dying hour still uninterested in his salvation. (Salsbury for L.Lodg) Story may be repeated over and over. Joined in the Bible by others --Felix, Agrippi.

B. RECEPTION:40-43

Realized it was Now or never. In hope and trust turns to the only one in the entire universe. Desperation he realized that Jesus was who he said and in faith reaches out --Lord...receives eternal life. Have you? Jn.5:24

To Which Class Do You Belong?

"You are standing"

" THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED"

Luke 24:13-35

The post resurrection appearances of Christ capture the interest and imagination of the believer because He never appeared to anyone but His own. As far as I know, no un-regenerate person has seen the Resurrected Lord--they last saw him on the Cross. The post resurrection appearances are thrilling to study in the Bible.

1. Mary Magdalene--John 20:11ff.

2. Thomas-- John 20:24ff.

These touch the heart with their value to us in devotion and faith. One of my favorite portions has been that recorded by Luke regarding the two disciples who were enroute to Emmaus when the Lord decided to join their journey and there is recorded one of the very interesting appearances of the Risen Lord.

Let us visualize the scene of these disciples on that Easter Sunday afternoon as they return to Emmaus. It would seem correct in assuming that they lived here....the scenes of Calvary still fresh in their memory--they had waited the 3 days but now it is the third day, some said his body was gone from the tomb....many questions, doubts, dismay and bewilderment surround them. There 3 things about this afternoon walk to Emmaus we would like to suggest:

Human

I. IT WAS AN AFTERNOON OF SADNESS--v.13-24 (17)

I do not know why they were returning home but there seems to be an atmosphere of gloom. This attitude prevailed with all of the disciples for it had been a sad 3 days and a few more previous to these.

1. Sadness around the Cross--women

2. Sadness for Peter--denial and weeping

3. Sadness for Judas--suicide

4. Sadness for Joseph of Ar. as he took the body.

It had not been a very festive week in Jerusalem--a dark cloud hung over the city.

One preliminary remark about the two disciples:

One of them is not named, the other is. This had caused much comment by the commentators.

1. Some say it was Mr. and Mrs. Cleopas -- their home in Emmaus where Jesus dined.

2. Some say it was Luke-- Edersheim makes an interesting observation: Each of the gospels has an interesting way of keeping himself out of the picture.

a. Matthew-- ref. to the "publican"

b. Mark--young man who fled in the night naked.

c. John--the disciple whom Jesus loved.

d. Suggested this would be a way Luke would put himself in the picture. Possible but no proof.

Did not recognize the presence of the Lord.

Allow some speculation and imagination, it might be suggested that their sadness could be seen in the following:

A. Sadness Reflected In Their Walk-- v.15

Picture the scene as they walk along--there is not the speed of step--perhaps just a little shuffling of the feet for there is no need to hurry home now!

B. Sadness Reflected In Their Talk--v.16&17

There are two words "ye have" in verse 17 are very suggestive of our point. It is the word "antiballeto" and it meant to throw back and forth, to exchange--as one would throw a ball. Lively discussion---no peace in the heart. One thing--among the first to give us away when the heart is not at rest---the way we talk--almost impossible to hide it!

C. Sadness Reflected in Way They Looked --v.17

Gloomy countenance. Christianity is supposed to be a matter of joy--for 3 years they had known that joy of close companionship with Jesus now all seemed to be a lost cause. EVERY HOUR A SAD ONE THE SAVIOUR IS NOT NEAR. GOD CREATED US TO LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM---NO ULTIMATE JOY WITH THIS.

Divine Sermon

II. IT WAS AN AFTERNOON OF SLOWNESS--v.25-27

Unfortunate translation. Word is ἀνοητος lit. "not seeing" dull of perception and understanding. They read the promises in the Scriptures but failed to believe them. (Us too....just as unbelieving.)

Jesus rebuke was that of lack of faith and to believe the word of God.

There have been some great sermons preached on this earth/

1. Jonathan Edwards--"Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God."

2. Savonarola-- ladies flocked to throw away their finery and follow the Saviour.

3. Robert G. Lee--"Payday Someday"

Some of the greatest sermons of my lifetime were heard in the little country church by the side of the road--no elaborate worship but the men preached the word of God with conviction and power---God manifested His presence.

BUT..... none of these could compare with this lesson....

Perhaps He started with Gen. 3:15 ---Gen. 22----

Gen. 49:10 "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come...."

Deut. 18:15 "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall harken."

Exodus 12--The Lamb; Isa. 53,

Imagine the interest to hear Him teach the Scriptures.

Reason NOT
Answer To
Their Need

Knox
Whittier
Wesleys



NVL
67

" HIS RESURRECTION "
Luke 24: 46-53

Easter Sunday is often the one Sunday in the year when folk tease others about their nominal Church attendance. This situation was brought to mind recently when I heard the story about two lawyers who were good friends. To the amazement of one, the other became a Sunday School teacher. "Why", said the first lawyer, "I doubt if you can even say the Lord's Prayer!" "Why, everyone knows that!" he replied. "Its now I lay me down to sleep..." "I sorry, said the first lawyer, "you win, I didn't know you knew so much about the Bible." If you don't understand the point of this story.....

Each of the gospels has an interesting last chapter. Though the events are related, each is very different. Luke alone records the beautiful story about the two disciples enroute to Emmaus. Also, the last 10 verses of that chapter are different. Underline 3 words to attach our thoughts to/around-- pegs upon which we may hang some of the great Biblical truth regarding the Resurrection of Christ. Preached--v.47 Power--v.49 Praising--v.53

faithfulness in house

I. HIS RESURRECTION: THE BASIS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING--v.46-48

A. Prophesied In The Old Testament

The fact that the doctrine of the Resurrection is taught in the O.T. is not new to some. Many familiar passages such as in Job (earliest O.T. writing)

Job 14:14 "If a man die, shall he live again?"

Job 19:25-27 "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God...."

The Risen Saviour:

Psalms 16:9-11 .. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.
In his sermon at Pentecost, Peter interpreted this to be the physical resurrection of Christ

Psalms 118:22-24 "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day which the Lord hath made we will rejoice and be glad in it."

B. Proclaimed in the New Testament

We live in an era when the mission of the church in the world is very confused. Men do not know the purpose of the church in the world. It has become everything the Lord did not intend it to become. *News re the Vatican's Investments in Stock - Wealth.*
The mission of the church in the world is seen very clearly in the Great Commission--Matt. 28:19--

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you....

How this has been forgotten today: **

Amazed this week at a story from California of a group of "down and outers" who were picketing a rescue mission. They want the meals but not the message. cf. The Roman Soldiers. Wait now! Many are like that they want the by-products of Christinity but not Christ!

Examine the message of the Apostolic Church:

There is not a single message in the Acts which is not based upon the Resurrection of Christ! Why? We are not related to some dead religion--a living person!

Examine the meaning of the text before us:

Repentance -- "metanoian" -- *"change the mind."*

God requires men to repent.

Acts. 19:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

Acts 20:21 "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Mark 2:17 "...they that are whole have not need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9

Remission of sins -- (aphesia) "forgive--to send away"

Question:

What is greater in all the world than to have forgiveness of sins?

Mark 2:10 ff.

Question:

If you desired to have forgiveness where would you go?
priest? pastor? psychiatrist?

The key verse: 1 Cor. 15:14-15

1. Preaching is vanity--nothing. Van. Ty O
2. Preachers are misled/misleading...liars.
Think of this..Paul, Peter, Augustine,
Calvin, Wesley, Moody, Spurgeon, Graham.
3. No atonement..v.17
4. No hope for for dead loved ones...v.18
5. No hope for the future..v.19
But...v.20

II. HIS RESURRECTION: THE BASIS OF BIBLICAL POWER--v.49

Ten days after His ascension, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would come to empower the church. There is no amount of organization that can do the work of God unless we turn to His way--by the Spirit.

A. The Power Was Demonstrated - Ac. 9 - (Paul)

After the crucifixion, a more discouraged, powerless, group of people we have never seen. Peter went fishing and other went with him. But in 50 days this same Peter who had denied, ran as did they all, faced the same crowd and preached the strongest message of all history to a rebellious crowd. Answer: Acts 1:8

Acts. 4:33

This small group of disciples changed the course of the world. They did it in the power of the Holy Spirit. They literally evangelized the Roman Empire with the preaching of men like Peter, Paul.

III. HIS RESURRECTION: THE BASIS OF BIBLICAL PRAISE--v.50-53

As far as the Roman world was concerned, Jesus was dead. No unsaved person ever saw him after Calvary--only His own.

* The Risen Lord the reason for their praise. Whereever the risen Lord is preached and honored, the same praise is seen in the house of God. Acts. 2:47, 3:8-9

***Missionaries comment:

↘ The face of America...not one of joy!
What then does this chapter and this message mean?

** Record of Churchill and others...thought of the V sign.
The man who refused to be defeated.

**In June of 1815 all England was awaiting the news of the campaign at Waterloo between N. Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington. Long before telegraph etc. watchers were stationed along the coast to catch message from approaching ships. Finally one watcher saw a vessel and the message was signaled "Wellington defeated..." but the fog closed in before any more could be received.

" THOMAS AND THE RESURRECTION "

Jan. 2:19
Jan. 10:25
On previous Easter Sunday mornings, we have considered the great doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from various books of the New Testament. Each one seems to give a few interesting features which the others do not touch. Today, I would like to consider the resurrection by looking at one of the 12 disciples—see something of his life and how he was affected by this great doctrine.

Thomas is very interesting man.

Ironsides says look in the Mikkor
With the exception of Peter, John and Paul, probably one of men more little boys named after. In the Scripture, he is often called "Didymus". The word means "twin" and I would suggest that he had either a twin brother or sister. The Bible does not name the other. (Esau and Jacob-- very much different--so with Thomas and his twin.) Thomas is listed in all the lists of the Apostles. However, the most penetrating insight into the character of Thomas is revealed by John. Thomas is mentioned on 3 or 4 occasions and on each he makes an important statement:

I. THOMAS IN THE TIME OF DANGER-- John 11:16

This statement may not carry great impact until we look back at the circumstances just prior to Jesus raising of Lazarus from the dead-- 10:39 There was every indication from a human standpoint that physical danger would be the outcome of going to Bethany since it was so close to Jerusalem.

Let me suggest to you that Thomas was the only one who suggested they die for the Lord if necessary. We have heard a great deal about Thomas faults but this verse would indicate a man of devotion, courage in the face of serious persecution. This man was faithful unto death to the Lord.

II. THOMAS IN TIME OF DISTRESS--14:5

Preparation for departure - (hypothesis)

The scene is in the upper room. It was a time of concern for the disciples. Jesus was talking about leaving them. He was talking about the way to heaven. They should have known about this--this is life's most important question--"How can I be absolutely sure, with no guess involved that when I die I am going to the right place." You can thank Thomas for his question, for it was in answer to this question we have one of the clearest statements in Scripture about the way to heaven. *Act 4:12 - Jan. 1:12*
Question:

Do you know the way? Are you perfectly sure today?
Jesus gives the only answer. *this time will come to you*

III. THOMAS IN TIME OF DOUBT-- 20:24

- A. His Position Had Not Changed But His Condition Had. y.24
"One of the twelve"— still was. — Eph. 1:3 "in Christ"
"was not with them when Jesus came" Jn. - Fellowship 1:3
The rest of the disciples had met again, perhaps in the Upper Room. They were fearful (v.19) but they met to be of mutual support...but Thomas was ABSENT.
Let me use my imagination a bit: Thomas had suffered a great loss... shut himself away from the fellowship of the others. (This is so prevalent in all of us.)
Point is: He missed out on the comforting presence of the Lord by being out of the place of blessing.
I know what keeps our "Present Day Thomases Away!"
a. Wounded Ego ... Self-Pity
b. Cold Heart
c. Business Interests
d. Company
e. Rain, Headache, Late supper... 1000 and one excuses. But no reason!

B. The Enthusiasm of the Disciples And the Pessimism of Thomas v.25

The man who is not near the Lord. The man who is walking in his own way is not going to be enthusiastic about the blessing of the Lord. Thomas the casual, matter of fact sort of fellow— (You know the kind—you are all excited about a new approach in witnessing or Bible study, visitation— like a bucket of ice water—about as much vigor as a wet noodle.

Saul of Tarsus never lost this drive once he had seen the Risen Lord.

"The Man From Missouri Attitude."

"I will not believe."

C. His Attitude Changed From Unbelief to Belief.

Something happened to Thomas that day. He no longer was the demanding, belligerent, man he had once been. Thomas had stood near the Risen Lord and it had changed his life.

Application— Have you yet believed on the Saviour.

UFO

Isaac
Ritchie
1 Pet. 1:8

"WHERE DO YOU STAND?"
Jn. 18:1-19:25

A few days ago while reading again the familiar chapters of our Lord's Passion Week, I noticed something never came to my eye before---reference to the places various persons were standing. The verses are highly suggestive of the relationship of all men to Jesus Christ. One cannot be neutral about the Saviour---we are either in Adam or in Christ. Let us look at 3 persons, where they were standing and how their position has a bearing on each of us today.

I. JUDAS STOOD BY THE GARDEN AND IN THE CROWD AND THUS BETRAYED THE SAVIOUR--Jn.18:1-12

Background: It is night. Jesus has resorted to a garden beyond the brook that runs thru a valley just outside the city of Jerusalem. This garden is not like one of our day in which vegetables or flowers would be grown. It was an enclosure where olives were pressed and the oil extracted for commercial and domestic purposes. It was a place of rest and prayer away from the press of the multitudes. It is interesting that Jesus should be arrested, betrayed, in a garden---it was in a garden that the first Adam was defeated by Satan, but here the last Adam wins the ultimate victory.

The life and ministry of Jesus is now behind him. The little band of disciples he will soon leave to die a death of shame. Objects of scorn and ridicule will soon be heaped upon Him--a crown of thorns, robe of mockery, scourge. HE MUST TRAVEL THIS ROAD ALONE---HIS HOUR HAS COME. This dark night would go down in history as the blackest page in history---its darkest hour. Sinful man would nail the son of God to a Cross for no reason but hatred and prejudice of truth and holiness. "They hated him without a cause...but for envy they delivered him." John does not record all of the details of the events in Gethsemane, to get a better more complete picture look at all of the accounts: (1) Name of the garden (2) Inner circle (3) Sorrow (4) Sorrow and prayer re cup (5) Angels ministry (6) Sleeping disciples

As we consider Judas and his betrayal we shall suggest just 4 of many areas where Judas did his horrible work:

A. Sum He Received --Matt. 26:15-16

"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver, And from that time he sought ~~to~~ opportunity to betray him."

B. Secrets He Revealed--Jn. 18:2

SIGN

This is the mark of a traitor--inside information only he could know--treachery at its ugliest.

C. Seal of His Betrayal-- (Sign of His Betrayal)-- Matt. 26:48
The tense of the GK. shows it was a repeated action.

D. Standing With The Crowd--Jn. 18:5

We will never know what went thru Judas twisted mind as Satan now completely takes control of him. How would a man feel as he watched the Lamb of God, gentle and kind, being led away to the slaughter--surely there could be no pleasure in such an act of infamy.

Application: The question arises, what does all of this have to do with me in the 20th Century--I didn't betray Christ? Whereas are you standing today? With the crowd--those who have nothing to do personally with Christ. Remember this was a religious crowd in part--- We are either for Christ by regeneration and new birth--against him by neglect. Need not deny Him with our lips--our lives deny his claim on our life

II. PETER STOOD BY THE FIRE AND IN THE COLD AND THUS DENIED THE SAVIOUR--Jn. 18:15

There is a vast difference between Peter and Judas. Peter is not an apostate--he is a backslider who thought himself capable in his own strength to make it thru for the Lord.

A. Peter Followed

Peter followed from afar...but ultimately forsook Christ. Peter was ineffective at this distance. Could this be the same Peter who had bragged of his allegiance just a few days before this!

B. Peter Feared

Its hard to think of Peter being afraid of anything. Just a few minutes ago he had a sword in his hand--now nothing and one little damsel puts the fear of the crowd into him---the law of self preservation.

C. Peter Failed

Peter utterly failed. Yet he was not alone--I don't see Joseph of Aramathea or Nicodemus stepping out of the crowd either.

Application:

"When thour art converted, strengthen thy brethern... Peter unlike Judas--Judas never loved Jesus--Peter never stopped loving Him! Peter had to learn over and over again that he was a sinful man incapable of anything apart from God's enabling grace. Afraid you can't live the Christian life--you can't and will fail as long as you turn from the source of victory.

III. MARY STOOD BY THE CROSS TO THE VERY END Mohn 19:25

Some have suggested Mary could have saved his life by one simple statement—but she could not!

It must have taken courage to stand by the Cross and see the shame of his death--the crowds must have been cruel and insulting but she never moved!

Application:

Where do you stand as far as the Cross of Christ is concerned?

1 Cor. 1:18 Have you trusted the Saviour as your saviour?

Jesus is standing in Pilates hall, Friendless, forsaken,
betrayed by all:

Harken! what meaneth the sudden call! What will you do with
Jesus?

Jesus is standing on trial still, You can be false to Him
if you will,

You can be faithful thro good or ill, What will you do with
Jesus?

Will you, like Peter, your Lord deny? Or will you scorn
from His ~~fold~~ to fly

Daring for Jesus to live or die? What will you do with
Jesus?

Jesus, I give thee my heart today! Jesus, I'll follow thee
all the way

Gladly obeying Thee! will you say: "This will I do with Jesus!"

What will you do with Jesus? Neutral you cannot be;
Some day your heart will be asking.
What will he do with me?"

"HIS CROSS AND OURS"

John 19:17

Soon the Easter Season will be here and our minds will turn to the great doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ. However, before any consideration of the Resurrection we should look at the events which led to Calvary.

"These words" bring us to the closing scenes of Jesus' earthly ministry. The agonies of the garden of Geth. have been felt; the treachery of Judas has been acted out; the shame and the sham of the trial has been concluded. The council has condemned him; the disciples have forsaken him; Peter has denied him. The soldiers have soured him, and soon they will gamble for his only earthly possession. The crown of thorns has been placed upon his brow, he has been given over to the hostile crowd. Bleeding, bound and faint, he appears at Calvary's summit. Here the bitter end will be enacted. Here in Palestine within a 35 year period, man's greatest blessing and greatest crime have been manifested. Let us consider just three ideas about the Cross:

I. THE PERSON OF THE CROSS

A. His Humanity

His "hour" had finally come. This person who had changed the course of history. This one of whom the Old Testament abounds in types and shadows. What an impact He had left upon history:

1. Born in a stable....angels announced his birth
2. No place to lay his head...his followers' mansions.
3. Poor...riches in glory
4. Weary in life...rest....Matt. 11:28
5. Thirsty....yet could stop thirst of soul... Jn. 4
6. Outcast in some circles....acceptance... John 6:37
7. Crown of thorns...crowns of reward
8. Wrote no songs, books, held no offices, erected no educational institutions and yet He has had more influence on civilization than any other man who ever lived!

B. His Deity

The Word of God abounds with many verses but for the sake of study and limitations of our short period, let us look at the Gospel of John:

1. The Word...John 1:1...14
2. The Worker of Miracles...2:11 "glory"
(You and I have no such glory)
3. The Only Begotten...From Above...3:16, 3:31
4. The Messiah... 4:25ff.

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."

5. Sovereign Judge... "and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the son of man. 5:27

6. Bread of Life... "I am that bread of life." 6:48

7. Water... "if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." 7:37

Throughout the Book:

Good shepherd, Resurrection and Life, Vine, Many verses to declare his deity,

From beginning to end our blessed Saviour:

Matt. 1:21, Luke 19:10

Mark 10:45.

John 1:29

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

The Bible is filled with this subject. However, let us look at one person and situation which will help us to understand. Matt. 27:15 ff.

Christ before Pilate—the choice Jesus or Barabbas. Barabbas was a robber, a political revolutionary, a murderer. He was in prison awaiting execution.

Let enter that dark prison. See him there...fearful, remembering the scenes of crucifixion he has witnessed before. Hears the shouts of his own name on the lips of the crowd. The steps of the jailor, the door opened, led outside...set free! There is some mistake!

No--- Jesus died in his place.

1. Barabbas is truly a representative of every man.

What he was physically, we are spiritually.

We deserve spiritual death, the wrath of God against our sins i.e. eternal punishment. But Jesus died on the Cross as my substitute to deal with the debt of divine justice which I could not pay. He died in my place.

2. The Sin Debt Is Payed--- Just like a company which cannot collect a bill once it has been payed.

"Jesus Payed It All"

Question:

God asks you to enter into a personal relationship with Christ. Receive Him as Lord of the Life.

The benefits of Calvary to your account.

Romans 4:25 "our offences"

2 Cor. 5:21

III. THE POWER OF THE CROSS

Paul writing to the proud Corinthians reminds them that men do not find God by natural wisdom. (Underscore)

Paul says, that man left to himself and his natural ability unaided by the Holy Spirit cannot find God. Human wisdom cannot avail here. Man must humble himself at the feet of God. Faith in Christ and His finished work.

1 Cor. 1:18

1 Cor. 1:21 "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Rom. 1:16

Scrap your methods, ideas, suggestions and come God's way or not be saved at all!

***Cleveland Turner.

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1989"A BETTER RESURRECTION"

HEBREWS 11:35

THE TEXT TODAY APPEARS IN THE CHAPTER OF THE BIBLE CALLED GOD'S HONOR ROLL OF FAITH. AFTER LISTING THE GREAT HEROES OF THE FAITH, THE WRITER OF HEBREWS SUMMARIZES THAT GREAT CATEGORY OF PEOPLE WHICH INCLUDES GIDEON, BARAK, SAMSON, JEPHTHAH, DAVID AND SAMUEL. THE OLD TEST. WOMEN REFER TO THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH (I KINGS 17:17-24) AND THE SHUNNAMITE (II KINGS 4:13-37). IN THESE HISTORIC REFERENCES WE ARE ABLE TO SEE WHAT FAITH ACCOMPLISHED IN THE LIVES OF CERTAIN PEOPLE. IN OUR TEXT, SOME PEOPLE OF FAITH WHO WERE TORTURED CHOSE DEATH RATHER THAN COMPROMISE OR DENY THEIR FAITH AND CONVICTIONS. THIS VERSE REMINDS ALL BELIEVERS THAT SOMETIMES THE PRICE OF LIFE IS TOO GREAT TO PAY. IN THE LIGHT OR FACE OF THESE CIRCUMSTANCES A BELIEVER MUST CHOOSE A BETTER RESURRECTION! (THE WORD "TORTURED" COMES FROM A WORD THAT MEANS DRUM AND REFERS TO A DRUM OR WHEELLIKE RACK UPON WHICH VICTIMS WERE STRETCHED AND BEATEN, USUALLY TO DEATH. MOST COMMENTATORS SUGGEST THAT THIS VERSE REFERS TO INCIDENTS DURING THE MACCABEAN TIMES.)

THE WORD "BETTER" IS USED IN PHILIPPIANS 1:21 WITH REFERENCE TO THE BELIEVERS ABODE WITH CHRIST. THE BETTER RESURRECTION HAS TO DO WITH SAVED PEOPLE. THE UNSAVED PERSON WILL BE RESURRECTED FROM THE DEAD FOR THE PURPOSE OF JUDGMENT AND ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD. THIS IS NOT A BETTER RESURRECTION! (JOHN 5:28 - "HARVEL NOT AT THIS: FOR THE HOUR IS COMING IN THE WHICH ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE AND SHALL COME FORTH; THEY THAT HAVE DONE GOOD UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE; AND THEY THAT HAVE DONE EVIL, UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION.")

Judgment

I. A BETTER RESURRECTION PROVIDES A BETTER HOPE -
I CORIN. 15:19

A. OUR HOPE IS NOT LIMITED TO THIS LIFE

FOR MOST PEOPLE, AS LONG AS THERE IS LIFE THERE IS HOPE, BUT WHEN LIFE IS GONE HOPE VANISHES. BIBLE

HOPE GOES BEYOND THE CEMETERY TO CHRIST WHO IS OUR HOPE. (COL. 1:27, 1 TIM. 1:1) CHRIST GIVES HOPE AND IS OUR HOPE. OUR AGE HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY DESPAIR. THE SOURCES OF HOPE HAVE SLOWLY DRIED UP OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES. POLITICAL HOPES SUCH AS THE NEW DEAL, FAIR DEAL, NEW FRONTIER AND GREAT SOCIETY HAVE VANISHED. ECONOMIC HOPES ARE NOT AS BRIGHT AS THEY ONCE WERE. CULTIC HOPES HAVE FADED WITH EVENTS SUCH AS THE JONESTOWN STORY. PESSIMISM CHARACTERIZES THE HOPELESS AND THE COPELESS. AND WITH MANY IT JUST DOESN'T SEEM TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE ANY MORE. THE PHILLIPS TRANSLATION OF 1 CORIN. 15:19 SAYS "TRULY, IF OUR FAITH IN CHRIST WERE LIMITED TO THIS LIFE ONLY, WE SHOULD OF ALL MANKIND BE THE MOST TO BE PITIED." WITHOUT CHRIST GENUINE HOPE IS IMPOSSIBLE.

B. OURS IS A HOPE WHICH DEATH CANNOT DESTROY- 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."

THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO ARE TEMPERAMENTALLY OPTIMISTIC AND THOSE WHO ARE THEOLOGICALLY HOPEFUL. THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN IS FOR AS LONG AS CHRIST LIVES! ONE OF THE COMMENTATORS RELATES THE STORY OF HIS VISIT TO A PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION WHILE HE WAS A STUDENT IN COLLEGE. ONE MAN IN THE INSTITUTION WAS TOLD BY THE DOCTORS THAT THERE WAS NO KNOWN CURE FOR HIS ILLNESS. THE MAN BEGGED FOR ONE RAY OF HOPE THAT THE TREND OF HIS ILLNESS MIGHT BE REVERSED BUT NONE WAS GIVEN. THE LAST WEEKS OF HIS LIFE WERE LIMITED TO A SMALL BARRED ROOM WHERE HE PACED UP AND DOWN IN MENTAL AND PHYSICAL AGONY. OVER AND OVER HE MUTTERED THE TWO WORDS, "NO HOPE, NO HOPE!" AND SAID NOTHING ELSE.)

(RELATE INCIDENT OF NICK MUNOZ WHO SPOKE OF A 30% CHANCE OF SURVIVAL REGARDING HIS SURGERY. HE DID NOT SAY THERE WAS A 70% CHANCE OF FAILURE!)

(IN PILGRIM'S PROGRESS BUNYON SPOKE OF PILGRIM'S EXPERIENCE IN THE CASTLE AND IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF DESPAIR. IT WAS THE KEY HOPE AROUND HIS NECK WHICH UNLOCKED THE DOORS OF DOUBTING CASTLE.)

GIANT

II. A BETTER RESURRECTION PROMISES A BETTER BODY- I CORIN. 15:35-44

THESE VERSES CONCERNING THE GLORIFIED BODY OF THE BELIEVER MAY NOT BE MEANINGFUL TO THE YOUNG, THE ATHLETIC, THE STRONG AND THE ACTIVE. HOWEVER, TO THE WEAK, THE FRAIL AND THE HANDICAPPED-WHAT A PROMISE! RELATE TO GLEN GREEN. IN HER BOOK, A STEP FURTHER, JONI FARECKSON TELLS OF HER VISIT IN 1976 WITH A HANDICAPPED PERSON NAMED RICK SPAULDING. WHEN THIS YOUNG MAN WAS 15 YEARS OLD HE WAS INVOLVED IN A FIST FIGHT IN SCHOOL, FELL AND STRUCK HIS HEAD ON THE GYM FLOOR, WAS IN A COMA FOR A LONG TIME AND AWAKENED PARALYSED. THE EXTENT OF HIS PARALYSIS WAS SHATTERING. THE ONLY THING HE COULD DO WAS TURN HIS HEAD AND BLINK HIS EYES AND IT HAD TAKEN HIM MONTHS TO ACCOMPLISH THAT. IN ORDER TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS, RICK HAS LEARNED TO BLINK HIS EYELIDS IN A KIND OF "MORSE CODE" AND WAS ABLE MAKE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WAS SAYING. JONI CONVEYED TO HIM ON THE OCCASION OF HER VISIT THAT THERE WAS COMING A DAY WHEN THEY WOULD HAVE NEW BODIES IN HEAVEN. SHE SAID: "I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT WHEN I WAS ON MY FEET, I NEVER THOUGHT MUCH ABOUT HEAVEN. I PICTURED IT AS A BORING PLACE WHERE EVERYONE WORE ANGEL COSTUMES..." BUT SINCE I LOST THE USE OF MY BODY, I'VE LEARNED THAT ONE DAY I'M GOING TO TRADE IT IN FOR A NEW ONE. NO ANGEL WINGS. JUST HANDS THAT WORK AND FEET THAT WALK, THINK OF IT WE'LL BE ON OUR FEET RUNNING, WALKING, WORKING, TALKING WITH JESUS-ALL KINDS OF THINGS." ONE MONTH LATER FROM THAT VISIT, RICK SPAULDING DIED. BELIEVE ME, THESE VERSES ARE HELPFUL AND MEANINGFUL TO THE HANDICAPPED. ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, MAN WAS CREATED TO LIVE FOREVER. SIN AND DEATH ARE INTRUSIONS. DEATH IS THE PENALTY FOR SIN. THIS CHAPTER SPEAKS OF A NEW KIND OF BODY AND PAUL DRAWS ILLUSTRATIONS FROM AGRICULTURE, ANATOMY AND ASTRONOMY. OUR PRESENT BODY IS DESCRIBED WITH TERMS: CORRUPTION, DISHONOR, WEAKNESS, NATURAL, EARTHLY AND MORTAL. THE GLORIFIED OR RESURRECTION BODY IS DESCRIBED: INCORRUPTION, GLORY, POWER, SPIRITUAL, HEAVENLY, AND IMMORTAL.

JUST AS ONE WOULD PLANT A SEED IN THE GROUND TO SEE IT DIE AND RISE AGAIN TO GOLDEN GRAIN, SO OUR BODIES WILL ONE DAY DIE AND ROT IN THE GROUND. HOWEVER,

FROM THAT GRAVE WILL ARISE A NEW BODY, DIFFERENT AND YET THE SAME. IT WILL BE RAISED FREE FROM THE LIMITATIONS OF OUR PRESENT EXISTENCE WITH NEW POWERS AND ABILITIES JUST AS CHRIST MANIFESTED IN HIS RESURRECTION BODY. * (THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF TALK ABOUT BODIES WITH REFERENCE TO A RATING SCALE. THE SCALE IS FROM 1 TO 10. THERE IS ONE HOLLYWOOD STAR WHO IS RATED A 10, EVERYBODY ELSE IS 9 OR BELOW! IN THE LIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER I WOULD PROPOSE A NEW RATING SCALE. LET US START WITH ONE MILLION AND CLIMBING. IN THAT DAY A 10 IS NOTHING! IN THE REALM OF NATURE WE HAVE A MINOR AND LIMITED ILLUSTRATION OF THIS PRINCIPLE. THE CATERPILLAR EMERGING FROM ITS' COCOON AS A BUTTERFLY.

III. A BETTER RESURRECTION PERMITS A BETTER REUNION- I CORIN. 15:51-57

THE TERM FAMILY REUNION DOES NOT HAVE THE MEANING TO OUR GENERATION THAT IT DID IN BYGONE DAYS. THERE WERE DAYS IN THE PAST WHEN ON A GIVEN DATE EVERYONE IN A CERTAIN FAMILY RETURNED TO THE HOME OF THE PARENTS FOR A SPECIAL TIME KNOWN AS THE FAMILY REUNION. THIS OCCURRED IN THE DAYS WHEN FAMILIES WERE MUCH LARGER AND PERHAPS CLOSER THAN TODAY. IT WAS USUALLY A HAPPY TIME. (I BROWSED THROUGH THE BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM CAREY AGAIN THIS WEEK AND READ THE REPEATED ACCOUNTS OF DEATH AND SICKNESS WHICH PLAGUED THOSE EARLY MISSIONARY VENTURES. CAREY HIMSELF WAS SICK. HIS CHILDREN DIED ON THE FIELD AS DID MANY OF THE EARLY MISSIONARIES. THESE STALWART SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS WERE PLANTED IN THE SOIL OF INDIA AWAITING THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST. AROUND THE WORLD ON EVERY CONTINENT THIS STORY HAS BEEN REPEATED THROUGH THE ERA OF CHURCH HISTORY. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT A REUNION THAT WILL BE WHEN THE DEAD IN CHRIST RISE.

BEFORE WE LOOK AT THIS TEXT, REMEMBER THE WORDS OF 1 THESS. 4:13. THE WORD TOGETHER IS SIGNIFICANT. FIRST WE WILL RISE TOGETHER WITH THEM AND THEN TOGETHER WITH HIM FOREVER. VANCE HAVNER SAID THAT THERE WAS A DAY WHEN HEAVEN SEEMED FAR AWAY BECAUSE MOST OF HIS FRIENDS WERE HERE AND THE RESURRECTION AND HEAVEN WERE TERMS ABOUT WHICH WE TALKED BUT THE REALITY OF SUCH A PLACE SEEMED FAR AWAY. NOW AS HE APPROACHES THE TWILIGHT LIFE HIS WIFE AND MOST OF HIS FRIENDS ARE NO LONGER HERE, BUT THERE. THE

REALITY OF THIS BLESSED REUNION BEGINS TO SETTLE UPON THE SOUL. ~~EVERY PERSON HAS LAID SOMEONE TO REST IN A CEMETERY SOMEWHERE. FOR PARENTS IT MAY HAVE BEEN AN INFANT WHO DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE AND GROW AND MATURE. IT MAY HAVE BEEN WIFE OR HUSBAND, MOTHER OR FATHER. FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED THE AGONY OF EARTHLY SEPARATION, THE REUNION IN THE RESURRECTION IS A LONG AWAITED HOPE AND BLESSING.~~ ~~IN OUR TEXT THE WORD MYSTERY IS ONE OF THE 27 TIMES IT APPEARS IN THE N.T. A BIBLE MYSTERY IS A SACRED SECRET, THAT IS, SOMETHING UNKNOWN IN THE PAST THAT IS NOW MADE KNOWN.~~

THE WORD ~~SLEEP~~ DOES NOT REFER TO THE SOUL BUT RATHER TO THE BODY. SOME WILL SLEEP THE SLEEP OF DEATH BUT NOT ALL. THERE WILL BE A GENERATION LIKE ENOCH AND ELIJAH WHO WILL GO TO HEAVEN WITHOUT DYING!

THE WORD ~~CHANGE~~ IS USED TO SHOW THOSE ALIVE THE COMING OF THE LORD WILL BE CHANGED INSTANTLY. ~~LAST TRUMP~~ IS NOT ONE OF THE TRUMPETS OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION BUT THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF TWO. ~~WHEN GOD BEGAN HIS WORK WITH ISRAEL IT WAS WITH A TRUMPET, (EXODUS 19:15) WHEN HE BEGINS WITH ISRAEL AGAIN, IT WILL BE WITH A TRUMPET. (RELATE OBSERVATION AT A JUNKYARD IN DETROIT. THE USAGE OF A MAGNET TO PICK UP JUNK CARS.)~~

I HAVE BEEN TO ~~SOME OF THE FAMOUS PLACES WHERE THE DEAD ARE ENTOMBED. THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT ARE FAMOUS FOR THE MUMMIFIED BODIES OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN KINGS. WESTMINSTER ABBEY IN LONDON IS KNOWN AS THE PLACE WHERE THE BODIES OF THE NOBLES AND NOTABLES OF ENGLISH HISTORY RESIDE. MOHAMMED'S TOMB IS A STONE COFFIN WHERE HIS BONES ARE INTERRED. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY IN WASHINGTON IS REVERED FOR THE NATION'S HONORED MILITARY DEAD.~~

I HAVE STOOD NEAR THE GARDEN TOMB IN THE ~~GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE AND IT IS EMPTY! WHEN GENERAL GORDON DISCOVERED THE GARDEN TOMB IN 1885, HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THIS WAS THE PLACE WHERE JESUS' BODY HAD LAIN. THE RUBBISH WAS 20 FEET HIGH WAS CLEARED FROM THE SPOT WITH GREAT CAUTION AND IN ITS ENTIRETY WAS SHIPPED TO THE SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN WHERE EVERY PART OF IT WAS ANALYSED, BUT THERE WAS NO TRACE OF HUMAN REMAINS. ALL OF THE BLESSINGS AND BENEFITS OF A BETTER RESURRECTION ARE MADE POSSIBLE BECAUSE THAT TOMB IS EMPTY TODAY,~~

"IT IS WELL"

2 Kings 4

Relate in narrative this wonderful story and the circumstances in which ~~this woman lost her only son~~. Question: How can we say in this same situation-- it is well? (David)

I. UNKNOWN FACTORS

There are many precious promises in the Word of God concerning these hidden elements of life. Rom. 8:28. Gen. 50:20 2 Kings 20-- Hezekiah's prayer for life. Granted 15 years. Wonder if he had known what he was asking if he would have been so anxious for those additional 15 years.

If our vantage point the same as God's and we could see as He does. (Like a parade). None of us want our children crippled, suffer grief and pain... God knows best-- He sees the factors which could harm and bring untold grief and He takes all of these things into his plan for each of us.

II. UNSEEN FUTURE

None of us know or have the promise of tomorrow. The Bible does not promise that we shall see the rising of another day. James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

This unseen and uncertain future is recorded in the facts of our Lord's Second Coming.

1. John 14:3

2. Luke 12:35-47 "And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding: that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately

Peril: v.45: "My lord delayeth his coming.."

We do not know the day, year or hour of Christ's return.

We do know He is Coming! It may be today, this week.

*** You work as if you expected your master tomorrow.

*** "No sir, as if I were expecting him today."

III. UNDYING FAITH

Faith is not enough. Faith must have an object--Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who said: "Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." and Matt. 18:2

This same Jesus who loved them then loves them now.

Faith in Him who said;;; John 11:25

Two strangers, a small boy and an older man, were fishing from the banks of the Mississippi River. Though the fish was poor, by the time the sun began to set they had talked about many things. Just at dusk a large boat was seen coming slowly up the river. The boy began to shout and wave his arms to attract attention of the boat.

THE PRINCE OF LIFE

Acts 3:12 - 26

PETER'S COURAGE HAD RETURNED. ONCE IT WAS THE COURAGE OF DARING BUT NOW OF DEDICATION. (ONCE HIS COURAGE WAS TO WALK ON WATER, TO SWING AT A SERVANT'S EAR, TAKE THE LEAD AMONG THE TWELVE.) NOW PETER'S POST-PENTECOST COURAGE WAS TO PREACH JESUS TO PEOPLE WHO DID NOT WANT TO HEAR THE MESSAGE. SOMEONE HAS SAID THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF COURAGE. ONE IS RECKLESS DARING TO DO WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES MAY BE. THE OTHER IS A GREATER KIND OF COURAGE WHICH KNOWING THE CONSEQUENCES DOES WHAT MUST BE DONE REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES. IT TOOK COURAGE TO DO WHAT PETER DID. I AM CURRENTLY READING A BOOK ENTITLED ETHICS IN A PERMISSIVE SOCIETY BY WILLIAM BARCALY. IN THIS BOOK HE RELATES THE COURAGE OF MEN LIKE AMBROSE BISHOP OF MILAN. WHEN THE ROMAN EMPEROR IN A FIT OF RAGE HAD SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE ^(Theodosius) MURDERED, IT WAS AMBROSE WHO STOOD IN THE CATHEDRAL DOOR AND FORBIDE THE EMPEROR FROM ENTERING THE CATHEDRAL. IT WAS NOT UNTIL A FULL YEAR LATER AND WHEN FULL REPENTANCE MADE THAT THE EMPEROR WAS PERMITTED TO ENTER THE CHURCH. THINK OF IT, A TIME WHEN THE ROMAN EMPEROR BOWED IN REPENTANCE BEFORE GOD OVER HIS SIN. IT IS SAID THAT QUEEN MARY RESENTED THE MINISTRY OF JOHN KNOX. KNOX'S ANSWER TO HER WAS "OUTSIDE THE PREACHING PLACE, MADAM, I THINK FEW HAVE OCCASION TO BE OFFENDED AT ME; AND THERE, MADAM, I AM NOT MASTER OF MYSELF, BUT MUST OBEY HIM WHO COMMANDS ME TO SPEAK PLAIN, AND TO FLATTER NO FLESH UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH." IT IS SAID THAT THE QUEEN WEPT WHEN KNOX REMINDED HER THAT KING, QUEEN, AND COMMONER ALIKE MUST LISTEN TO GOD AND THERE ARE NO FAVORITES WITH HIM. KNOX WAS FEARLESS IN HIS PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD. WHEN MARTIN LUTHER WAS SUMMONS TO THE TOWN OF WORMS TO ANSWER FOR HIS FAITH HE WAS A HUMBLE MONK WITH NO POWER OR INFLUENCE BEHIND HIM. WHEN WARNED OF THE DANGER, HE SAID, "I WOULD GO TO WORMS IF THERE WERE AS MANY DEVILS THERE AS THERE IS TILES ON THE ROOFTOPS". EVEN

A: *Thessalonians*"Ge. Wallace
of Ch. Hist."

11

THE INFLUENCE AND POWER OF THE ROMAN CHURCH DID NOT SCARE LUTHER INTO ABANDONING HIS CHRISTIAN CONVICTIONS. AT THAT PARTICULAR CONFERENCE, WHEN LUTHER WAS GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO WITHDRAW HIS STATEMENT AND RECALL SOME OF HIS WRITINGS HE SAID, "HERE I STAND; I CAN DO NO OTHER; SO, HELP ME GOD." THIS WAS COURAGEOUS PREACHING, THE SAME KIND OF PREACHING DEMONSTRATED BY PETER AND THE OTHER APOSTLES IN THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF THE BOOKS OF ACTS.

I. AN UNPOPULAR EXPLANATION - V. 12 - 13A, 16

THE BACKGROUND OF THE SERMON HAD TO DO WITH A MAN WHO WAS HEALED IN THE TEMPLE AREA. HE HAD COME TO THE TEMPLE EXPECTING TO RECEIVE MONEY BUT INSTEAD RECEIVED HEALING. THE MAN HAD GENERATED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST BECAUSE OF HIS ENTHUSIASTIC BEHAVIOR. THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE TEMPLE WERE INTERESTED IN KNOWING HOW THIS MIRACLE TOOK PLACE AND THE EXPLANATION OF A MAN WHO WAS THE VICTIM OF CONGENITAL LAMENESS. HOW COULD SUCH A THING HAPPEN? PETER DENIES ANY ABILITY ON HIS PART IN MAKING THE MAN WALK. IN THE MINDS OF THE CROWD, JESUS WAS DEAD FOREVER! NOW PETER SAYS THAT THIS MAN WAS ABLE TO WALK BECAUSE OF FAITH IN A LIVING JESUS! THIS WAS A WORK OF GOD AND THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST WAS GOD GLORIFYING HIS SON. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WAS AT THE HEART OF APOSTOLIC PREACHING. THE SUBJECT OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WAS THE ONE THING THIS CROWD DID NOT WANT TO HEAR! (IF MEN ARE TO GET SAVED, THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S SALVATION BUT ALSO THE BAD NEWS ABOUT THEIR OWN GUILT AND SIN.) IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL PEOPLE THE TRUTH WHEN THEY HAVE MADE UP THEIR MINDS WHAT THEY WILL OR WILL NOT ACCEPT AS TRUTH. THE SUBJECT OF DEATH IS NEVER POPULAR. THE SUBJECT OF RESURRECTION IS DIFFICULT FOR SOME TO BELIEVE. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO GET TO HEAVEN MEN MUST BELIEVE BOTH OF THESE GREAT BIBLE TRUTHS.

II. AN UNBELIEVEABLE EXCHANGE - V. 13B - 15

FROM THIS PASSAGE, WE ARE REMINDED OF PILATE'S JUDICIAL DECISION AND HIS GIVING IN TO THE PRESSURE OF THE CROWD. PILATE WAS INVOLVED IN THE GREATEST CRIME IN HUMAN HISTORY. THE ROMAN GOVERNOR WAS CONVINCED THAT THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

3:8

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V. 16

(over)

WAS UNJUST. A COMMON CRIMINAL WAS SET FREE AND THE ONLY PERFECTLY GOOD MAN WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS. THE CROWD ASKED FOR BARABBAS, LIFE TO BE SPARED AND THE AUTHOR OF LIFE TO BE KILLED. THIS IS INCREDIBLE. (CF LUKE 23:1 PP. A) THE REPEATED EMPHASIS OF THIS CHAPTER IS THAT THERE WAS NOTHING AGAINST JESUS. THE JEWS COULD NOT CARRY OUT THE DEATH PENALTY ONLY THE ROMAN AUTHORITIES HAD POWER TO DO THIS. PILATE WAS THE POLITICIAN WHO DID NOT WANT TO OFFEND THE MAJORITY. PILATE FEARED FOR HIS POSITION AND CAREER. HIS PAST MISSTAKES WITH THE JEWS IN PALESTINE WERE CATCHING UP WITH HIM SO HE WAS PARALYZED TO ACT JUSTLY EVEN IN THE FACE OF TRUTH. HOWEVER, BE CAREFUL BEFORE YOU CRITICIZE PILATE, WHAT ABOUT OUR BEHAVIOR TOWARD CHRIST?)

III. AN UNWITTING EXCUSE - V. 17 - 18

PETER REALIZED THAT THE PEOPLE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE FULL IMPLICATION OF THE CRUCIFIXION. PAUL RECOGNIZED THE SAME. (1 COR, 2:8 - 9) THESE PEOPLE DID NOT REALIZE THAT JESUS WAS INDEED THE MESSIAH. (CF ACTS 17:30) THERE WAS A TIME IN ANCIENT DAYS WHEN MEN WHO WERE IGNORANT OF GOD WERE LOOKED UPON AND EXCUSED. HOWEVER, IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOD'S FULL REVELATION THERE IS NO EXCUSE TODAY. (RECENTLY I WAS READING AN ARTICLE CONCERNING THE EXCUSES PEOPLE GIVE FOR AVOIDING CHRIST AND THE GOSPEL. (1) HYPOCRITES. MOST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE MEMBERS WHO DON'T PAY THEIR BILLS AND EVERY BODY KNOWS IT BUT ALL THE OTHER MEMBERS DON'T LEAVE THE CLUB BECAUSE OF THAT. COUNTERFEIT MONEY CIRCULATES IN OUR SOCIETY BUT I DON'T DESTROY MY GOOD MONEY BECAUSE OF IT. EVERY ORGANIZATION HAS ITS PHONIES BUT WE DON'T GIVE UP BECAUSE OF THEM. EVERY CHURCH HAS ITS HYPOCRITES, WE PRAY FOR THEM AND DO ALL WE CAN TO WEED THEM OUT. BUT THIS IS REALLY NO EXCUSE. (2) I HAVE TO GIVE UP TOO MUCH TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN. THAT'S TRUE. YOU WOULD HAVE TO GIVE UP ALOT BUT WHAT ONE GIVES UP IS NO COMPARISON TO WHAT ONE GAINS. (3) IT'S TOO HARD AND TOO NARROW. THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT ARE HARD AND NARROW BUT I AM GLAD FOR IT. I'M GLAD PILOTS, DOCTORS, AND OTHERS ARE REQUIRED TO TRAIN HARD FOR THEIR DIFFICULT TASKS. THESE ARE BUT A FEW OF THE MANY

EXCUSES PEOPLE GIVE FOR NOT BEING SAVED. THE PROBLEM IS ALL OUR EXCUSES WON'T HOLD WATER IN THE LIGHT OF THE COMING JUDGEMENT.

IV. AN UNCONDITIONAL EDICT - V. 19 - 21

THE TERM REPENTANCE REFERS TO MORE THAN A FEELING OF CONCERN OR REGRET. THE WORD LITERALLY MEANS "TO CHANGE THE MIND." BIBLE REPENTANCE IS THE SINNERS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS LOST ESTATE OR SINNERSHIP AND THUS HIS NEED OF GRACE. TO CHANGE ONES MIND REGARDING CHRIST IS NOT JUST THE ACCEPTANCE OF NEW IDEAS IN PLACE OF THE OLD BUT RATHER A COMPLETE CHANGE OF ONES INNER ATTITUDE OF ONES THINKING REGARDING JESUS CHRIST. REPENTANCE IS FAR MORE THAN JUST CHANGING ONES OPINION. THE MIND THAT HAS CHANGED CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST WILL MOVE AWAY FROM SIN AND TOWARD GOD. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID "IF REPENTANCE WAS SIMPLY REGRET FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF SOME ACTION, IT MIGHT WELL MEAN THAT THE MAN WOULD DO THE SAME THING AGAIN, IF HE COULD BE SURE THAT THIS TIME HE WOULD ESCAPE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS ACTION. THIS KIND OF REGRET IS NOT SO MUCH REGRET FOR THE ACTION ITSELF....BUT FOR BEING FOUND OUT." IF WE COULD ESCAPE THE CONSEQUENCES OR IF HE COULD ARRANGE TO DO THE SAME THING WITHOUT THE CONSEQUENCES, HE WOULD QUITE CERTAINLY DO IT AGAIN. REPENTANCE IS GENUINE SORRY SORROW FOR THE WRONGNESS IN A SITUATION IN THE SITE OF GOD. THE TERMS OF THESE VERSES HAVE SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL. IF A NATION WOULD REPENT OF HER SINS AND TURN TO CHRIST THEN ALL OF THE BLESSINGS OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM WOULD APPEAR WHEN CHRIST COMES AGAIN. THESE TERMS REFER TO THE BLESSINGS OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM. THESE ARE DAYS WHEN REPENTANCE IS A SUBJECT THAT IS NEGLECTED. WE LIVE IN A AGE WHEN PEOPLE GLOSS OVER SIN. (I REMEMBER A STORY OF A STUDENT AT MOODY INSTITUTE WHO WAS TALKING TO A MAN AT THE PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION ABOUT HIS SOUL. THE MAN ARGUED THAT HE DID BELIEVE THE BIBLE, THAT HE WAS AN ATHEIST BUT THE STUDENT KEEP REPEATING ONE VERSE - LUKE 13:3 "EXCEPT YE REPENT, YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH." THE MORE THE STUDENT QUOTED THE VERSE THE MORE THE MAN SCOFFED. "I TOLD YOU I DON'T BELIEVE THE BIBLE." HOWEVER, THE STUDENT CONTINUED REQUOTE THAT SINGLE

VERSE LUKE 13:3, FINALLY THE ATHEIST BECAME SO EXASPERATED HE ACTUALLY STRUCK THE STUDENT KNOCKING HIM TO THE GROUND. GETTING UP FROM THE STREET, THE STUDENT RETRIEVED HIS BIBLE AND SAID, "FRIEND, GOD LOVES YOU AND UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH." THE MAN WALKED AWAY IN A RAGE. THE NEXT NIGHT HOWEVER, HE WAS BACK AT THE MISSION AND EVEN BEFORE THE SERVICE STARTED HE CONFESSED TO THE SUPERINTENDENT THAT HE WAS BACK BECAUSE HE WAS UNABLE TO SLEEP LAST NIGHT. HE SAID HE COULD ONLY HEAR ONE PHRASE IN HIS MIND "EXCEPT YE REPENT, YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH." WHEN HE GOT UP FOR BREAKFAST THE WORDS WERE STILL RINGING IN HIS EARS AND HE COULD HAVE NO PEACE UNTIL HE SETTLED HIS RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST.)
COMMENT ON 2 PETER 3:9

In the early church the Jews thought of Messiah in terms of glory and power. When they were confronted with a Messiah on a Cross something great must be introduced to convince them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. That something was the Resurrection. This was a triumph beyond man's wildest dreams.

"IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN"Bcc.
Pm. 1993

I CORINTHIANS 15:14

APPROXIMATELY 500 YEARS BEFORE JESUS, AND 500 YEARS AFTER JESUS LIFE AND MINISTRY, 2 FOUNDERS OF WORLD WIDE RELIGIONS LIVED AND DIED. BUDDAH AND MOHAMMED HAVE INFLUENCED MILLIONS OF PEOPLE. THE SUPPLY AND PRICE OF THE GASOLINE WE USE IN OUR AUTOMOBILES IS AFFECTED BY THE FOLLOWERS OF MOHAMMED WHO ARE SEEKING TO ESTABLISH AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN THE COUNTRY OF IRAN. IF ONE SHOULD GO TO THE GRAVES OF THESE TWO LEADERS, HE WOULD FIND THEIR REMAINS FOR THEY DIED AND ARE STILL DEAD. TO MY KNOWLEDGE NEITHER MAN PROFESSED THE POWER OR THE DISPOSITION TO RETURN FROM THE DEAD. IF ONE SHOULD GO TO THE TOMB OF JESUS, HE WOULD FIND IT EMPTY! ALL THE ENEMIES OF JESUS HAD TO DO TO DESTROY THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY FOREVER WAS TO FIND THE DEAD BODY OF JESUS AND CHRISTIANITY WOULD HAVE NO FOUNDATION UPON WHICH TO STAND. THERE MAY BE PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WHO SAY THAT THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS A HOAX, BUT THEY HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THEIR UNBELIEF. HOWEVER, BY CONTRAST, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL MEN IN HISTORY WHO HAVE SET OUT TO PROVE THE RESURRECTION IS FALSE, ONLY TO BE CONVERTED TO CHRIST THROUGH THEIR INVESTIGATION. FOUR HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE JESUS WAS BORN, SOCRATES, THE FAMOUS GREEK PHILOSOPHER, DRANK HEMLOCK AND LAY DOWN TO DIE. ONE OF HIS FRIENDS ASKED HIM: "SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN?" THE DYING PHILOSOPHER REPLIED, "I HOPE SO, BUT NO MAN CAN KNOW." IN I CORIN. 15, PAUL ADDRESSES HIMSELF TO THE QUESTION OF RESURRECTION AS A MATTER OF FACT, MORE IS SAID IN THIS CHAPTER ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF RESURRECTION THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE PASSAGE IN THE BIBLE. IN 3 VERSES, PAUL USES THE WORD "IF" SEVEN TIMES, TO SUGGEST SEVERAL ENORMOUS PROBLEMS IF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WERE NOT INDEED A FACT OF HISTORY. THE "NOW IF'S" BEGIN IN V. 12 AND CONCLUDE IN V. 19. THE SUBJECT THEN CHANGES TO "NOW IS." TODAY WE WILL FOLLOW PAUL'S LINE OF THINKING AND SUGGEST IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION, THEN MANKIND IS FACED WITH SOME PROBLEMS TO WHICH THERE WOULD BE NO SOLUTION.

18 { Ea. day, 5 times a day $\frac{1}{5}$ of the world's population
muslims bow toward Mecca — After Aug —
World's second largest religion — dominant belief in 60 nations
in Africa & Asia. — Ea. year 1.6 m. go to Mecca —
70 day period.

I. IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN: THE BIBLE IS WRONG - v. 1-4

JESUS PREDICTED HIS OWN RESURRECTION IN JOHN 2: 13-21, "THEN ANSWERED THE JEWS AND SAID UNTO HIM, WHAT SIGN SHOWEST THOU UNTO US, SEEING THAT THOU DOEST THESE THINGS? JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO THEM DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, AND IN 3 DAYS I WILL RAISE IT UP. THEN SAID THE JEWS FORTY AND SIX YEARS WAS THE TEMPLE IN BUILDING, AND WILT THOU REAR IT UP IN THREE DAYS? BUT HE SPAKE OF THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY." JOHN 5:25-29 SPEAKS OF THE SUBJECT OF RESURRECTION. JOHN 11:25, ACTS 2:24-30, REV. 20:5-6, PHIL. 3:10-11, ARE ALL VERSES WHICH SPEAK OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND OF THE SAINTS. THE THEME OF THE PREACHING OF THE EARLY CHURCH WAS SIMPLY CHRIST LIVES! THE QUESTION ARISES THAT IF THE BIBLE IS INACCURATE AT THIS POINT, HOW MAY WE BE SURE THAT IS ACCURATE ON VERSES SUCH AS: JOHN 3:16, JOHN 5:34, 6:37, ROM. 10:8-10, ACTS 16:31. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE PEOPLE WHO DENY ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING WHICH DOES NOT FIT INTO THEIR MOLD OF REASONING. NOTHING IS EASIER THAN TO DENY WHAT YOU CANNOT DISPROVE. MANY YEARS AGO IN ENGLAND, AN ATHEIST CHALLENGED A LOCAL PASTOR TO A DEBATE ON THE VALIDITY OF THE BIBLE AND CHRISTIANITY. THE PASTOR ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE BUT WITH THE FOLLOWING TERMS: HE SAID HE WOULD BRING 100 MEN AND WOMEN FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO THE DEBATE AND LET THEM TELL WHAT THE RISEN CHRIST HAD DONE FOR THEM, HOW HE HAD CHANGED THEIR LIVES FROM SPIRITUAL DARKNESS TO SPIRITUAL LIGHT. THEN HE CHALLENGED THE ATHEIST TO BRING WITNESSES WHO COULD SPEAK CONCERNING THE MERITS OF ATHEISM AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THEIR LIFE. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE DEBATE WAS NEVER HELD. MEN MAY SCOFF AND DENY, BUT THE EFFECTS OF THE RISEN LORD STILL REMAIN AND HE STILL CHANGES THE LIVES OF MEN AS NO OTHER HUMAN PHILOSOPHER CAN DO.

II. IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN: PAUL AND THE OTHER APOSTLES WERE MISLED AND THEY MISLED OTHERS - v. 5-8, 14-15

WAS THE APOSTLE PAUL THE JIM JONES OF THE EARLY CHURCH? WAS HE THE KIND OF MAN WHO COULD BE SELF-DECEIVED TO THE POINT THAT HE WOULD PROPAGATE A LIE AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO PROPAGATE THE SAME LIE? IF CHRIST DID NOT RISE FROM THE DEAD THEN THERE IS NO

("Waco Waco")

OTHER CONCLUSION.

A. THE TESTIMONY AND EXPERIENCE OF THE APOSTLES-v.5-8

PAUL AFFIRMS THAT THE 12 APOSTLES, 500 MEMBERS OF THE EARLY CHURCH, AND PAUL HIMSELF WERE ALL EYEWITNESSES TO THE FACT THAT CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD, FOR THEY SAY HIM AFTER HIS RESURRECTION. PAUL CALLS TO THE WITNESS STAND 513 PEOPLE, INCLUDING HIMSELF, TO DECLARE THAT JESUS CHRIST ROSE FROM THE GRAVE. THE SINGLE MOST STARTLING EVENT IN ALL OF SAUL'S LIFE TOOK PLACE ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS WHERE HE AFFIRMS HE SAW THE RISEN SAVIOUR, HEARD HIM SPEAK, AND THAT EXPERIENCE SO CHANGED PAUL'S LIFE THAT HE NEVER EVER FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE EXPERIENCE. THE BIBLE CALLS IT CONVERSION! THE OTHER APOSTLES HAD BREAKFAST WITH THE RISEN CHRIST, WERE INVITED TO TOUCH HIS HANDS AND SIDES, HEARD HIM TEACH, SAW HIS POST-RESURRECTION MINISTRY, FOR 40 DAYS.

B. THE PREACHING MINISTRY OF PAUL - v. 14

THE MESSAGE OF PAUL'S MINISTRY HAD TO DO WITH THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. HIS TESTIMONY TO THE CORINTHIANS IS RECORDED IN I COR. 1:18-2:1FF, IF CHRIST HAD NOT RISEN FROM THE GRAVE THEN PAUL'S PREACHING IS EMPTY PREACHING, EMPTIED OF ITS POWER, FOR IF JESUS WAS STILL DEAD PAUL HAD NOTHING TO SAY, NOTHING! THE POWER OF THE PREACHING OF THE EARLY CHURCH WAS IN THE FACT THAT CHRIST LIVES.

C. THE FAITH OF BELIEVERS IS EMPTY - v. 14,17

THE WORD FAITH IS USED SEVERAL WAYS IN THE BIBLE. IT MAY REFER TO THAT ELEMENT PRESENT IN OUR SALVATION, SOMETIMES IT REFERS TO ONE ASPECT OF A BELIEVER'S LIFE OR IT MAY REFER TO THE BODY OF TRUTH WHICH A BELIEVER HOLDS AS DOCTRINE. WE SING OF THAT FAITH AND WE CLING TO ITS TRUTH. I DO NOT NEED TO SAY MUCH ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF A DEAD SAVIOUR. IF JESUS CHRIST DID NOT COME FORTH FROM THE GRAVE, HE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A MAN, PERHAPS A MORAL MAN AND AN EXCELLENT TEACHER, BUT THIS COULD BE SAID OF MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS OF MEN. A DEAD SAVIOUR IS NO SAVIOUR AT ALL. THE FACT THAT WELL MEANING MEN HAVE PREACHED THIS GREAT TRUTH DOES NOT NECESSARILY MAKE IT TRUE. THE TEXT SUGGESTS THAT WHAT WE PREACH AND BELIEVE HAS NO MEANING OR SIGNIFICANCE IF CHRIST IS STILL DEAD.

*Even
mighty*

D. THE PROBLEM OF FALSE WITNESSES - v. 15

IF CHRIST DID NOT RISE FROM THE DEAD, THE APOSTLES INCLUDING PAUL, WERE WRONG AND IN EFFECT, LIARS, LEADING MANY THOUSANDS AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TO BELIEVE WHAT THEY HAD TESTIFIED AS A MATTER OF FACT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, EVERY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL WHO HAS EVER SAID JESUS CHRIST AROSE FROM THE GRAVE IS A FALSE WITNESS AND A LIAR, AND EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT BE SINCERE, THE DAMAGING EFFECT COULD NOT BE MINIMIZED. A SINCERE DOCTOR WHO TREATS PATIENTS INCORRECTLY ON THE BASIS OF FALSE INFORMATION IS A DANGEROUS MAN, EVEN THOUGH HE MAY BE SINCERE AND SO ARE MISINFORMED MINISTERS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR SINCERITY. THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORY AND THEIR OWN LIVES AND MINISTRY ATTEST TO THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE WHO CHAMPIONED THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION WERE NOT A GROUP OF DEMENTED MANIACS, BUT WERE IN FACT MEN OF RESPONSIBILITY WHO SIMPLY REPORTED THE FACT OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

III. IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN: THERE IS NO HOPE BEYOND THE CEMETERY - v.13-19

IF CHRIST DID NOT RISE FROM THE DEAD, THEN THOMAS GRAY IS RIGHT WHEN HE SPEAKS OF THE INEVITABLE HOUR: "THE PATHS OF GLORY LEAD BUT TO THE GRAVE." NAPOLEON WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID, "I DIE BEFORE MY TIME; AND MY BODY WILL BE GIVEN BACK TO EARTH, TO BECOME THE FOOD OF WORMS. SUCH IS THE FATE WHICH SO SOON AWAITS THE GREAT NAPOLEON." MOST PEOPLE DO NOT ENJOY TALKING ABOUT HOSPITALS, FUNERAL HOMES, AND CEMETERIES, FOR THESE SUBJECT REMIND ALL MEN OF OUR 2 GREAT ENEMIES, NAMELY (1) DISEASE, (2) DEATH. IT HAS ESTIMATED THAT 60 MILLION PEOPLE PLUS DIE ON PLANET EARTH EVERY YEAR, OR 2 EVERY SECOND. THIS COMPARES WITH 115 MILLION BORN EVERY YEAR! I AM AMAZED AT HOW WELL SOME UNSAVED PEOPLE COPE WITH DEATH AND DISEASE. THESE PEOPLE BOUNCE BACK FROM THE SORROW AND TRAGEDY OF LIFE IN AN AMAZING FASHION, SIMPLY THROUGH COURAGE AND DETERMINATION OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT, BUT DEATH IS SOMETHING THAT LEVELS ALL MEN. IT IS A SUBJECT MOST DO NOT KNOW HOW TO HANDLE BECAUSE WHEN LIFE IS GONE, SO IS HOPE. THESE DEAR PEOPLE ARE NOT SURE IF THERE IS LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE, THEY ARE NOT SURE OF THEIR DESTINATION. THEY STAND IN THE CEMETARY AND WHEN LOVED ONES ARE GONE THEY SEEM TO BE GONE FOR GOOD, NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN.

minutes

(RELATE EXPERIENCE OF EUNICE.) I HAVE STOOD IN CEMETARIES AND FUNERAL HOMES TO CONDUCT THE SERVICES OF FRIENDS WHOM I HAD PROMISED TO SEE IN GLORY. SOME I HAVE SPOKEN WITH ~~SECONDS~~ BEFORE THEY DIED. WE HAVE QUOTED TOGETHER VERSES SUCH AS I THESS 4, I COR. 15:51FF, AND HAVE SPOKEN OF THE VICTORY WE HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS, ~~IF CHRIST DID NOT RISE FROM THE DEAD, PLEASE DON'T ASK ME TO CONDUCT ANOTHER FUNERAL SERVICE. IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION, THEN WE GO TO THE CEMETARY IN DESPERATION, FOR THAT IS THE END.~~ I HAVE SEEN MEN OF WEALTH, POVERTY, MILITARY AND FROM EVERY WALK IN LIFE FACE DEATH AND CHRIST MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN THE FUNERAL HOME AND IN THE CEMETARY. YOU CANNOT TELL ME THE GRAVE IS THE END, FOR I KNOW SOMEONE WHO WENT INTO A GRAVE AND CAME OUT VICTORIOUS ON THE OTHER SIDE, AND WHO HAS PROMISED ALL BELIEVERS THAT BECAUSE HE LIVES, WE TOO SHALL LIVE. HE LED THE WAY IN ORDER THAT WE MAY FOLLOW IN HIS TRAIN. (I HAVE WATCHED DOCTORS LABOR LONG AND HARD TO SAVE A LIFE, BUT THE MOMENT LIFE WAS GONE, THEY WERE AS SAD AS THE RELATIVES WHO WATCHED IN SILENCE AND SORROW. (RELATE EXPERIENCE OF J. MCCLANAHAN WHEN THE DOCTOR ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS DEAD. A FRIEND OF MANY YEARS WAS HELPLESS AS A CHILD, WITH NOTHING ELSE TO SAY, IT WAS ALL OVER.) HOWEVER, THE BIBLE KNOWS NO SUCH THING AS THE HOPELESSNESS AND GLOOM THAT PREVAILS IN GODLESS PHILOSOPHIES. "BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHICH ACCORDING TO HIS ABUNDANCE MERCY HATH BEGOTTEN US AGAIN INTO A LIVING HOPE, BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD, TO AN INHERITANCE INCORRUPTIBLE, AND UNDEFILED, AND THAT FADETH NOT AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN FOR YOU, WHO ARE KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD THROUGH FAITH UNTO SALVATION, READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME." (I PETER 1:3-5)

IV. IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN: THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS FORGIVENESS OF SINS - vs. 17

WHEN JESUS CHRIST AROSE FROM THE GRAVE HE GAVE EVIDENCE THAT WHAT HE HAD ACCOMPLISHED FOR OUR SINS ON THE CROSS OF CALVARY HAD MET EVERY DEMAND OF GOD. (ROM. 4:25) THE BIBLE PLAINLY DECLARES THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A PERSON ON EARTH TO SAY WITH ASSURANCE, "I KNOW FOR SURE I HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN ALL MY SINS." (EPH. 1:7, LUKE 19:10, MK. 10:45)

How could a person make such a sweeping, startling statement if Jesus Christ had not risen from the grave? There is an old and familiar story of an aged person who is dying and asked to see a clergyman. A priest was sent and upon seeing her said, "Madam, I have come to grant you absolution." The lady apparently did not understand the meaning of absolution and when told that it meant forgiveness for sins, she said, "May I look at your hands?" The priest inquired why such an unusual act, and her reply was, "The man who forgives my sins has the print of nails in his hand." If Jesus Christ had not risen from the grave, no man would ever say with assurance or speak with assurance concerning the forgiveness of sins.

The significance of Easter is bound up in the resurrection of Christ. For some, Easter is the Easter bunny and Easter eggs, just as for some Christmas is for Santa Claus and gifts. These two significant days in our calendar year speak of two great events in Christianity, namely the birth of Christ and the resurrection of Christ. Jesus lived and died in order to deal with your sins and mine. Colossians 1:14 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

The doctrine of the resurrection of Christ is the powerhouse of the Church. The early church spoke ^{Acts 2:22-23} this powerful message and it changed the lives of men. As a matter of fact, every single sermon recorded in the Book of Acts has as its subject the resurrection of Christ. If the enemies of the early church did not believe this message, all they had to do was to produce the dead body of Jesus and Christianity would have become a lost cause. However, from that day to this the formula of faith has been bound up in the subject of the resurrection. The vital part of your faith and mine has to do with our believing "that God hath raised Him from the dead." (Romans 10:9) Jesus referred to the fact of resurrection early in His ministry. (John 5:24-29) In these verses, Jesus ~~speaks~~ ^{of} two kinds of resurrection. One that is spiritual, another that is literal and physical. ~~In the verse~~ ^{In the verse} Philippians 3:10, Paul is speaking not just of the bodily resurrection of the believer but the entrance of the believer into a higher state of thought and experience which centers around the risen Lord. The Bible speaks of our life hidden with Christ in God. The born-again Christian has come into a proper relationship to the risen Christ who is a person with absolute power and authority. (Matthew 28:18) (Rev. 1:18) "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." If Jesus Christ has all power and all authority, then we can say with assurance that He is able to deal with our sins. Paul is saying that the power of the resurrection is more than just an event in history. It is our coming into vital contact with the risen Christ. This power is able to do things in our lives

I. THE POWER TO DEAL WITH SKEPTICISM AND DOUBT -
John 20:24-29

Only (I wish it had been possible for our audience to hear the testimony of Dr. Charles McGowen at the Good Friday breakfast. His problem was one of skepticism and doubt. There is a place in life for faith.

The hours and days in which Jesus was in the grave were hours of anguish for His disciples. Their dreams of a coming glorious kingdom had been shattered. Death had done for them what it does for us; it dashed

all of their hopes and destroyed their plans. They had trusted in Jesus that he would institute a program in Israel that would deliver them from Roman bondage and establish the long-awaited kingdom of Messiah. A sadness had overcome them all. Disappointment and frustration had set in. The fact that Jesus had informed them not only of His death but also of His resurrection, somehow had not pierced their unbelief. In this passage, we are introduced to Thomas whom someone called the "man from Missouri." He was still one of the twelve but he was absent from the others. For that reason, he did not see the Lord at that initial meeting with the disciples and consequently was not very enthusiastic concerning the news they told him of the risen Saviour. When Thomas saw the resurrected Christ it changed his life as it does all men. You and I are not won to Christ thru arguments or devastating logic but rather thru a personal experience with Jesus Christ. (Compare Jews for Jesus in Eternity Magazine) Undoubtedly there are listening today who have doubts and difficulties about Bible doctrine such as resurrection and miracles. These questions will not be resolved through investigation alone. Every answer will simply turn up another question. In these days of emptiness when life is filled with purposelessness, lack of peace, loneliness, lack of discipline, and fear of death, it is good to know that there is someone to whom men can turn and find satisfaction in life. Faith in Christ is the answer to the deepest needs of the human soul. Once in a while, someone will complain that they would believe the Bible if there was evidence they could accept. This is a good approach, but the question is, what kind of evidence is the unsaved man prepared to accept? If it can be proven to him that Jesus Christ literally and bodily arose from the grave, would he be willing to accept Christ. (***Illustration of Ironside's debate with an atheist.**) Also illustration of P.O.W.'s and the things they held dear during their imprisonment, God - Family - Country)

II. POWER TO DEAL WITH SORROW AND DEATH - John 11:19-24

The picture in John's record is that of a crisis situation. Death had invaded the homes of Jesus' friends. I notice with interest that there is no guarantee of the immunity of God's children from distress in this life. As a matter of fact, if you

are a Christian, you may have more than the normal load. Jesus tarried when He heard of Lazarus' death, which is surprising. Obviously, God had a lesson for them and us to learn. God is never late in His dealings with us. Jesus came to them in their time of sorrow and death and comforted them. Jesus' answer for their troubled hearts was the truth of the resurrection. The Christian is not at an utter loss for death is not the end for him. (***) Illustration - If death should come for the believer, instant glory. Others may weep, some would be sad, but the believer would be in the presence of the Lord.) I have lived and ministered long enough now to see the vast difference in death where Jesus is present and where He is absent. I have taken many friends by the hand and said, "I'll see you in Heaven." With the unsaved, there is no such confidence. *C. Klocke*

III. THE POWER TO DEAL WITH SIN AND DEPRAVITY - I Cor. 15:12-19

Romans 4:25 teaches that the resurrection of Christ was the evidence of His completed work on Calvary. A dead Saviour would be no Saviour at all. Every thing hinged on the resurrection. "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." (I Peter 1:3) The Bible teaches in its entirety that the death of Christ is the only answer to our sins. || Romans 3:23, 6:23. "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." (I Peter 2:24) "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." (Galatians 1:4) "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." (I Peter 3:18) Question: Why do men act as they do? Why are our newspapers filled with acts of violence? Why are the headlines daily filled with subjects like Watergate, where men lie, steal, cheat? Why are there committees in Congress to investigate other areas of government? Why are prisoners of war tortured and beaten? Why does one man murder 8 nurses? Why does a woman murder her own three children while they are asleep in bed? Why are the streets of Charleston

filled with violence and crimes of every description? Why? The answer is bound up in a three letter word and that word is sin. The only power in earth or Heaven to deal with the problems of sin is the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection power. The only way to deal with sin is to get at the root in order to stop the fruit.

Certain

IV. THE POWER TO DEAL WITH OUR SCHEDULED DESTINY - Rev. 20:5

Second Death... v.5

Eternal Separation From God.

Every man is going to live somewhere forever. Most men are not afraid of facing a future judgment for, in all frankness, they do not believe a judgment exists. However, men do fear death. The Bible teaches that Christ is the true antidote to the fear of death. Once a believer comes to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, it is not terribly important whether he enters His presence through the sickness of cancer, an automobile accident, a bullet, or a bomb. We live in a world that stands on the brink of potential destruction. This is a problem for which there is no human solution. We make treaties with men who have no honor. The threat of destruction haunts many. Jesus Christ ^{with His} personal experience is the answer to these fears.

In one of his books, William Barkley mentions the death of a church organist who died shortly before Easter a few years ago. It had been his custom to cooperate with the organist and choir of a nearby church in preparation for a prayer service at the Easter season. Just before his death he had telephoned his neighboring friend and remarked, "It is time we were thinking of Easter." In this remark, this musician was reflecting the attitude of many people at this time of the year. The only time they think about the resurrection or the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is at Easter. They may go all thru the year and never think about Christ again. It is time we think about the faith that is required by God on our part in His living resurrected Son. It is time to think about that now.

Am Bcc
April 1994"RESURRECTION PROMISES"

SOMEDAY I AM GOING TO WRITE ~~THE~~ BOOK. ~~THE FIRST ONE WILL BE~~ A LAYMAN'S GUIDE ON HOW TO GET RID OF YOUR PASTOR. AMONG THE SUGGESTIONS, WILL BE THE FOLLOWING:

1. WHEN HE IS PREACHING, STAY AWAKE, LOOK MODERATELY INTERESTED AND SAY "AMEN" ONCE IN A WHILE. HE WILL PREACH HIMSELF TO DEATH IN A FEW WEEKS!
2. SPEAK A WORD OF COMMENDATION CONCERNING SOMETHING HE HAS SAID OR DONE WITHIN THE PAST YEAR. HE WILL SOON WORK HIMSELF TO DEATH!
3. YIELD YOUR LIFE TO JESUS CHRIST, THEN ~~ASK FOR SOMETHING~~ TO DO IN THE CHURCH, PREFERABLY IF YOU WOULD BE PERMITTED TO GO VISITING ON THURSDAY EVENING TO WIN SOMEONE TO CHRIST. HE WILL DIE OF HEART FAILURE!
4. MAKE HIM THE OBJECT OF YOUR DAILY PRAYERS AND GIVE FULL COOPERATION, AND SOON THE WORK WILL BECOME SO WELL-KNOWN THAT A LARGER CHURCH WILL TAKE HIM OFF YOUR HANDS!

THE SECOND BOOK WILL HAVE TO DO WITH EXCUSES FOR NOT ATTENDING CHURCH. AMONG THESE ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION WILL BE:

1. SUNDAY SICKNESS -- *Syndrome* THAT KIND OF SUBTLE DISEASE THAT GRIPS THE BODY AND SOUL BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9:45 AND 12:00. HOWEVER, MUCH BETTER BY MID-AFTERNOON AND COMPLETELY CURED BY MONDAY MORNING IN TIME FOR WORK.
2. COMPANY COMING *"Blues"* -- THE EXCUSE THAT I MUST STAY HOME AND COOK FOR A LARGE CROWD COMING IN FOR THE WEEKEND. CHOIR, SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES, USHERING AND EVERY OTHER MEETING GOES OUT THE WINDOW FOR OUR COMPANY. *2a Hong Cong to see me (R)*
3. TIRED TOTS *Tremors* -- KIDS NEED REST UNTIL ABOUT 11:00 ON SUNDAY, AND IT WOULD BE CRUEL TO AWAKEN THEM. THE SAME FAMILY HAS A BOY WHO GETS UP AT 4:30 EVERY MORNING TO DELIVER PAPERS, BUT THIS IS NOT CRUEL--IT IS CHARACTER BUILDING.

THERE ARE MANY OTHERS DEALING WITH CHURCH FACILITIES, PERSONALITY PROBLEMS, BUT THE ALL TIME CLINCHER WAS THE LADY WHO SAID SHE HAD TO STAY HOME FROM CHURCH IN ORDER TO GIVE HER CAT ITS MEDICINE AT PRECISELY 11:00!

ONE OF THE MOST WORN EXCUSES HAS TO DO WITH THE PERSON WHO SAYS, "I WON'T PROMISE YOU I'LL COME TO CHURCH BECAUSE I'M A MAN OF MY WORD AND IF I PROMISE YOU, I'LL COME." THIS IS THE DEVIL'S WAY OF GETTING PEOPLE TO STAY HOME AND STAY AWAY FROM THE HOUSE OF GOD.

OUR LORD WAS A MAN OF HIS WORD. AFTER HIS RESURRECTION, JESUS PROMISED HIS DISCIPLES CERTAIN BENEFITS PERTAINING TO HIS RESURRECTION. THIS MORNING WE WILL LOOK AT THREE (3) OF THESE GREAT RESURRECTION PROMISES.

I. THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE -- MATT. 28:20

IN JANUARY OF 1856, DAVID LIVINGSTON WAS FACED WITH ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT SITUATIONS HE HAD YET ENCOUNTERED IN 16 YEARS IN AFRICA. THERE WAS THE FAINT DESIRE TO LEAVE THE WORK FOR HIS OWN PHYSICAL WELL-BEING. IN THAT MOMENT OF DISTRESS, HE READ AGAIN THE PROMISE OF MATTHEW 28. HE COPIED THE FOLLOWING WORDS IN HIS JOURNAL AFTER THAT EXPERIENCE: "IT IS THE WORD OF A GENTLEMAN OF THE MOST STRICT AND SACRED HONOR, SO THAT'S AN END TO IT." YEARS LATER WHEN HE WENT HOME TO SCOTLAND AND ANNOUNCED EVEN AT HIS ADVANCED AGE THAT HE WOULD RETURN TO AFRICA, HIS RESOLUTION WAS BASED ON THE FACT THAT HE HAD STAKED HIS ENTIRE LIFE ON THE WORDS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION AND THEY HAD NEVER FAILED HIM. THE PROMISE OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE SENT AND SUSTAINED LIVINGSTON IN DARKEST AFRICA. THE PROMISE IS GIVEN TO EVERY BELIEVER WHO GOES WITH THE GOSPEL.

A. HIS PRESENCE WITH THOSE WHO GO TO ALL NATIONS.

THE FIRST TWO LETTERS OF THE WORD "GOSPEL" GIVE THE IMPETUS FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE--GO. FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, MISSIONARIES HAVE BEEN LEAVING THE COMFORT AND LUXURIES OF THEIR NATIVE LAND TO GO TO STRANGE COUNTRIES, LEARN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, CUSTOMS AND FACE DISEASES AND SUPERSTITION FOR THE SAKE OF

*meta = pupa
personal
relationship*

*Spain - Gold
America - God*

JESUS CHRIST. THE ONLY THING THAT HAS MADE THIS BEARABLE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE. SOME MEN GO TO FOREIGN LANDS FOR ADVENTURE AND PERSONAL GAIN. THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST GOES OUT OF CONSTRAINING LOVE. "FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH US..." II CORIN. 5:14. THE CHURCH THAT DOES NOT GO WITH THE GOSPEL, BOTH AT HOME AND OVERSEAS, CEASES TO FUNCTION AS A CHURCH. IT WILL BE DEVOID OF GOD'S BLESSING.

→ Mission Agency or Mission Field?

B. HIS PRESENCE AS WE TEACH.

THE CHURCH IS TO DISCIPLE ITS PEOPLE. EVERY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH MUST HAVE BALANCE. IT IS POSSIBLE TO GO TO EXTREMES--ALL EVANGELISM OR ALL EDUCATION. BOTH OF THESE ASPECTS ARE NECESSARY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH. GOD HAS GIVEN GIFTS TO THE CHURCH, ACCORDING TO EPHESIANS 4. ONE OF THE GIFTS IS THAT OF TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD. MEN NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES. IN AN ERA OF EDUCATION, THERE WAS WIDE BIBLE IGNORANCE IN AMERICA. (RELATE THE STORY OF TWO MEN VIEWING THE DEVASTATION OF A LOCAL FLOOD. "THIS CERTAINLY LOOKS LIKE THE FLOOD." "THE WHAT?" "THE FLOOD. YOU KNOW, THE FLOOD AND THE ARK AND THE LANDING ON MT. ARARAT, SURELY YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THAT." "NO, SIR, I HAVEN'T SEEN A PAPER FOR AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR DAYS!" -

C. HIS PRESENCE TO THE END OF THE AGE.

Alaskan m. 355

THE LORD'S PRESENCE WITH HIS DISCIPLES WAS NOT FOR ONE FLEETING MOMENT, BUT FOR ALL THE DAYS OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITY HERE ON EARTH. EACH DAY, UNDER EVERY KIND OF CIRCUMSTANCE, HE HAS PROMISED TO BE WITH US. THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH GOD WAS WITH US IN THE FLESH WHEN CHRIST CAME. "BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BRING FORTH A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME EMMANUEL, WHICH BEING INTERPRETED IS GOD WITH US." (MATT. 1:23) THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH CHRIST IS WITH US WHEN WE COME TO KNOW HIM AS SAVIOUR. (REV. 3:20) "AND I WILL PRAY THE FATHER, AND HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER, THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOR EVER." (JOHN 14:16)

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II. THE PROMISE OF HIS POWER -- LUKE 24:49

THE EARLY CHURCH DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFLUENCE TO KEEP ITS LEADERS OUT OF JAIL. ITS POWER WAS NOT IN POLITICAL ASSOCIATION OR OF HUMAN KIND, ITS GREAT POWER AND EFFECTIVENESS WAS IN ITS WITNESS OF CHRIST AND HIS RESURRECTION. THE OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHURCH IN OUR ERA IS ITS INEFFECTIVENESS AND POWERLESSNESS. A CHURCH THAT RESORTS ONLY TO HUMAN ABILITY IS DOOMED TO FAILURE. OUR'S IS A SUPER-NATURAL TASK AND DEMANDS THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO ACCOMPLISH GOD'S WORK IN THE WORLD. (ACTS 1:8) THIS PROMISE COMES AT THE END OF THE EMMAUS EXPERIENCE.

A. A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE.

"BEHOLD" -- THE WORD "BEHOLD" IS A WORD THAT IS USED IN THE BIBLE TO CALL ATTENTION TO SOMEONE. IT IS GOD'S WAY OF SAYING "YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE!" IT IS USED OFTEN IN THE BIBLE. II CORIN. 5:17; II CORIN. 6:2; REV. 3:20; I CORIN. 15:51; REV. 22:12, "AND, BEHOLD, I COME QUICKY; AND MY REWARD IS WITH ME, TO GIVE EVERY MAN ACCORDING AS HIS WORK SHALL BE."

B. THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER.

ACCORDING TO JOHN 14:16 AND ACTS 1:4, THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER HAD TO DO WITH ANOTHER COMFORTER OR THE HOLY SPIRIT COMING DOWN ON THE INFANT CHURCH TO GIVE POWER FOR ITS MINISTRY IN THE WORLD. APART FROM THIS INHUMANITE POWER, THE CHURCH WOULD ONLY FLOUNDER IN ITS TASK TO REACH THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

C. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TARRYING.

RECENTLY, A RELIGIOUS LEADER SUGGESTED THAT OUR GREATEST NEED WAS ANOTHER PENTECOST. MAY I SAY, PENTECOST WOULD HAVE COME IF NO ONE HAD TARRIED. PENTECOST WAS AN HISTORICAL DAY ON GOD'S CALENDAR JUST AS WAS CALVARY. THE 120 DISCIPLES TARRIED IN JERUSALEM DID NOT CAUSE THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST. THE OBEDIENCE OF THESE DISCIPLES TO CHRIST'S COMMAND SIMPLY PUT THEM IN THE PLACE WHERE THEY COULD BE BLESSED AS GOD IN HIS GRACE MOVED IN UPON THE CHURCH. THE POWER

OF THE CHURCH WAS POWER FROM ON HIGH. IT WAS THE GREAT NEED THEN AS IT IS TODAY. I AM QUITE SURE THAT AS THE DISCIPLES TARRIED IN THE LORD'S PRESENCE, MANY HINDRANCES WERE REMOVED IN THEIR LIVES AS THEY WAITED IN PRAYER UPON GOD. THE LESSON OF THIS VERSE IS THAT AS WE WAIT UPON THE LORD, OUR HEARTS ARE PREPARED FOR BLESSING WHICH HE WANTS TO POUR UPON HIS CHURCH.

III. THE PROMISE OF HIS PROVISION -- JOHN 21:6

WE NEED NOT SAY A GREAT DEAL ABOUT WHY PETER AND THE OTHERS WENT FISHING. I AM NOT SURE OF THE RIGHTNESS OR WRONGNESS OF THE SITUATION. THE TEXT DOES NOT INDICATE THAT THEY HAD ANY INTENTION OF RETURNING TO THEIR FISHING BUSINESS OR A FULL-TIME BASIS. THIS COULD HAVE BEEN THE ACTIVITY OF THE DISCIPLES IN A MOMENT OF LET-DOWN. THE LORD HAD BEEN CRUCIFIED AND THEY WERE SIMPLY WAITING TO SEE HOW CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD ALTER OR CHANGE THEIR LIVES. HOWEVER, OUT OF THIS EXPERIENCE THEY WOULD LEARN SEVERAL VALUABLE LESSONS.

A. THE ATTEMPT TO RESUME THE OLD WAY OF LIFE -- VERSES 1-3

NIGHT WAS THE TIME TO FISH AND THESE MEN CERTAINLY KNEW THE WATER. THEIR EFFORTS RESULTED IN EXHAUSTION AND FRUSTRATION. THEY DID THEIR VERY BEST ONLY TO FAIL. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT IF THEY HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL THAT NIGHT, THEY MIGHT HAVE HAD LITTLE INTEREST IN THE LORD'S WORK ON EARTH, AND COULD HAVE GONE BACK INTO THE FISH BUSINESS. OUT OF THIS EXPERIENCE, GOD WAS TEACHING THEM THAT THEY HAD SOMETHING GREATER TO DO. (2 Pt. Candidates / Small groups)
Back home in business

B. THE LORD WAS NEAR, BUT THEY WERE UNAWARE OF HIS PRESENCE -- VS. 4

OFTENTIMES THE LORD'S WORK IS DONE WHILE HE IS NEAR, WATCHING OUR FRUSTRATION, WAITING FOR US TO IDENTIFY OURSELVES WITH THE RISEN LORD;

C. THE FULLNESS OF OBEYING HIM.

IF THIS STORY OR MIRACLE ILLUSTRATES ANYTHING, IT DEMONSTRATES THAT WITHOUT HIM WE CAN DO NOTHING.

(JOHN 6:63; JOHN 15:5) IN OUR OWN EFFORTS, WE ARE DESTINED TO FAILURE. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HIM, THERE IS FULLNESS. THERE IS AN INTERESTING COMPARISON BETWEEN THE GREAT COMMISSION IN MATTHEW 28 AND THE LAST GREAT MIRACLE OF JESUS IN JOHN 21. THE CHURCH IS BIDDEN TO GO INTO THE WORLD TO TAKE THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. THE GOAL OF THE LORD'S SERVANTS IS TO BECOME FISHERS OF MEN. OUR SUCCESS IN THIS VENTURE IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON OUR OWN SKILLS AND ABILITIES, BUT UPON HIM. WHEREVER MEN HAVE GONE ACCORDING TO HIS PROMISE, IN HIS POWER, THERE HAS BEEN SUCCESS. WHERE THE CHURCH HAS RESORTED TO THEIR OWN SCHEMES AND METHODS, THE RESULT HAS ALWAYS BEEN FRUSTRATION AND EMPTINESS. AS LONG AS MEN ARE CONTENT WITH THEIR OWN SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS, THEY WILL NEVER RESORT TO THE LORD FOR HELP AND KNOW HIS BLESSING UPON THEIR LIVES. WHAT IS TRUE OF INDIVIDUALS IS ALSO TRUE OF CHURCHES. THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN WAS ALSO THE WRITER OF THE LAST BOOK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, NAMELY, THE BOOK OF REVELATION. THE LAST GREAT PROMISE IN THE BIBLE HAS TO DO WITH THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE CALL OF OUR BLESSED LORD FOR MEN TO BE SAVED. GOD HAS NOT CHANGED HIS MESSAGE OF REDEMPTION TO A NEEDY WORLD. THE CALL OF THE BIBLE TO EVERY PERSON IS "COME." (MATT. 11:28)

Rev. 22.