

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

OCTOBER 30, 1983

Bcc. P.M. Sept. 1992

THE LIFE OF DAVID: IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE?

II SAMUEL 18:29

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS QUESTION, WE MUST REVIEW THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS BEGINNING WITH AMMON, DAVID'S ELDEST SON. WITH THE HELP OF JONADAB HE DEvised A SUBTLE AND PERVERTED PLAN. WHEN DAVID HEARD OF TAMAR'S HUMILIATION, HE WAS ANGRY BUT DID NOTHING! ABSALOM WAITED TWO YEARS TO GET REVENGE. HE FLED TO HIS MOTHER'S RELATIVES, IN OTHER WORDS HIS GRANDPARENTS, AND REMAINED THERE FOR THREE YEARS. JOAB ALSO HAD A PLAN FOR RECONCILIATION OF ABSALOM AND DAVID. A WOMAN OF TEKOAH WAS COACHED BY JOAB TO TELL A FICTITIOUS STORY TO KING DAVID. IN THAT STORY DAVID RECOGNIZED HIS OWN SITUATION CONCERNING ABSALOM AND SENT JOAB TO BRING ABSALOM BACK TO JERUSALEM. HOWEVER, AFTER TWO YEARS ABSALOM RESORTED TO BURNING JOAB'S FIELD TO GET HIS ATTENTION AND TO PRECIPITATE A RECONCILIATION WITH DAVID. ABSALOM WAS THE HANDSOMEST MAN IN ISRAEL. HE WAS ADMIRER FOR HIS STUNNING BEAUTY AND WAS A MAN OF GREAT CHARM, COUPLED WITH VAIN AMBITION. DAVID IN MID-LIFE HAD RETIREMENT ON HIS MIND, HAD BECOME DULL CONCERNING HIS CIVIL RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTO THAT ENVIRONMENT ABSALOM BEGAN TO SWAY THE NATION IN HIS FAVOR. HE SENT FORTH A COUP WHICH EVENTUALLY RESULTED IN DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM JERUSALEM. ABSALOM'S CHIEF ADVISOR WAS A MAN NAMED AMITHOPHEL WHO ADVISED ABSALOM TO PURSUE DAVID QUICKLY WHILE HE WAS DISORIENTED AND UNORGANIZED. HOWEVER, A LOYAL SUPPORTER OF DAVID NAMED HUSHAI CONVINCED ABSALOM

Ch. 18

TO WAIT WHICH IS REALITY GAVE DAVID TIME TO REGROUP AND ORGANIZE HIS ARMY EVEN THOUGH HE WAS OUTNUMBERED BY ABSALOM'S TROOPS. IN THEIR FIRST MAJOR BATTLE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER ABSALOM LOST 20,000 MEN AND BECAME SO DIVIDED THAT HE HAD TO RUN FOR HIS OWN LIFE AND WAS CAUGHT BY HIS NECK AND HAIR IN THE LOW-HANGING BOUGHS OF A SCRUB TREE. JOAB - THE "JAVELIN MAN" - PLUNGED THREE THROUGH ABSALOM'S HEART - THE HUMAN "DART BOARD" AND THUS ABSALOM DIED AN IGNOBLE DEATH. JOAB DISPATCHED A RUNNER NAMED CUSHAI - AN ETHIOPIAN - TO BREAK THE NEWS TO DAVID. HOWEVER, A YOUNG PRIEST NAMED AHIMAAZ REQUESTED THAT HE MIGHT ALSO RUN. HE ARRIVED AT THE GATE WHERE DAVID STOOD INQUIRING OF THE WATCHMAN ON THE TOWER REGARDING RUNNERS. THIS CHAPTER REVEALS THE UNCONTROLLABLE GRIEF IN DAVID'S HEART WHEN HE LEARNED THAT ABSALOM, HIS FAVORITE SON, WAS NOT SAFE BUT DEAD! THE QUESTION DAVID ASKED ABOUT HIS WAYWARD SON IS ONE THAT IS IN THE HEART OF EVERY PARENT WHO HAS CHILDREN. LET US CONSIDER SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES WHEN A YOUNG PERSON IS NOT SAFE.

I. HE IS NOT SAFE WHEN HE ^{Lives} RESIDES IN A ^{Threats involve him} DIVIDED HOME

PARENTS ASSUME THAT A CHILD IS SAFE AS LONG AS HE IS SMALL AND THEREFORE SOMETIMES DO NOT APPLY THEMSELVES TO REARING CHILDREN. OFTEN THAT RESPONSIBILITY RESTS ALMOST ENTIRELY ON ONE PARENT. HOWEVER, BRINGING UP CHILDREN IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BOTH PARENTS, THEY SHARE THAT RESPONSIBILITY. IN ORDER FOR CHILDREN TO BE SAFE IN A HOME,

PARENTS MUST WORK IN LOVE, HARMONY AND COOPERATION IF CHILDREN ARE TO BE SAFE FROM THE DANGERS AND PRESSURES FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD. A HOME SHOULD BE A PLACE OF SECURITY FOR CHILDREN. ANY ELEMENTS WHICH DESTROY THAT SPIRIT OF LOVE AND UNITY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A CHILD'S RUIN. LET ME MENTION JUST ONE OR TWO AREAS OF DANGER. PARENTS DIVIDE A HOME WHEN THEY SHOW FAVORITISM WITH CHILDREN. IN SOME HOMES, ONE CHILD IS FAVORED OVER ALL THE REST. HE CAN DO NO WRONG, THEY CAN DO NO RIGHT. HE IS BABIED, CODDLED, GIVEN SPECIAL GIFTS AND IS THE OBJECT OF MOTHER OR FATHER'S EVERY ATTENTION WHILE THE REST GO UNNOTICED AND APPARENTLY UNLOVED. REMEMBER GOD GAVE YOU EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN AND WE SHOULD LOVE THEM EQUALLY AND WITHOUT SHOWING FAVORITES. THE BIBLE GIVES A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF THIS DANGER IN REBEKAH AND ISAAC REGARDING ESAU AND JACOB. THESE PARENTS DROVE A WEDGE BETWEEN THEIR BOYS WHICH LASTED A LIFETIME. PARENTS, LIKE DAVID WHO REFUSE TO DISCIPLINE AND ARE INDULGENT TOWARD THEIR CHILDREN CREATE A CLIMATE IN THE HOME THAT WILL RESULT IN THE SPIRITUAL RUIN OF THEIR CHILDREN. CONSTANT DISAGREEMENT, QUARRELING, FIGHTING, CRITICISM OF OTHER PEOPLE, ARGUING OVER MONEY, AND DEBTS COUPLED WITH GENERAL BAD EXAMPLES WILL LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR DESTROYING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN. I WONDER HOW MANY YOUNG LADIES HAVE LEFT HOME TO GET MARRIED NOT BECAUSE THEY WERE IN LOVE BUT SIMPLY BECAUSE IT PROVIDED AN ESCAPE TO LEAVE A HOME WHERE TURMOIL AND DISCORD WERE PREVALENT.

Ch wings on back!

Discipline when they don't discipline

AN UNDISCIPLINED GENERATION WANTS MORE OF THE SAME!

Discipline - gone
Punish - gone

Threats one Against the other!

Only re church to be equally

B

FB May

Kloster Milk

Drink Discs - 90x -

C

Controlled By
~~MAA~~ Set of

II. HE IS NOT SAFE WHEN HE RECEIVES WRONG VALUES IN LIFE *to Ring wrong* **(B)**

SOME PEOPLE EQUATE PHYSICAL BEAUTY WITH MORAL INTEGRITY. WE ARE ATTRACTED TO HANDSOME OR BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE BUT PHYSICAL BEAUTY AND MORALITY DO NOT NECESSARILY GO HAND IN HAND. ABSALOM WAS A HANDSOME MAN, IN FACT HIS PERSONAL ATTRACTIVENESS WAS PROVERBIAL IN NATURE. HOWEVER, HIS PHYSICAL BEAUTY WAS NOT MATCHED WITH MORAL CHARACTER. IT IS EASY TO GIVE CHILDREN THE WRONG IMPRESSION AND THE WRONG SET OF MORAL VALUES WITHOUT OPENING ONE'S MOUTH. WHEN EVERYTHING IN ONE'S LIFE IS BASED ON THE PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL SIDE OF LIFE, CHILDREN ASSUME THAT IS WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND THEY LIKE PARENTS PURSUE THESE VALUES. LIKE ABSALOM, YOUNG PEOPLE ARE INCLINED TO BE CARELESS AND IGNORE GOD'S WORD. SANGSTER RELATES THE FOLLOWING STORIES CONCERNING VALUES: A SMALL BOY WAS PLAYING WITH SOME FRIENDS ON A SIDE STREET WHEN HE DARTED IN FRONT OF AN AUTOMOBILE AND WAS KNOCKED TO THE GROUND. THE DRIVER PICKED HIM UP AND HURRIED TO THE HOSPITAL. IN A MATTER OF MINUTES HIS LIMP, UNCONSCIOUS BODY WAS BEING EXAMINED BY DOCTORS. HE SEEMED TO BE DEAD. HOWEVER, IN A MATTER OF MINUTES HE HAD REVIVED AND IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HE HAD SUFFERED A CONCUSSION BUT NO OTHER INJURIES. THE CHILD BEGAN TO WHIMPER WHEN HIS MOTHER CAME INTO THE ROOM. HE WAS CRYING BECAUSE IN THIS INCIDENT HE HAD LOST HIS FAVORITE CAP. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CHILD HAD COME VERY NEAR TO LOSING HIS LIFE BUT HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING LOST HIS CAP. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A CHILD WHO UNDERSTANDABLY COULD MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE

beauty
 "face" any
 of "the"
 ship them

Hollywood
 Great
 Beauty =
 take care

Ring
 Ring

1. *
 (vertical line)

"Country Roads""THE ROAD HOME"

JOHN 14:1-6

Imagine that

YOU ARE SITTING IN THE AIRPORT IN LIMA, PERU. YOU HAVE BEEN TRAVELING FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. NOBODY NEARBY SPEAKS ENGLISH. YOU ARE WEARY, DIRTY, WRINKLED AND LONELY. THE MUSIC COMING FROM THE INNERCOM SYSTEM IN THE AIRPORT IS MOSTLY PERUVIAN FOLK MUSIC OF FLUTES AND INSTRUMENTS OF THAT NATURE. SUDDENLY WITHOUT WARNING THE VOICE OF JOHN DENVER BEGINS TO SING A FAMILIAR SONG - "COUNTRY ROADS, TAKE ME HOME TO THE PLACE I BELONG, WEST VIRGINIA...." ALL KINDS OF NOSTALGIC SCENES FILL YOUR MIND AS YOU SIT AND THINK OF TREE-LINED COUNTRY ROADS LEADING TO THE PLACE WHERE YOU WERE RAISED IN THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINIA. JESUS WAS GOING HOME TO HEAVEN. HIS DEATH WAS LESS THAN A WEEK AWAY. HE KNEW THAT, THE DISCIPLES DIDN'T. HE WAS PREPARING THEM FOR THE SHOCK OF HIS DEPARTURE. (BY THE WAY, CHAPTERS 1-11 DEAL WITH JESUS' LIFE UP TO AGE 33. CHAPTERS 12-21 THE LAST WEEK. IT SPEAKS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT LAST WEEK CULMINATING IN HIS DEATH.) LET US EXAMINE THESE FAMILIAR WORDS WHICH WILL HELP JESUS' DISCIPLES AND MILLIONS WHO FOLLOWED IN THEIR TRAIN.

I. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED*Fades Creek*

THE WORDS "LET NOT" MEANS STOP - DON'T START. JESUS SAW THE DISTURBING IMPACT HIS WORDS WOULD HAVE ON THE DISCIPLES. THEN, AS NOW, SAYING GOODBYE IS NEVER EASY FOR FRIENDS. THE WORD HEART IS THE GREEK KARDIA AND IS IN THE SINGULAR NOT PLURAL. JESUS WAS TALKING TO HIS DISCIPLES ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, NOT AS A GROUP. HIS WORDS SPOKE TO THE INTERMOST PART OF THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL BEING, THE CORE OR CENTER OF THE SOUL. WE USE THE HEART IN VARIOUS WAYS -

Bethesda

- 2 -

~~and~~ "agitate"

HEAVY, HARD, BIG, DOWN, SICK, ACHING. THE WORD TROUBLED CARRIES THE IDEA OF ~~ANNOYANCE~~, UNSETTLING, TUMULT - IT REFERS TO A MENTAL MOVING OR SHAKING. THE SAME WORD IS TRANSLATED IN JOHN 5:4 CONCERNING THE TROUBLING OR SHAKING OF THE WATER AT THE POOL. SOMETIMES WE RECEIVE NEWS THAT UNSETTLES OR SHAKES US UP. THESE DISCIPLES HAD NO REASON TO BE TROUBLED. WHAT JESUS WAS SAYING TO THE DISCIPLES WAS MORE THAN GOOD ADVICE - IT WAS GOOD MEDICINE! THE DISCIPLES DID NOT LIVE IN A TRANQUIL WORLD NOR WOULD THEY LIVE TRANQUIL LIVES BUT THEY COULD HAVE A TRANQUIL HEART. (JOHN 16:33) YOU AND I ARE NOT SHELTERED FROM SHATTERING NEWS OR CIRCUMSTANCES BUT WE ARE PROMISED PEACE. (ISA. 26:3) IT IS THE IMAGININGS OF OUR TROUBLED HEARTS THAT TEAR US UP INSIDE. WE IMAGINE THE WORST IN ALMOST EVERY SITUATION. BY CONTRAST, WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO TRUST AND NOT ANTICIPATE ALL THE BAD THINGS THAT MIGHT HAPPEN BUT RATHER LEAVE THOSE THINGS IN HIS HANDS. WE, LIKE THE DISCIPLES HAVE NO REASON TO BE TROUBLED AS LONG AS JESUS CHRIST LIVES.

II. YE BELIEVE GOD BELIEVE ALSO IN ME

JESUS ASKED THE SAME FAITH AND CONFIDENCE THAT THEY GAVE TO GOD. THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE REQUEST - UNLESS HE IS GOD! SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT ACCEPTING THE ~~FIRST~~ ^{LAST} HALF OF THIS VERSE WILL KEEP US FROM BEING AND ATHEIST, ACCEPTING THE ~~LAST~~ ^{FIRST} HALF WILL KEEP US FROM BEING ANXIOUS. MEN HAVE FOLLOWED FRIVOLOUS SCHEMES AND FUTILE SUPERSTITIONS, HOAX AND HALLUCINATIONS, DEADENDS AND DEADBEATS UPON WHICH MEN HAVE HANGED THEIR UTMOST CONFIDENCE AND TRUST. FAITH IN A WRONG CAUSE DOES NOT MAKE THE CAUSE RIGHT. THIS VERSE IS SIMPLY STATING THAT CHRIST IS DEITY. IF HE WERE NOT GOD, SUCH A REQUEST WOULD BE UTTERLY BLASPHEMOUS. JESUS ASKED PEOPLE FOR THE SAME KIND OF TRUST THEY WOULD PUT IN GOD SAYING THAT

SUCH TRUE TRUST IS A TONIC FOR TROUBLED HEARTS. FOR ORDINARY FOLK THIS IS ABSOLUTELY AN INCREDIBLE STATEMENT BUT FOR JESUS THERE IS NOTHING INCREDIBLE ABOUT IT - IT IS SIMPLY TRUE.

III. IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS

PEOPLE FROM A LARGE FAMILY UNDERSTAND CROWDED CONDITIONS BETTER THAN MOST. IN SUCH HOMES, IT IS A WAY OF LIFE TO SLEEP FOUR IN A BED, WAIT IN LINE FOR THE BATHROOM, EAT SECOND TABLE "OF WINGS AND NECKS!" NEW WEDS UNDERSTAND CRAMPED CONDITIONS. THE BIBLE SIMPLY STATES THAT IN OUR FINAL ETERNAL HOME THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF ROOM FOR EVERYONE. IN THIS CONTEXT THE WORD HOUSE OBVIOUSLY MEANS MORE THAN JUST A PLACE TO LIVE. IT REFERS TO THE VASTNESS OF GOD'S HEAVEN AND IT RELATES TO THIS SMALL SPECK IN SPACE WHERE WE LIVE. EARTHLY HOUSES FULL UP AND FALL IN - HIS ~~SON'S~~ ASTRONOMY HAS BROUGHT INTO OUR VOCABULARY SUCH WORDS AS ANDROMEDA - OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOR, TWO HUNDRED MILLION LIGHT YEARS AWAY THE NEAREST GALACTIC SYSTEM. OTHER WORDS SUCH AS QUASAR FROM THE GERMAN WORD MEANING THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE. TERMS WHICH REMIND US OF THE INFINITE DIMENSIONS AND PROPORTIONS OF GOD'S UNIVERSE. (SEE WILBUR SMITH - PAGE 41) THE WORDS "MANY MANSIONS" SUGGEST A LARGE SPACIOUS HOUSE WHERE WEALTHY PEOPLE LIVE. THE ENGLISH WORD MANSE IS A SHORTED FORM OF THE WORD. HOWEVER IN THE TEXT THE GREEK WORD MEANS MUCH MORE. IT MEANS TO STAY OR CONTINUE UNCHANGED, TO ABIDE, DWELL, LODGE, REST, SETTLE, REMAIN, TO BE STEADFAST OR PERMANENTLY CONSTANT - TO STAY IN A PLACE OR DWELL. IT IS A REFERENCE TO AN ETERNAL, PERMANENT RESTING PLACE IN GLORY. TODAY THERE IS NOTHING PERMANENT OR ABIDING ABOUT EARTHLY DWELLINGS. THEY MAY BE RAVAGED BY FIRE, FLOOD OR FAILURE TO PAY THE MORTGAGE OR EVEN FALL DOWN WHEN WE DON'T FIX THEM UP. AS A MATTER OF FACT,

"Where I Am"
7:34-36
12:26
14:3
17:24

II CORINTHIANS 5:1 SPEAKS OF AN EARTHLY BODY AS A HOUSE OR TENT THAT WILL ONE DAY COLLAPSE AND ROT. TOO MUCH OF OUR THINKING ABOUT HEAVEN HAS TO DO WITH "A BIG HOUSE" MENTALITY. WE THINK OF HEAVEN AS A PLACE WHERE THERE'LL BE NO MONEY, MORTGAGE, REPAIRS OR BAD NEIGHBORS. HOWEVER, THE BEST WE CAN DREAM OF IS NOT ADEQUATE. VANCE HEAVENER REMINDS HIS READERS THAT GOD PAVES THE STREETS IN HEAVEN WITH THE "STUFF" WE SPEND OUR LIFE TO ACCUMULATE IN THE BANK. (EXPLAIN)

IV. IF IT WERE NOT SO I WOULD HAVE TOLD YOU

TRUTH WAS JESUS' TRADEMARK. HE WAS HONEST WITH HIS DISCIPLES AS WITH EVERYONE ELSE. MANY PEOPLE LIE TO SHIELD LOVED ONES FROM THE TRUTH. NOTICE THE TWO WORDS "NOT SO". THERE ARE MANY THINGS PEOPLE SAY ABOUT HEAVEN THAT ARE SIMPLY NOT SO! 1) IT IS NOT SO THAT WE WILL GET TO THE PEARLY GATES AND WAIT WITH BATED BREATH TO SEE WHICH WAY THE BALANCE FALLS. 2) IT IS NOT SO THAT IF ONE DOES HIS BEST HIS BEST IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR GOD. IF THAT WERE SO CALVARY WAS A HORRIBLE MISTAKE. 3) IT IS NOT SO THAT WHEN WE DIE WE AUTOMATICALLY GO TO HEAVEN. IT IS NOT SO THAT THERE'S AN INTERMEDIATE PLACE BETWEEN DEATH AND HEAVEN WHERE MEN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT AND CHANGE LIFESTYLES BECAUSE OF THE PRAYERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE. THIS IS PAGANISM NOT CHRISTIANITY.

V. I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU....I WILL COME AGAIN

THE WORD PREPARE MEANS TO MAKE READY. THE WORD PLACE IS TRANSLATED IN LUKE 2:7 ROOM AND IN LUKE 16:28 "PLACE OF TORMENT" AND IN ACTS 1:25 "HIS OWN PLACE" (THERE ARE TWO PLACES WE CHOOSE WHERE WE GO.)

"Pick your
Place!"

- 5 -

of God
is for you.

JESUS WAS A CARPENTER - A BUILDER - HE STILL IS. (MATTHEW 16:18) FOR HIS DISCIPLES IN EVERY DISPENSATION, HE HAS PROMISED A HOME IN HEAVEN AS OUR FINAL AND ETERNAL RESTING PLACE. JESUS IS PREPARING A PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE. THERE IS ALSO A PLACE PREPARED FOR AN UNPREPARED PEOPLE! THE SUBJECT OF HEAVEN BRINGS TO MIND THE IDEAS WHICH ART AND LITERATURE PROTRAY. STREETS OF GOLD, PEARLY GATES, HARPS, ANGELS, HALOS AND GARDENS. ALL OF THIS MISSES A VERY BASIC FACT NAMELY, JESUS' RESIDENCE IS WHERE HEAVEN IS. ONE OF THE IRONIES OF THE SUBJECT OF HEAVEN IS THAT PEOPLE DESIRE TO KNOW ABOUT HEAVEN CONCERNING ITS BEAUTY, BLESSINGS AND THE BEHAVIOR OF THE BLESSED BUT THEY SPEND VERY LITTLE TIME INQUIRING ON HOW TO GET THERE! EVEN IN A CHURCH LIKE OURS, MANY WOULD BE HARD PRESSED FOR A SIMPLE EXPLANATION ON HOW TO BE SURE OF HEAVEN WHEN ONE DIES.

QUESTION: HOW MAY I BE SURE - ABSOLUTELY SURE?

WE'RE GRATEFUL TO THOMAS FOR ASKING THAT QUESTION. OUR ETERNAL RESIDENCE AND THE ROAD TO IT IS CRYSTAL CLEAR. THE DEFINITE ARTICLE APPEARS BEFORE THE WAY. "NO ONE" IS AN EXCEPTION. THERE ARE NONE NOT A SINGLE ONE. MANY YEARS AGO A HOLLYWOOD ACTRESS NAMED MARION DAVIES BUILT A HOME OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN IN SAN MONICA, CAL. (MANY REMEMBER HER AS THE "GIRLFRIEND" OF WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST.) IT HAD 90 ROOMS, 37 FIRE PLACES, 3 DINING ROOMS, 2 SWIMMING POOLS, 32 SERVANTS TO KEEP IT GOING. IN 1961, MARION DAVIES DIED OF CANCER. ONE COMMENT AFTER HER DEATH WAS THAT SHE HAD BUILT HER MANSION IN THE WRONG PLACE!

Jack Welch - Question

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

NOVEMBER 8, 1987
Revised Aug. 1993
(Gospel - notes)

A HOUSE WITH PLENTY OF ROOM

Joe Miller 4000
+ sq ft.

JOHN 14:2

Every Body's Dream!

PEOPLE FROM A LARGE FAMILY OFTEN UNDERSTAND CROWDED HOME CONDITIONS BETTER THAN OTHERS. IN SUCH HOMES, IT IS A WAY OF LIFE. (SLEEPING FOUR TO A BED, TWO UP, TWO DOWN - WAITING TO GET INTO A SINGLE BATHROOM - EATING "SECOND TABLE" - WINGS AND NECKS!) SOME NEWLYWEDS KNOW THE CRAMPED CONDITIONS OF A SMALL APARTMENT. (COMMENT ON MOBILE HOME AT PBC.) THE BIBLE OFFERS GOOD NEWS FOR CHRISTIANS. IN OUR FINAL, ETERNAL HOME THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR EVERYONE! CONTEXT: THE DISCIPLES HAD RECEIVED SOME NEWS FROM JESUS THAT CAUSED THEIR WORLD TO FALL IN AND FALL APART QUICKLY. HE WAS GOING TO LEAVE THEM. NOT IN A YEAR, OR A MONTH BUT IN LESS THAN A WEEK - THE END WAS NEAR. NOW CAME THE TEST OF THEIR TEACHING - HOW WOULD THEY BEHAVE AFTER HE WAS GONE? HIS WORDS TO THEM ARE ALSO WORDS TO US.

I. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

THE WORDS "LET NOT" DO NOT CARRY THE IDEA OF "DON'T START", BUT RATHER "STOP". JESUS SENSED AND SAW THE DISTURBING IMPACT HIS WORDS HAD ON THE DISCIPLES. THEN, AS NOW, SAYING GOODBYE IS NEVER EASY FOR FRIENDS. STOP BEING TROUBLED WAS HIS ADMONITION. THE WORD "HEART" IS THE GREEK KARDIA AND IN THE SINGULAR NOT PLURAL. JESUS WAS TALKING TO THEM ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, THAT IS, EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM SPECIFICALLY AND NOT JUST AS A GROUP. HIS WORDS WERE TO

THAT INNERMOST PART OF THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL BEING, THE CORE OR CENTER OF THEMSELVES. THE WORD "TROUBLED" CARRIES THE IDEA OF AGITATION, SOMETHING THAT IS UPSETTING OR DISTURBING AND WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY OF SUCH A CONDITION THAT WE ARE ALL "SHAKEN UP". IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE TROUBLED WATERS, TIMES AND NEWS OR ANYTHING THAT TROUBLES THE HEART AND MIND. THESE DISCIPLES REALLY HAD NO REASON TO BE TROUBLED. THEY WERE REACTING TO WHAT THEY CONSIDERED BAD NEWS. THIS KIND OF "HEART TROUBLE" COMES TO US ALL. WHAT JESUS WAS SAYING WAS MORE THAN GOOD ADVICE - IT WAS GOOD MEDICINE. HE DID NOT SAY THAT LIFE WOULD BE BURDEN-FREE LIKE A CHILD ON A PERPETUAL PLAYGROUND OR IN A SAND BOX. THE DISCIPLES WOULD NOT WORK IN A TRANQUIL WORLD NOR WOULD THEY LIVE TRANQUIL LIVES BUT HE DID PROMISE THEM A TRANQUIL HEART. (JOHN 16:33) THE SAME IS TRUE FOR BELIEVERS TODAY. WE ARE NOT SHELTERED FROM SHATTERING NEWS OR CIRCUMSTANCES BUT WE ARE PROMISED HIS PEACE. (ISAIAH 26:3) IT IS THE IMAGININGS OF OUR TROUBLED HEARTS THAT TEAR US UP ON THE INSIDE. WE IMAGINE THE WORST IN EVERY SITUATION. BY CONTRAST WE SHOULD TRUST AND NOT ANTICIPATE WHAT BAD THINGS MAY HAPPEN - LEAVE THOSE THINGS IN HIS HANDS. MOST OF US HAVE IMAGINED THE WORST ABOUT MONEY MATTERS, HEALTH PROBLEMS, NATIONAL SECURITY, WAR AND DEATH. WE, LIKE THE DISCIPLES, HAVE NO REASON TO BE TROUBLED AS LONG AS JESUS CHRIST LIVES.

II. YE BELIEVE IN GOD BELIEVE ALSO IN ME

ACCEPTING THE FIRST HALF OF THIS VERSE WILL KEEP ONE FROM BEING AN ATHEIST, ACCEPTING THE LAST HALF WILL KEEP HIM FROM BEING ANXIOUS. THINK OF THE FUTILE AND FRIVOLOUS SCHEMES,

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THEIR UTMOST CONFIDENCE AND TRUST. FAITH IN
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TRUST IS A TONIC FOR TROUBLED HEARTS. HE
DECLARES HIS OWN DIETY AND EQUALITY WITH
GOD. THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE INCREDIBLE STATEMENT
UNLESS IT IS TRUE THEN THERE IS NOTHING
INCREDIBLE ABOUT IT!

*See
entry*

III. IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS

IT IS INTERESTING THAT JESUS WOULD ATTACH
THE WORD HOUSE TO THE OMNIPRESENT GOD.
OBVIOUSLY THEN A HOUSE IS MORE THAN JUST A
PLACE TO LIVE. IT REFERS TO THE VASTNESS OF
GOD'S HEAVEN AND EVEN HIS UNIVERSE AS IT
RELATES TO THIS SMALL SPECK IN SPACE THAT
WE LIVE ON. EARTHLY HOUSES FILL UP AND FALL
IN - NOT HIS! ((COMPARE DAD'S HOUSE, JINKS,
YODER AND THOMPSON - ALL PLACES WHERE HOUSES
USED TO BE - BUT NO MORE.)) ASTRONOMY HAS
BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION SUCH WORDS AS
ANDROMEDA - OUR NEWEST NEIGHBOR, TWO HUNDRED
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WHAT THEY ARE. TERMS WHICH REMIND US OF THE
INFINITE DIMENSIONS AND PROPORTIONS OF GOD'S
UNIVERSE. (SEE WILBUR SMITH - PAGE 41.)
THE PHRASE "MANY MANSIONS" USUALLY SUGGESTS
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WEALTHY PEOPLE LIVE. THE ENGLISH WORD MANSE
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ABIDE AND IS SO TRANSLATED IN JOHN 14:23. IT IS A REFERENCE TO OUR ETERNAL, PERMANENT ABIDING OR RESTING PLACE IN GLORY. TODAY, THERE IS NOTHING PERMANENT OR ABIDING ABOUT OUR EARTHLY DWELLING. IT MAY BE RAVAGED BY FIRE, FLOOD, FAILURE TO PAY THE MORTGAGE, FALL DOWN WHEN WE DON'T FIX IT UP. AS A MATTER OF FACT, IN II COR. 5:1FF PAUL SPEAKS OF OUR EARTHLY BODY AS A HOUSE OR TENT THAT WILL ONE DAY COLLAPSE AND ROT! COMMENT ON CARL HENRY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY WITH HIS CLOSING STATEMENT OF HIS DESIRED PASSAGE TO BE SAFE HOME... Before Dark.

*Prayer:
Lord!*

IV. IF IT WERE NOT SO I WOULD HAVE TOLD YOU

BARCLAY LABELS THIS VERSE AS A REFERENCE TO THE "HONESTY OF JESUS." TRUTH WAS HIS TRADEMARK. (JOHN 18:31, JOHN 8:32) MANY PEOPLE WOULD NOT DELIBERATELY LIE BUT HE COULD NOT. MANY PEOPLE WOULD WISH THEIR FELLOWMAN WELL BUT HE WORKED TO MAKE THAT POSSIBLE. MANY HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS THAT ARE NEVER ACCOMPLISHED BUT HIS LIFE ACCOMPLISHED EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO. (JOHN 17:4) NOW HE SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES: "DON'T BE AFRAID OF MAKING IT TO HEAVEN. THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM AND THAT IS YOUR ETERNAL DWELLING PLACE." NOTICE THE PHRASE "NOT SO." THERE ARE MANY THINGS MEN SAY ABOUT HEAVEN THAT SIMPLY ARE NOT SO:

*"So. So."
if not?*

- (1) *"Hope So" - close your eyes & jump (2) NO SO - NOT SO!*
IT IS NOT SO THAT WE WILL GET TO THE PEARLY GATE, WAIT WITH BAITED BREATH FOR PETER TO OPEN THE DOOR AND THEN TO PASS THE BALANCE TEST. - (Walter's Story 3 minutes ago.)
- (2) IT IS NOT SO THAT A PERSON MAY DO THE BEST HE CAN POSSIBLY DO AND IF HE DOES HIS BEST, HIS BEST WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR GOD. (Calvary a mistake!!)

Heel
Bad
not so!

- (3) IT IS NOT SO THAT WHEN WE DIE WE AUTOMATICALLY BOOK PASSAGE FOR HEAVEN AND MAKE IT SAFELY.
- (4) IT IS NOT SO THAT THERE'S AN INTERMEDIATE PLACE BETWEEN DEATH AND HEAVEN WHERE MEN HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT AND HAVE A CHANGED LIFESTYLE THROUGH THE FAITHFUL PRAYERS OR CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE. SUCH AN IDEA IS SHEER PAGANISM.

WHAT IS SO IS WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT HEAVEN AND HOW TO GET THERE.

V. I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU...I WILL COME AGAIN

JESUS WAS A CARPENTER AND A BUILDER - HE STILL IS. (MATTHEW 16:18) FOR HIS DISCIPLES IN EVERY DISPENSATION HE PROMISED A HOME IN HEAVEN AS OUR ETERNAL AND FINAL RESTING PLACE. (COMPARE REVELATION 21-22) JESUS IS PREPARING A PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE. THERE IS ALREADY A PLACE PREPARED FOR AN UNPREPARED PEOPLE. THE SUBJECT OF HEAVEN OFTEN BRINGS TO MIND IDEAS WHICH ART HAS LEFT IN OUR THINKING. STREETS OF GOLD, PEARLY GATES, HARPS AND ANGELS, HALOS AND FRUITFUL GARDENS. ALL OF THIS MISSES THE SIMPLE FACT THAT WHERE JESUS IS IS HEAVEN FOR THE BELIEVER. VERSES: PHILIPPIANS 1:23, 1 THESS. 4:13FF, 1 COR. 15:51 - ALL OF THESE VERSES SPEAK OF A "FOREVERNESS TOGETHERNESS". THE IRONY AND PERHAPS THE MOST SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF HEAVEN IS THAT PEOPLE DESIRE TO KNOW ABOUT HEAVEN, ITS BEAUTY, BLESSINGS AND BEHAVIOR OF THE BLESSED, BUT SPEND VERY LITTLE TIME INQUIRING ABOUT HOW TO GET THERE. ALSO, ONE MIGHT BE STARTLED

Heel
11:10

21:3

~~Agilent~~ - 3 minutes To live -
how?

EVEN IN A CHURCH LIKE THIS AT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE HARD PRESSED FOR A SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF HOW TO BE SURE ONE GOES TO HEAVEN WHEN HE DIES. QUESTION: HOW MAY I BE SURE? IF WE ARE SURE ABOUT ANYTHING EVER - IT SHOULD BE THIS QUESTION. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THOMAS FOR ASKING THE QUESTION FOR US - 14:5-6. THE WAY TO HEAVEN AND KNOWING GOD IS NOT BY ARGUING OR SEEKING TO VERIFY HIS EXISTENCE THROUGH VARIOUS INTELLECTUAL PROCESSES BUT RATHER OBEYING AND TRUSTING HIS WORD THAT HE WILL DO EXACTLY WHAT HE PROMISES HE WILL DO. ARE YOU WILLING TO MAKE AN EXPERIMENT? PRAY THE SINNERS PRAYER.

Marion Davis

Many yrs. ago, a Hollywood star built a new home overlooking the ocean in Santa Monica Calif.

90 Rooms

37 Fireplaces

3 Dining Rooms

2 Swimming pools

32 Servants

- Built the one party \$30,000

In 1961 she died of cancer. One comment - built her mansion in the wrong place.

SURPRISED BOTH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE COW! THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF SURPRISES. IMAGINE DAVID'S SURPRISE WHEN HIS OLDER BROTHERS WERE REJECTED AND HE WAS SELECTED THE FUTURE KING OF ISRAEL. OR PETER'S SURPRISE WHEN THE ANGEL AWAKENED HIM IN PRISON. (ACTS 12) BUT THE GREATEST

SURPRISE HAD TO BE WITH JACOB ON HIS WEDDING DAY. (GENESIS 29:16-25) THE WORD SURPRISE SUGGESTS SOMEONE WHO IS CONFRONTED WITH THE UNEXPECTED SITUATION SO THAT HE OR SHE IS AMAZED OR ASTONISHED. JESUS WAS A CONSTANT SURPRISE TO THE JEWS AND HIS DISCIPLES. THEY NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS GOING TO SAY OR TO DO. "AND THE JEWS MARVELED, SAYING, HOW KNOWETH THIS MAN LETTERS, HAVING NEVER LEARNED?" (JOHN 7:15) "IS NOT THIS JOSEPH'S SON?" (LUKE 4:22) LET US EXAMINE SURPRISES RECORDED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"The Surprises of Jesus"

"of Jesus Series"

① ADAM!
Wanted to sleep & after
woke up / married!

② El: son
③ ABinadab
④ Shammah
4, 5, 6
7 = 0

I. SURPRISE NO. 1: THE ^{Whom}MEN JESUS CALLED
TO BE HIS DISCIPLES - MARK 3:14

TODAY, WE LOOK UPON THE MEN ^{men}WHOM JESUS CALLED TO BE HIS DISCIPLES AMONG THE GREAT LEADERS IN HISTORY. IT WAS NOT SO AT FIRST. JESUS CALLED A DOZEN UNKNOWN, UNLEARNED AND UNTRAINED MEN. THEY WERE AT BEST - ORDINARY. THERE WAS NOT A RABBI, RICH MAN OR RULER AMONG THEM. THERE WAS HOWEVER A TWIN, TAX MAN AND A TRAITOR NOT TO MENTION A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF FISHERMEN. A. B. BRUCE IN HIS BOOK THE TRAINING OF THE TWELVE SAID OF THE APOSTLES: "IN A WORLDLY POINT OF VIEW THEY WERE A VERY INSIGNIFICANT COMPANY INDEED - A BAND OF POOR, ILLITERATE GALILEAN PROVINCIALS, UTTERLY DEVOID OF SOCIAL CONSEQUENCE, NOT LIKELY TO BE CHOSEN.... BY ONE HAVING SUPREME REGARD TO PRUDENTIAL CONSIDERATION. WHY DID JESUS CHOOSE SUCH MEN?" BRUCE'S CONCLUSION IS THAT THESE MEN WERE THE BEST AVAILABLE. OTHERS WERE TOO PROUD, PREOCCUPIED, PATRONIZING OR SIMPLY PRESTIGE CONSCIOUS TO THE POINT THAT IDENTITY WITH A SIMPLE CARPENTER WHO HAD NO EARTHLY ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS WAS TOTALLY UNTHINKABLE. THESE WERE NOT THE KIND OF PEOPLE MEN WOULD USUALLY SELECT IN A MOVEMENT OR ORGANIZATION. THEY WERE MEN OF THE STREET AND SEA, NOT OF SCHOOL AND SCROLL. MOST MEN WOULD SELECT DISCIPLES AS A PRESIDENT, A CABINET, A COLLEGE ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, A COACH HIS STAFF - MAYBE CHECKING OUT THE COMPUTER FOR THE BEST QUALIFIED PEOPLE. THE SELECTION OF THE 12 DISCIPLES HAS TO BE THE GREATEST ENLISTMENT PROGRAM IN HUMAN HISTORY. TWELVE ORDINARY MEN WERE CALLED UPON TO DO AN EXTRA-ORDINARY TASK. THESE MEN DID NOT

"Follow Me!"

They did not come
look for Him, He
came looking for them.

Jan. 15:16

FOLLOW JESUS FOR THE USUAL REASONS THAT MEN ENLIST IN PROGRAMS. ACCORDING TO 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26 THERE IS A PRINCIPLE FOR ENLISTMENT IN GOD'S PROGRAM. THE POINT OF THIS VERSE ISN'T THAT GOD IS NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT AND USE CULTURED ARISTOCRATS IN HIS KINGDOM BUT SUCH PERSONS ARE TOO OFTEN INTERESTED IN OTHER THINGS AND NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (ILLUSTRATION: THE RICH YOUNG RULER) THE MEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS DID SO OUT OF A SPIRIT OF SURRENDER AND SERVICE. THE FLESH IS IMPRESSED WITH BEAUTY, BRAINS, BUCKS AND BIGNESS. OUR LORD SOUGHT PEOPLE WHO WOULD BELIEVE HIM.

4B5

+1!

(MANNER)

II. SURPRISE NO. 2: THE WAY JESUS DEALT WITH SOCIAL OUTCASTS - JOHN 4:27

μετα
yulakos

THERE ARE TWO GRAMMATICAL OBSERVATIONS IN THE GREEK TEXT. THERE IS NO DEFINITE ARTICLE AND THE GREEK PREPOSITION IS META OR THE PREPOSITION OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. JESUS SURPRISED, EVEN SHOCKED HIS DISCIPLES BY TALKING WITH A WOMAN IN PUBLIC - A GENTILE WOMAN MADE IT WORSE! THE CUSTOM OF THE TIMES REQUIRED THAT A MAN SHOULD NOT SALUTE, ADDRESS OR SPEAK TO A WOMAN IN A PUBLIC PLACE, NOT EVEN HIS WIFE. SOME RABBIS TAUGHT THAT THE WORDS OF THE LAW WOULD BE BETTER BURNED THAN PRESENTED BY A WOMAN. ONE RABBI PROPOUNDED THAT TALKING TO A WOMAN WAS ONE OF THE SIX THINGS WHICH MADE A DISCIPLE IMPURE - THE FIVE OTHERS WERE NOT MENTIONED! ONE PRAYER OFTEN PRAYED BY JEWS HAD TO DO WITH THANKING GOD HE WAS NOT A GENTILE AND NOT A WOMAN! ON THIS OCCASION THE DISCIPLES WERE MANIFESTING THEIR OWN CULTURAL PREJUDICES. WOMEN WERE CONSIDERED TO BE

① "the
any
woman"

③

A
substantiated
conclusion

Storing
Lk. 16

11 Nov 1961

INFERIOR TO MEN. (A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER ASKED A LITTLE GIRL IF SHE KNEW THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE. HER RENDITION WAS: "FIRST GOD CREATED ADAM AND WHEN HE LOOKED AT HIM HE SAID, 'I THINK I CAN DO IT BETTER SO HE MADE GIRLS.'") JESUS DID NOT WASTE TIME CATERING TO THE PREJUDICES OF HIS DAY. HE MET A WOMAN IN DEEP NEED AND IN ONE WONDERFUL CONVERSATION TOLD HER ABOUT LIVING WATER. WHAT SHE WAS, WHERE SHE WORSHIPPED AND WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT ABOUT HER HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HER NEED. SOMEONE HAS SAID THIS IS THE STORY OF THE "BAD SAMARITAN MEETING THE GOOD SAMARITAN". JESUS WAS NOT SO CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE MIGHT SAY BUT THAT THIS WOMAN MIGHT BE SAVED.

III. SURPRISE NO. 3: HOW JESUS DEALT WITH THE DISCIPLES' DESIRE FOR GREATNESS - LUKE 22:24-27

Gradual delusions

(or megalomania of the Disciples)

ONE WEEK BEFORE JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED, THE DISCIPLES WERE QUARRELING AND ARGUING AMONG THEMSELVES CONCERNING WHO WOULD BE NO. 1 IN THE FUTURE KINGDOM. THE MOTHER OF JAMES AND JOHN WAS SURE HER BOYS DESERVED TO BE IN THE NO. 1 AND 2 SPOT AND TOLD JESUS SO IN THE FORM OF A REQUEST. IN THE TEXT, JESUS POINTED OUT THAT GENTILES EAGERLY GRASP FOR POWER. IN THE WORLD SYSTEM, A MAN'S GREATNESS IS OFTEN MEASURED IN PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL POWER OR THE EXTENT OF POSSESSIONS AND PERCEPTIVE POWERS - INTELLIGENCE. JESUS STARTLED HIS DISCIPLES BY SHOWING THAT IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD GREATNESS IS MEASURED

Present

(Swindell)

IN DEDICATION AND SERVICE. OUR LORD WAS NOT LOOKING FOR CELEBRITIES OR SUPERSTARS BUT SERVANTS. (COMPARE IMPROVING YOUR GRIP). HE ILLUSTRATES THIS TRUTH WITH TWO OBJECT LESSONS WHICH CURED THE DISCIPLES' BIG HEAD. (1) MATTHEW 18:1-4 HE ENCOURAGED HIS DISCIPLES TO BECOME CHILD-LIKE BUT NOT CHILDISH. (2) JOHN 13 - THERE MUST BE THE TOWEL BEFORE THE THRONE. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THE WAY TO BE MISERABLE IS TO LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE FIRST, FOREMOST AND FOREVER. THE WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO GIVE AWAY OR TO GIVE OF YOURSELF WITHOUT THE PROSPECT OF PERSONAL GAIN.

(Dr. Karl Menninger) (1) *find some* (2) *find masses* - *cast!*
IV. SURPRISE NO. 4: THE (CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE) THAT STIRRED JESUS' SOUL - MATTHEW 9:36-38 *(the masses + how they moved them)*

WHEN YOU AND I LOOK AT THE MASSES OF PEOPLE ON EARTH WE ARE STIRRED IF THEY HAVE NOTHING TO EAT, OR CLOTHES TO WEAR, OR HOUSES TO LIVE IN, JOBS TO EARN A LIVING, NOT TO MENTION EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS. JESUS WAS STIRRED DEEPLY BECAUSE HE SAW THE MASSES AND THEIR GREAT SPIRITUAL NEED. THIS IS THE DEEPEST OF MAN'S NEEDS AND THE LEAST UNDERSTOOD AND THE LEAST CONCERNED. NOT MANY PEOPLE, IN THE RELATIVE SENSE, ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED BECAUSE PEOPLE HAVE NO SPIRITUAL SHEPHERD! ONCE IN A WHILE A CHURCH, OR A PERSON IN A CHURCH, WILL GET A VISION FOR THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN BUT FAR TOO MANY GET OVER IT TOO SOON. (HUDSON TAYLOR WAS BURDENED FOR THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF CHINA, LIVINGSTON FOR AFRICA, CAREY FOR INDIA, HUDSON FOR BURMA.) THE MOST NEGLECTED YET NEEDED CONCERN IN THE CHURCH TODAY IS A BURDEN, A SOUL-STIRRING BURDEN FOR THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF EARTH'S MASSES.

Social Services over Salvation

of Ch. life - Soul winning or something else!

V. SURPRISE NO. 5: THE PEOPLE FOR WHOM
CHRIST DIED - ROMANS 5:6-8 *the magnitude of God's Love*

I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY A SOLDIER WOULD DIE FOR A COMRADE IN ARMS OR A POLICEMAN FOR HIS PARTNER, A PATRIOT FOR HIS COUNTRY, A MOTHER FOR HER CHILD OR EVEN A FANATIC FOR A CAUSE. BUT I CANNOT FATHOM HOW OR WHY GOD'S SINLESS SON WOULD DIE FOR SINFUL MEN! LET US SUPPOSE THAT DURING WORLD WAR II TWO SWEDISH SCIENTISTS WORKING TOGETHER DISCOVERED A CURE FOR CANCER. ONE OF THE SCIENTISTS WAS NEAR DEATH AND ON THE VERGE OF THE BREAKTHROUGH HE ASKED HIS COLLEAGUE TO PROMISE WHEN THE DISCOVERY WAS MADE HE WOULD TAKE THE FIRST VACCINE TO THE MOST UNDESERVING CREATURE ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH. THIS WAS THE STIPULATION AND REQUEST OF THE DYING SCIENTIST. WHEN THE BREAKTHROUGH CAME HIS COLLEAGUE WENT TO SWITZERLAND AND APPLIED FOR A PASSPORT TO GERMANY. WHEN ASKED WHY THE SWEDISH DOCTOR EXPLAINED THAT HE HAS A TEST TUBE WHICH CONTAINED A VACCINE THAT WOULD CURE CANCER. IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING, SO THE STORY GOES, THAT ADOLPH HITLER HAS CANCER AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH HIS VOW TO A DYING FRIEND HE WAS TAKING THAT FIRST DOSAGE TO THE MOST UNDESERVING MAN ALIVE HENCE HIS PROPOSED TRIP TO GERMANY. A FICTITIOUS STORY TO BE SURE BUT ILLUSTRATING A FACT OF THE HUMAN CONDITION. IN THE DAWN OF HUMAN HISTORY, ADAM INTRODUCED INTO THE MORAL BLOODSTREAM OF THE HUMAN RACE A DEADLY MORAL DISEASE CALLED SIN. EVERY PERSON BORN HAS THAT MORAL VIRUS. UNATTENDED THAT MORAL DISEASE WILL KILL HUMANKIND FOREVER. HOWEVER, THE DIVINE ANTIDOTE TO MAN'S MORAL INFECTION TOOK PLACE ON A CROSS

2 Cor. 5:21
 BORN-
 again

ON IRAN

2 granddaughters
I have 2 daughters
wouldn't wait at
them die for anyone
But God...

2000 YEARS AGO, WHY GOD WOULD CARE
ENOUGH TO SEND HIS SON TO THE CROSS FOR
OUR SINS IS UNFATHOMABLE LOVE. HOWEVER,
NOW GOD EXPECTS MEN TO DO SOMETHING
ABOUT CHRIST. CHRIST IS THE ANSWER AND
CURE TO MAN'S SPIRITUAL DARKNESS AND
DILEMMA. OFTEN, THIS "CURE" COMES AS A
SURPRISE FOR IT IS NOT THE WAY MEN HAVE
DEvised TO GET TO HEAVEN.

- # 1. Disciples *the men*
- # 2 ^{Sign} Outcasts *the manner*
- # 3 Greatness *the Megalomania*
- # 4. Stirred Him *the multitudes*
- # 5 People ... Died. *the magnitude*

NOTHING COULD CHANGE THE SIMPLE FACT THAT SISERA WAS DEAD. HIS CHARIOTS WOULD NEVER COME HOME AGAIN. THE DAYS OF HIS GLORY IN BATTLE AND VICTORY WERE OVER FOREVER. SISERA'S MOTHER REMINDS ME OF MANY PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY OUGHT TO BE SAVED, MIGHT EVEN DESIRE TO BE SAVED, BUT THEY ARE WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN BEFORE THEY COME TO CHRIST. IN THAT SENSE, THEY, LIKE SISERA'S MOTHER, ARE WAITING FOR THE DEAD, WAITING FOR CHARIOTS TO RETURN THAT WILL NEVER RETURN. (DURING THE SIX AND ONE-HALF YEARS AS PASTOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN NORTHVILLE, MICHIGAN, I VISITED AT LEAST ONCE EVERY FAMILY IN SIGHT OF OUR CHURCH. (1) MRS. HUNTINGTON - ALCOHOLIC. (2) RED HOUSE - SON MURDERED ALONG A DESERTED ROAD. (3) MR. CANTERBURY - FORD EXECUTIVE, FRIEND BUT NOT A FRIEND OF CHRIST. (4) WESTFALL FAMILY - ONE SAVED, ONE LOST. THAT SAME STORY MAY BE REPEATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN OUR CHURCH OF PEOPLE WHO ARE WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN BEFORE THEY COME TO CHRIST. LET ME MENTION SOME OF THOSE "CHARIOTS THAT WILL NEVER RETURN.")

1. SOME ARE WAITING FOR A FEELING

SOME FOLK MEASURE EVERYTHING BY EMOTIONS. WHETHER IT BE TEARS OR TERROR THEY SIMPLY "HAVE TO FEEL IT." THEY MUST FEEL RIGHT OR THEY WON'T DO IT. THIS MAY BE GOOD ADVICE IN SOME SITUATIONS BUT GOOD FEELINGS ARE USUALLY A POST-CONVERSION EMOTION AND NOT A PRE-CONVERSION EMOTION. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I REMEMBER A MAN WHO CAME TO OUR CHURCH ON ONE OCCASION NEVER TO RETURN BECAUSE HE SAID AFTER CHURCH HE SIMPLY FELT TERRIBLE, GUILTY, UPSET AND WHEN HE WENT TO CHURCH, HE WANTED TO FEEL GOOD! (LET US SUPPOSE THAT YOU HAVE

AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR DOCTOR FOR AN EXAMINATION BECAUSE YOU SUSPECT CANCER. THERE IS THE EMOTION OF ANXIETY, CONCERN, FLAT OUT FEAR BEFORE THE EXAMINATION. AFTERWARD THE DOCTOR TELLS YOU THAT YOUR FEARS WERE UNFOUNDED BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS OK. YOUR FEAR IS REPLACED BY RELIEF EVEN JUBILATION. THE EMOTION ONE FELT DID NOT ALTER THE FACTS. THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY "FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FEELING" STOP WAITING FOR GOOSE BUMPS, BRIGHT LIGHTS, HAIR STANDING UP ON THE BACK OF THE NECK, EMOTIONS GENERATED IN A SERVICE CONDUCTIVE TO A POSITIVE RESPONSE. JUST DO WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS TO DO - RECEIVE CHRIST! "Pat W. H. K. O. W." I. Feeling

II. SOME ARE WAITING FOR A BETTER CHURCH

I WISH THE BIBLE CENTER CHURCH WERE A BETTER CHURCH. I WISH THERE WERE NO HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH BUT THERE ARE. HOWEVER, IF THIS CHURCH WERE PERFECT I WOULD HAVE TO RESIGN BECAUSE I WOULD RUIN IT BECAUSE I AM GUILTY OF HYPOCRISY TOO! THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I HAVE PRETENDED TO BE SOMETHING I AM NOT - AND SO HAS EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS CHURCH. HOWEVER, I UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THAT HYPOCRITES DO HINDER FOLK FROM ATTENDING CHURCH. IF YOU AND I AS BELIEVERS DON'T PAY OUR BILLS, CHEAT, DON'T LIVE UP TO THE INTEGRITY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS, THEN IN REALITY WE MAY HINDER PEOPLE FROM COMING TO CHRIST. AS YOU KNOW, THE WORD HYPOCRITE REFERS TO ONE WHO IS ACTING OUT A PART, PLAYING CHURCH, OR MANIFESTING "THEATRICAL GOODNESS." THE EMPHASIS OF HIS LIFE IS TO BE SEEN AND NOT TO BE. HIS EMPHASIS IS ON WINDOW TRIMMING AND NOT STOCK IN THE SHELVES. HIS CHRISTIANITY IS WON ON HIS LIPS BUT NOT REFLECTED IN HIS LIFE.

Pat W. H. K. O. W.

JESUS CONDEMNED HYPOCRISY BUT IT IS NO EXCUSE FOR PEOPLE NOT GETTING SAVED. IT IS A TIRED, WORN OUT, TISSUE THIN EXCUSE. THERE ARE COUNTERFEITS EVERYWHERE. THERE ARE DISHONEST POLITICIANS, SALESPERSONS, PASTORS, LAWYERS, DOCTORS BUT THEIR DISHONESTY DOES NOT KEEP US FROM DRIVING CARS, GOING TO PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE FOR HELP WHEN WE NEED IT. EVEN ONE OF THE TWELVE DISCIPLES WAS A HYPOCRITE IN THE TRUE SENSE OF THE WORD. (YEARS AGO, KEN QUELLETTE AND I VISITED IN A HOME WHERE THE PEOPLE COMPLAINED ABOUT HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH. THE RESPONSE TO THAT MEETING WAS WONDERFUL! I'M GLAD THAT HYPOCRITES COME TO CHURCH BECAUSE IF ANYONE NEEDS TO HEAR THE BIBLE, SURELY THE HYPOCRITE NEEDS IT MOST! HOWEVER, IT IS UNTHINKABLE THAT A PERSON WOULD LET A HYPOCRITE STAND BETWEEN HIM AND HEAVEN AND HELL.

III. SOME ARE WAITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO GO FIRST - (Rom. 14:12) (Acts 17:30-31)

HUSBANDS ARE WAITING ON WIVES, WIVES ON HUSBANDS, CHILDREN ON PARENTS, PARENTS ON CHILDREN, FRIENDS ON OTHER FRIENDS - THIS IS ONE OF SATAN'S OLDEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE TRICKS. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT EACH OF US IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN CONDUCT BEFORE GOD. THE PROBLEM IS OFTEN REFLECTED IN THE FACT THAT THE PERSON YOU ARE WAITING ON BEFORE YOU MAKE A DECISION MAY INDEED MAY BE WAITING ON YOU TO DO THE SAME THING! TIME AFTER TIME IN OUR SERVICES PEOPLE HAVE COME FORWARD TO RECEIVE CHRIST ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT THE HUSBAND OR WIFE OR CHILD HAS FOLLOWED THEM DOWN THE AISLE! I WAS THE FIRST IN OUR FAMILY, FOLLOWED BY MOTHER, DAD. ALL SAVED BUT I DID NOT WAIT FOR THEM TO LEAD ME! (RELATE TO MRS. WESTFALL WHO LIVED BEHIND

(August)

-5-

I Truly
II Better Church
III Someone Else

last Sunday after Service - Cor. Ky. - "Remember the lost people!"

OUR CHURCH FOR 40 YEARS. THEIR SON AND FAMILY HAD COME TO CHRIST. HE WAS ONE OF OUR DEACONS. SHE CAME TO CHURCH, LISTENED TO THE GOSPEL, WAS SAVED AND BAPTIZED AND DIED SIX WEEKS LATER. IF SHE HAD WAITED FOR HER HUSBAND SHE WOULD BE IN HELL TODAY BECAUSE HER HUSBAND NEVER SENSED HIS NEED TO COME TO CHRIST AND AS FAR AS I KNOW, HE DIED WITHOUT THE SAVIOUR.

IV. SOME ARE WAITING FOR ANOTHER TIME

MOST OF US BELIEVE THAT WE WILL LIVE A LONG TIME - AT LEAST 70 YEARS PLUS AND WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT SOME DAY, SOMEWHERE, SOMETIME, AT LEAST THERE IS THE IDEA THAT WE WILL REPENT BEFORE WE DIE. HOWEVER, EVERY DAY ONE LIVES APART FROM CHRIST MAKES IT ONE STEP MORE DIFFICULT TO BE SAVED. HABITS OR NEGLECT BIND US EVER MORE TIGHTLY. SAD TO SAY BUT OFTEN IT TAKES TRAGEDY TO AWAKEN THE SINNER OUT OF HIS SLUMBER. YEARS AGO, IT WAS NOT UNUSUAL FOR WHAT WE CALL "DEATH BED REPENTANCE" BUT THAT IS RARE TODAY BECAUSE THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR DYING PEOPLE TO BE HEAVILY SEDATED OR UNCONSCIOUS, UNABLE TO MAKE A RATIONAL DECISION. A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO OUR VISITING EVANGELIST REMINDED ALL OF US THAT ONCE WE LEAVE THIS BUILDING IT IS EASIER TO SAY NO UNTIL SOME DAY IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ONE WON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THE SPIRITUAL ALARMS SYSTEM IN THE SOUL THAT SCREAMS AND ENCOURAGES ONE TO GET SAVED. TOO OFTEN THOSE WHO SAY NOT NOW, NOT HERE, ALSO SAY NOT EVER. FOR SOME IT IS EITHER + TODAY OR TOO LATE. (LOOKING BACK OVER 35 OR MORE YEARS OF MINISTRY, I CAN THINK OF A COAL MINER CRUSHED IN A SLATE FALL WHO HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INTEREST IN TALKING TO ME ABOUT CHRIST EVEN THOUGH HE WAS 48 HOURS FROM DEATH.

"Like thief on cross"
which thief??

47 yrs ago.

Felix = Convenient
Season

-6-

Agrippa - almost
persuaded.

2.
I THINK OF ANOTHER WOMAN ADDICTED TO ALCOHOL
WITH WHOM I SPOKE IN A HOSPITAL IN MICHIGAN.
SHE HAD EVERY GOOD INTENTION AND PLANNED TO
ABANDON HER DRINKING AND TURN TO CHRIST. LESS
THAN A MONTH FROM THE DAY I TALKED TO HER
ABOUT BEING SAVED, SHE WAS KILLED IN AN
AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT. I THINK OF THE PEOPLE
WHO HAVE SAT IN THIS AUDITORIUM WHO WOULD
COMMIT SUICIDE BEFORE THE NEXT SUNDAY. THERE
ARE STORIES ON TOP OF STORIES OF PEOPLE WITH
GOOD INTENTIONS BUT WHO WAITED ONE DAY TOO
LONG. FOR THEM, SOME DAY NEVER CAME. IN
II CORINTHIANS 6:2 GOD REPEATS THE WORD
NOW. WHEN GOD SAYS SOMETHING TWICE, WE
SHOULD LISTEN CAREFULLY. NOW - TODAY IS THE
ONLY DAY WE MAY BE SURE OF BEING SAVED.
SATAN WILL LET YOU BELIEVE THERE IS A HEAVEN
TO GAIN AND A HELL TO FLEE. IT'S OK IF YOU
WANT TO BELIEVE THAT BUT HIS MOST EFFECTIVE
WEAPON IS TO GET YOU TO BELIEVE THAT SOMEHOW
THERE IS NO HURRY, THERE IS PLENTY OF TIME.

2 Cor. 6:2

FABLE But illustrates
a FACT.

... Behold, Now is the accepted time;
Behold, Now is the day of
Salvation."

Jean Edmunds

THE ENCOURAGER

QUESTION: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN LESSONS SUCH AS VOICE, DRIVING, BOWLING, GOLF, EXERCISES? HOW DID THE INSTRUCTOR BEHAVE? DID HE LOSE HIS TEMPER, YELL AND CALL YOU HARD NAMES SUCH AS IDIOT, MORON, OR DUMMY, LAUGH AND MAKE FUN OF YOUR FEEBLE EFFORTS? USUALLY THE INSTRUCTOR'S WORDS ARE HELPFUL AND ENCOURAGING SUCH AS KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, DON'T QUIT. THERE ARE PEOPLE IN LOCAL CHURCHES WHO CHEER UP THOSE WHO ARE SAD, HELP UP THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN, FIX UP THINGS THAT ARE BROKEN. IN THE EARLY CHURCH, BARNABUS WAS A BELIEVER WHOSE LIFE WAS A BLESSING TO THE CHURCH. HE LIVED UP TO HIS NAME, "THE SON OF ENCOURAGEMENT." EVERYONE NEEDS ENCOURAGEMENT ONCE IN A WHILE. WHEN WE ARE SICK, SAD, DEVASTATED BY DEATH OR DIVORCE, STUDENTS AWAY FROM HOME, MEN IN THE MILITARY, AGED, WEAK AND LONELY, ALL OF THESE ARE TIMES IN LIFE WHEN A WORD, A PHONE CALL, A LETTER, A PAT ON THE BACK MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. IN ONE OF HIS BOOKS, SWINDOLL SUGGESTS THAT EVERY CHURCH NEEDS A "BARNABUS BRIGADE." PEOPLE WHO WILL TAKE OTHERS TO LUNCH AND PICK UP THE TAB, SEND A GIFT, FREE TICKETS AND KEEP THE KIDS WITH NO ACCEPTANCE OF MONEY FOR SUCH SERVICES. (COMMENT REGARDING STRAUSS AND THE LADY AT THE GREENBRIER - MAGICAL WORDS IN THE TRUE BARNABUS TRADITION.) LET US DISCOVER TOGETHER HOW BARNABUS ENCOURAGED OTHERS:

Pick up

Encourage
CarksStrauss
ElsieMOPS
"modern pre-scholars"

(SUBSTANCE)

I. BARNABAS ENCOURAGED OTHERS WITH HIS USE
MONEY - Acts 4:32-37 OF

SOME PEOPLE USE VERSE 32 AS A BASIS FOR WHAT THEY CALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM. THERE IS NO SUCH ANIMAL. JUST AS THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN HONEST CROOK OR A TRUTHFUL LIAR, THERE IS NO CHRISTIAN COMMUNIST FOR THE TERMS ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. COMMON OWNERSHIP DOES NOT MEAN COMMUNISM. A STUDY OF THE CONTEXT POINTS OUT THAT THIS EVENT TOOK PLACE AS THE RESULT OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION. IT RESULTED IN RELIGIOUS UNITY WITH THE GOVERNMENT NOT INVOLVED. IT WAS VOLUNTARY, UNSELFISH IN ITS MOTIVATION AND PEACEFUL IN ITS OPERATION. THERE ARE TWO STARTLING FACTS ABOUT GENEROSITY MENTIONED IN THIS PASSAGE:

- (1) BARNABAS WAS NOT ALONE IN HIS GENEROSITY - (4:34.) "many" (60 RKS - Pns)
- (2) BARNABAS GAVE WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED TO HIS GIFT. (4:37)

THE APOSTLES COULD DECIDE WHERE THE FUNDS WERE TO BE USED. THERE WAS NO "BARNABAS MEMORIAL CHAPEL, LIBRARY, SCHOLARSHIP." CONTROL WAS NOT HIS CONCERN, ONLY CONTRIBUTION. THE TEXT SHOWS THAT BARNABAS WAS FROM THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS, A LANDOWNER OF SOME SUBSTANCE. THE TERM LEVITE MEANS HE WORKED OR SERVED IN THE TEMPLE. THEIR DUTIES WERE TO SWEEP THE FLOOR, OPEN AND CLOSE THE DOORS, TO ACT AT TEMPLE POLICE AND MANY OTHER MENIAL TASKS AROUND THE TEMPLE. BARNABAS WAS A PERSON WHO WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE COMFORT OF OTHERS AND HIS LIFE WAS DEVOTED TO SERVICE TO GOD AND MAN. BARNABAS USED HIS FINANCIAL RESOURCES

what we only for
we put in cash in

1 TO HELP OTHERS WHILE HE WAS STILL LIVING. HE WAS DETERMINED THAT HIS ESTATE WOULD BE USED WHILE HE WAS ALIVE. FINANCES IS ONE TRUE TEST OF GENUINE DISCIPLESHIP. (ROY LAURIN TELLS THE STORY OF A RICH MAN OF MISERLY DISPOSITION WHO VISITED HIS PASTOR. AS THEY WERE TALKING, THE PASTOR ASKED THE RICH MAN TO STEP TO THE WINDOW AND SAY WHAT HE SAW. "I SEE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN WALKING ALONG THE STREET," REPLIED THE RICH MAN. THE PASTOR ASKED THE RICH MAN TO STEP TO A MIRROR AND REVEAL WHAT HE SAW. "NOW I SEE MYSELF." THE PASTOR POINTED OUT THAT IN THE WINDOW THERE IS GLASS WITH NOTHING BEHIND IT BUT IN THE MIRROR THERE IS GLASS COVERED WITH A LITTLE SILVER. NO SOONER IS THE SILVER ADDED THAN ONE CEASES TO SEE OTHERS AND ONLY HIMSELF! STEPHEN

2 ULFORD TELLS THE STORY THAT DURING THE REIGN OF FREDERIC WILLIAM III, KING OF PRUSSIA, THE COUNTRY WAS INVOLVED IN EXPENSIVE WARS ENDEAVORING TO STRENGTHEN THEIR COUNTRY BUT LACKING IN FUNDS. FREDERICK DID NOT WISH TO DISAPPOINT HIS PEOPLE IN MAKING NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS SO AFTER CONSIDERABLE STUDY HE APPROACHED THE WOMEN OF PRUSSIA AND ASKED THEM TO BRING THEIR JEWELRY, GOLD AND SILVER, TO BE MELTED DOWN AND MADE OR USED FOR MONEY IN DEFENSE OF THEIR COUNTRY. HE RESOLVED THAT FOR EACH ORNAMENT OF GOLD OR SILVER HE WOULD GIVE IN EXCHANGE A DECORATION OF BRONZE OR IRON AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE. FOR EACH DECORATION WOULD BEAR THE INSCRIPTION: "I GAVE GOLD FOR IRON, 1813." THE RESPONSE, ACCORDING TO THE STORY, WAS OVERWHELMING AND WHAT WAS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT WAS THAT THESE WOMEN PRIZED THESE GIFTS FROM THE KING MORE HIGHLY THAN THE POSSESSIONS THEY GAVE. THE REASON OF COURSE WAS THAT THE DECORATION WAS PROOF THAT ONE HAD SACRIFICED FOR THE

3 KING, INDEED IT IS A MATTER OF RECORD IN HISTORY THAT IT BECAME UNFASHIONABLE FOR WOMEN TO WEAR JEWELRY SO THE ORDER OF THE IRON CROSS WAS ESTABLISHED. MEMBERS OF THIS ORDER WORE NO ORNAMENTS SAVE A CROSS OF IRON FOR ALL TO SEE. WILLIAM BORDEN WHO WAS SAVED UNDER THE MINISTRY OF R. A. TORRY WHEN TORRY WAS PASTOR OF MOODY CHURCH BECAME A FOREIGN MISSIONARY. BORDEN WAS A MILLIONAIRE BY INHERITANCE AND SYSTEMATICALLY SET OUT TO GIVE AWAY HIS FORTUNE FOR CHRIST. DURING THE THREE YEARS HE WAS AT PRINCETON SEMINARY HE GAVE AWAY \$75,000 TO CHRISTIAN WORK. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS WAS IN 1912. HE DIED IN EGYPT ENROUTE TO THE MISSION FIELD BEFORE HE WAS 30 YEARS OF AGE. IN HIS WILL HE LEFT \$250,000 TO THE CHINA INLAND MISSION AND THE SUM OF \$100,000 EACH TO NATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE AND TO MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE NOT TO MENTION VARIOUS OTHER GROUPS WHO RECEIVED \$50,000 GIFTS AND MORE THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF BORDEN. BORDEN SHARED THE SPIRIT OF BARNABAS WHO WAS WILLING TO GIVE AND GIVE AGAIN TO THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST. TO GIVE AWAY AND NOT TO GRASP WAS HIS PHILOSOPHY.

If you want to see what God truly does - He paves streets with it!

II. BARNABAS ENCOURAGED OTHERS BY HIS INFLUENCE - Acts 9:27 TAKING RISKS

(26-28) OTHERS WERE AFRAID TO TAKE -

SAUL, A NEW BELIEVER, SOUGHT OUT THE CHURCH FOR FELLOWSHIP. HOWEVER, HIS REPUTATION STILL FRIGHTENED THE BELIEVERS. BARNABAS DISPLAYED COURAGE AND A WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS FOR THE RIGHT REASON. HE WAS WILLING TO STICK OUT HIS NECK FOR A FELLOW BELIEVER ASKING NO FAVORS IN RETURN. THE TENDENCY TO PLAY IT SAFE, RISK NOTHING, GAIN NOTHING,

WATCH OUT FOR NUMBER ONE WAS NOT IN HIS MAKEUP. HE WAS WILLING TO TRUST. (MOST PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF STANDING UP FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS FALLEN DOWN IN THEIR RESPONSIBILITY.) IN BARNABAS, SAUL HAD A TRUE FRIEND. HIS JUDGMENT WAS VINDICATED. BARNABAS WAS GENEROUS IN HIS ATTITUDE IN THINKING ABOUT OTHERS. HE LOOKED FOR THE BEST AND NOT THE WORST IN OTHER PEOPLE. HE EXPECTED THEM TO LIVE UP TO HIS HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND HE USED HIS INFLUENCE TO HELP OTHERS AND NOT FOR PERSONAL GAIN. (COMMENT REGARDING MATT HOWELL IN 1954 - A BUSINESS MAN BARNABAS.)

III. BARNABAS ENCOURAGED OTHERS BY HIS

CARE OF CONVERTS Acts 11:23-25

Activation of OTHERS - (Converts) ("whole year")

MOST BIBLE TEACHING CHURCHES EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUL WINNING AND MISSIONS AND BARNABAS WAS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN A MISSIONS MINISTRY. THE TEXT POINTS OUT THAT BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN - VERSE 25, A GLAD MAN - VERSE 23, AND A GOING MAN - VERSE 22, VERSE 25. BARNABAS SOUGHT SAUL EVEN THOUGH SAUL WAS A "RISING STAR" IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH. PAUL THE APOSTLE WAS ASSUMING A STRONG LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE EARLY CHURCH. BARNABAS WAS WILLING TO STEP BACK AND MAKE ROOM FOR HIM, TO RELINQUISH AUTHORITY AND POWER TO SOMEONE ELSE. THIS IS AN AMAZING CHARACTERISTIC. BARNABAS WAS WILLING TO SPEND TIME IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LEADER WHO WOULD IN SOME MEASURE TAKE MUCH OF BARNABAS' RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CHURCH. THIS IS NOT EASY TO DO. SOME FOLK FIGHT, SCRATCH, CRITICIZE, STOOP TO ANY METHOD OR TACTIC IN ORDER TO HOLD A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP. CARING FOR CONVERTS IS A NEGLECTED MINISTRY IN MANY CHURCHES.

Vocation?

Job? Family?

Cl. B. 2

Sports?

Hobbies?

Ch. Life

make Room?

THE EMPHASIS IS TO MAKE A DECISION, GET FOLKS DOWN THE AISLE, THAT IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP ON A LONG JOURNEY. THERE ARE NOT MANY PEOPLE AVAILABLE TO CARE FOR NEW BELIEVERS, ESPECIALLY KNOWING THAT THE NEW BELIEVER MAY TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THE CHURCH! BARNABAS WAS SUCH A MAGNANIMOUS MAN AND WAS SO DEVOTED TO JESUS CHRIST THAT HE HAD LITTLE CONCERN ABOUT WHO GOT CREDIT AS LONG AS THE WORK WAS DONE FOR CHRIST. THE PLACE OF HONOR WAS NOT HIS CONCERN. *How*

IV. BARNABAS ENCOURAGED OTHERS BY
GIVING SOMEONE WHO FAILED (ANOTHER) *on*
OPPORTUNITY - Act 15:36-37 *Second*

THE STORY OF JOHN MARK IS WELL KNOWN. HE WAS A YOUNG MAN WHO EITHER BECAME DISCOURAGED OR HOMESICK DURING THE RIGORS OF PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY. HE RETURNED HOME PREMATURELY AND WAS LABELED A QUITTER BY PAUL. WHEN THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY WAS BEING PLANNED AND JOHN MARK'S NAME CAME UP AS A POTENTIAL STAFF MEMBER, PAUL DISMISSED HIM QUICKLY. BARNABAS DISAGREED. THE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION WAS SO SHARP BETWEEN THESE TWO LEADERS THAT THEY DECIDED TO SPLIT UP AND GO IN SEPARATE DIRECTIONS. TO BE SURE, BARNABAS WAS JOHN MARK'S UNCLE AND BLOOD IS NOW AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN THICKER THAN WATER, BUT THERE ARE OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED. BARNABAS SAW SOMETHING IN MARK THAT PAUL DID NOT SEE. MARK WAS LIKE MANY WHO FAILED IN HIS FIRST ATTEMPT AT CHRISTIAN WORK. PAUL WAS SIMPLY NOT WILLING TO RISK ANOTHER TRY AND POSSIBLE FAILURE. PERHAPS BARNABAS WAS MORE SENSITIVE TO THE TRUE HEART OF MARK. HE MAY ALSO HAVE KNOWN THAT THE LORD'S SERVANTS

LEARN MORE FROM FAILURE THAN SUCCESS. HOWEVER, PAUL DID ACKNOWLEDGE THE FACT OF MARK'S REDEMPTION. (II TIM. 4:11) HISTORY IS FILLED WITH THIS IDEA. FOR EXAMPLE, JOHN WHISTLER, FAMOUS ARTIST, FAILED AS A SOLDIER AT WEST POINT. HE FAILED AT ENGINEERING AND FINALLY TRIED PAINTING OUT OF SHEER DESPERATION. PHILLIPS BROOKS FAILED AS A TEACHER. HE BECAME A GOSPEL PREACHER AND GAINED INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR HIS 22 YEARS OF MINISTRY AT TRINITY CHURCH IN BOSTON. THOMAS EDISON WAS 32 YEARS OLD AND HAD SPENT 13 MONTHS OF REPEATED FAILURE TO FIND THE FILAMENT THAT WOULD STAND THE STRESS OF ELECTRIC CURRENT. ONE DAY ALMOST AS AN IDLE GESTURE, HE CARBONIZED A PIECE OF COPPER THREAD AFTER HE HAD TRIED EVERY KNOWN METAL. IT REQUIRED 5 HOURS TO DO THE PROCESS. THE FIRST THREAD BROKE BEFORE IT COULD BE REMOVED FROM THE MOLD, LIKEWISE A SECOND AND THIRD. THE ENTIRE SPOOL OF THREAD WAS CONSUMED, ALSO A SECOND SPOOL. FINALLY A PERFECT FILAMENT EMERGED ONLY TO BE BROKEN IN AN EFFORT TO INSERT IT INTO A VACUUM TUBE. ANOTHER WAS DESTROYED WHEN A JEWELERS SCREWDRIVER FELL ON IT. AFTER TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS THE FILAMENT WAS FINALLY AND SUCCESSFULLY INSERTED. THE BULB WAS EXHAUSTED OF AIR, SEALED AND THE CURRENT TURNED ON. THE RESULT IS HISTORY. AFTER THAT EDISON WORKED CONTINUOUSLY FOR 48 HOURS AND SAT UP AN ADDITIONAL 45 HOURS UNTIL THE LIGHT BLINKED OUT AND THE WORLD HAD ITS FIRST INCANDESCENT LAMP. OUT OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE FAILURE, SUCCESS CAME. ALEXANDER MCCLAREN WAS OVERWHELMED IN HIS MINISTRY BY A SENSE OF FAILURE. ON ONE SPECTACULAR OCCASION WHEN HE WAS AT THE VERY ZENITH OF HIS MINISTRY, HE LEFT

Jim Cymbal

AN AUDITORIUM OVERCOME WITH A SENSE OF
HIS OWN INADEQUACY AND FAILURE AS A
PREACHER YET IN THE EYES OF HIS HEARERS
THERE WAS NO GREATER. BARNABAS WAS A MAN
WHO KNEW THAT NO FAILURE NEED BE FINAL.
THANK GOD FOR MEN LIKE BARNABAS WHO WERE
SYMPATHETIC TO THOSE OF US WHO BLUNDER
AND STUMBLE THROUGH LIFE. (COMMENT
REGARDING SEMINARY CHAPEL SERVICE.)

IV. THE EXCEPT OF DYING - JOHN 12:24

A. IN THIS PASSAGE, JESUS TALKS ABOUT A PARADOX. HE SPEAKS OF LIFE OUT OF DEATH. HE IS OBVIOUSLY SPEAKING OF HIMSELF AS THE GRAIN OR CORN OF WHEAT WHO WOULD DIE IN ORDER TO BRING FORTH OTHERS INTO GLORY. IT IS NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT IF JESUS HAD NOT DIED HE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE ONLY MAN IN HEAVEN, FOR HE ALONE COULD MAKE IT ON HIS OWN MERIT. THE POPULAR THINKING OF JESUS' DAY WAS THAT WHEN MESSIAH CAME HE WOULD COME AS A POWERFUL ALL CONQUERING RULER AND MEN WOULD GET ON HIS POLITICAL BANDWAGON AND FOLLOW HIM INTO A GOLDEN AGE OF PROSPERITY AND BLESSING FOR ISRAEL AND THE WORLD. HOWEVER, JESUS SUGGESTED A DIFFERENT PRINCIPLE FOR HIS FOLLOWERS. IT WAS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY OF SELF CULTURE AND SELF ENJOYMENT AS THE CHIEF ENDS AND GOALS OF LIFE. JESUS SPOKE OF SELF SACRIFICE AND SELFLESSNESS INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS. HE SUGGESTS A SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE SEEN IN NATURE THAN WHEN A PIECE OF GRAIN IS PLANTED IN THE GROUND AND ROTS; IF YOU WILL, IT IS THEN AND THEN ALONE THAT IT BRINGS FORTH HARVEST. AS IN THE CASE OF OUR LORD, IT IS NOT UNTIL BELIEVERS HAVE DIED TO SELF, SELFISH AMBITIONS AND PERSONAL GOALS AND HAVE PUT CHRIST AS SOVEREIGN LORD UPON THE THRONE OF THE HEART THAT THEY BRING FORTH FRUIT AND BLESS THE LIVES OF OTHER PEOPLE. THIS WAS A REVOLUTIONARY AND STARTLING PRINCIPLE WHICH SHOCKED JESUS' HEARERS.

V. THE EXCEPT OF ABIDING - JOHN 15:4 (ck. Jhn)

QUESTION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ABIDE IN CHRIST? FIRST OF ALL, THIS CHAPTER IS NOT TEACHING THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS ALREADY IN CHRIST TO BE LOST. THE SUBJECT IS FRUIT BEARING AND HAS TO DO WITH THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST AND WHAT GOD DOES TO GUARANTEE THE FRUITFULNESS OF THOSE WHO BELONG TO HIM. THE FAILURE OR LOSS OF THE VINE IN THE CONTEXT IS NOT THE RESULT OF A LOSS OF SALVATION BUT RATHER LOSS IN SERVICE FOR A WASTED LIFE. THE CHRISTIAN WHO DOES NOT LIVE A FRUITFUL LIFE IS REALLY WASTING HIS TIME ON EARTH. USELESSNESS IN THE WORK OF GOD INVITES DISASTER. I WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT IT IS ONLY POSSIBLE FOR THOSE TO ABIDE IN CHRIST WHO ARE ALREADY IN CHRIST. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO KNOWN UNCONFESSED SIN HINDERING OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THE

our greatest problems: study, stay
shine - not shy about
hoarding stars - shining stars!

LORD. WE SHOULD HAVE NO INTERESTS OR GOALS IN LIFE WHICH ARE NOT UNDER HIS FULL CONTROL. WE SHOULD ALLOW NOTHING TO COME BETWEEN US AND CHRIST. OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HIM SHOULD NOT BE AN ON AGAIN OFF AGAIN ARRANGEMENT, BUT A STEADY ONWARD, UPWARD GROWING IN GRACE AND FELLOWSHIP BEFORE HIM. AS WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM WE WILL HAVE FRUIT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. ABIDING HAS TO DO WITH COMMUNION MORE THAN UNION. THE SECRET OF A FRUITFUL LIFE HAS TO DO WITH UNBROKEN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD. SIN BLOCKS THAT FELLOWSHIP AND THE MORE WE KEEP OUR LIVES CLEAN AND THE CHANNEL OPEN BETWEEN US AND THE LORD THE MORE FRUITFUL WE WILL BE AS CHRISTIANS. LET ME ALSO SAY THAT FRUIT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS NOT JUST SOUL-WINNING. THE LORD IS CONCERNED ABOUT OUR CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AND CONDUCT WHICH REFLECTS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. (GAL. 5:22FF) THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF FRUIT IN ADDITION TO SOUL-WINING. IT SPEAKS OF HOLINESS, GIVING, GOOD WORKS AND PRAISE FROM OUR LIPS AS BEING FRUIT UNTO GOD. (CF. ROM. 6:2, 15:28, HEB. 13:5, COL 1:10) ACCORDING TO THIS CHAPTER THE SECRET OF A FRUITFUL CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ABIDING. WE THINK IT IS WORKING AND DOING BUT THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF OUR ABIDING. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT WE OBEY THE RULES OF HEALTH WE WILL ABIDE IN GOOD HEALTH. WHEN WE OBEY THE RULES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING, WE ABIDE IN SPIRITUAL HEALTH. LET US REMAIN NEAR HIM, WITH NO KNOWN SIN HINDERING OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM.

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

AUGUST 14, 1988

Bcc-Pm - my
1992

JOHN'S LAST LETTER

III JOHN

5
How
my
John
is
dear
5
DEAR
JOHN

THE THIRD CHAPTER OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IS ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE. III JOHN IS ONE OF THE LEAST KNOWN. THE APOSTLE JOHN WROTE FIVE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS (THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, REVELATION, THREE EPISTLES). III JOHN IS ONE OF THE BOOKS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CONTAINING A SINGLE CHAPTER - JUDE, II JOHN AND PHILEMON ARE OTHERS. THIS LETTER WAS WRITTEN FROM EPHESUS WHERE JOHN WAS THE PASTOR NOW IN HIS 90'S. FEATURES: 219 WORDS, 14 VERSES. (COMPARE TUESDAY PAPER WHERE 325 PLUS 349 WORDS WERE USED TO CALL TWO MEN THIEVES!) TRUTH MENTIONED SIX TIMES. THIS IS NOT A DEAR JOHN LETTER BUT A LETTER WRITTEN BY A MAN NAMED JOHN WHO WAS DEAR TO CHRIST. IT IS ADDRESSED TO A MAN NAMED GAIUS. THREE KEY PEOPLE IN THE EPISTLE PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION.

I. GAIUS - THE KIND OF LAYMAN EVERY CHURCH NEEDS - VERSES 1-8

FOR SOME YEARS, I PRACTICED A BAD HABIT REGARDING CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. SPENT TOO MUCH TIME THINKING ABOUT, PRAYING ABOUT, WORRYING ABOUT "PROBLEM PEOPLE" IN CHURCHES. THE MEAN SPIRITED TROUBLEMAKERS WERE GETTING PRIMARY ATTENTION. THEY SPENT MUCH OF THEIR TIME TRYING TO GIVE EVERYBODY ULCERS, MAKING EVERYBODY MISERABLE - WHILE THE FINE, FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS OF THE CHURCH WERE OFTEN OVERLOOKED. THE LORD IMPRESSED ME TO STOP PONDERING OVER THESE PROBLEM FOLKS AND START PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO WERE STEADY SAINTS. GAIUS WAS

SUCH A PERSON. HE WAS THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WHEN HE WALKED INTO THE CHURCH THE SPIRIT OF THE MEETING IMPROVED. HE WAS LOVING, KIND, GENEROUS AND HOSPITABLE. WELL-ROUNDED, WELL-ADJUSTED, WELL-LIKED, WELL-EVERYTHING! WE WILL LIMIT OUR CONSIDERATIONS TO TWO PRIMARY CATEGORIES:

(A) GAIUS HAD A SPIRITUAL FATHER WHO CARED
ABOUT HIS TOTAL WELL BEING - V. 1,2,4

"THE ELDER" IS ONE OF THREE BIBLE TERMS TO DESIGNATE PEOPLE OF SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH. THIS WORD IS PRESBUTEROS WHICH EMPHASIZES THE STATUS OF LOCAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP. JOHN WAS IN HIS 90'S AND WAS INDEED "AN ELDER"! THE WORD "GAIUS" WAS A COMMON NAME FOR AN UNCOMMON MAN (COMPARE TO SMITH AND JONES). THE WORD "THE BELOVED" WAS A TERM FAMILIAR TO JOHN FOR HE WAS KNOWN AS BELOVED HIMSELF. THE WORDS "PROSPER" AND "HEALTH" REFER TO THIS PRAYER FOR THE "WELL-HEELED" AND THE "WELL-HEALED." THE WORD FOR HEALTH IS THE GREEK HYGENE. JUST AS ONE CARES FOR HIS OWN GOOD HEALTH BY PRACTICING GOOD RULES FOR HEALTH SO THERE ARE SPIRITUAL HABITS TO BE DEVELOPED. THE WORDS "NO GREATER JOY" REVEAL AS MUCH ABOUT JOHN AS GAIUS. THE THING THAT BROUGHT JOY TO THE HEART OF THE AGED SAINT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS CONVERTS. HE PASTORED ONE OF THE "BIG SEVEN CHURCHES" BUT THAT WAS NOT HIS GREAT DELIGHT. APPEARANCES ON TV, AT CONFERENCES, WRITING BOOKS WERE NOT THE THINGS THAT RATED WITH HIM. HE WANTED HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS TO TRAFFIC IN TRUTH, TO MAKE TRUTH THE TEST OF THEIR MINISTRY.

ie John

27

"Ministry in Greek" Bl

(Strass Suit)

(B) GAIUS HAD A TERRIFIC TESTIMONY AMONG TRAVELING TEACHERS, PREACHERS AND MISSIONARIES - V 3, 5-8

SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THERE WERE FOUR H'S TO DENOTE GAIUS' CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

Bethany
GKS like to go!
(1) HOME - THE WORD WENT OUT WHEN IN ASIA - STAY WITH GAIUS FOR HIS HOME IS A COMFORTABLE PLACE FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS. THEY LOVED TO STAY THERE. *(Key - work on Ch. Father ticks) (Fruit in fire down - Bread + 3 Fresh chicken) (Fancier) (Waver) (Finer)!*

(2) HOSPITALITY - HE NOT ONLY KNEW HOW BUT PRACTICED THIS EARLY CHRISTIAN TRAIT. *(Fruit - Room) (Trans.)*

(3) HONORARIUM - WHEN GUESTS CAME TO THEIR CHURCH, THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO BORROW MONEY TO GET HOME. (COMMENT ON HAROLD MORRIS AND OFFERINGS TAMPERED WITH BY CHURCH PEOPLE.)

(4) HELPER - THE WORD PARTNERS OR CO-WORKERS SUGGESTS THOSE WHO SHARE IN THE WORK RATHER THAN SHIRK RESPONSIBILITY.

WHEN ONE CONSIDERS VERSES 5-8 AND THE WORDS OF COMMENDATION FOR GAIUS ONE WORD SEEMS TO LEAP FROM THE TEXT AND THAT IS THE WORD DO. GAIUS WAS A MAN WHO DID MORE THAN HE SAID. (WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, MORE IS SAID THAN DONE!) THANK GOD FOR THE DOERS IN THE LORD'S WORK, PEOPLE WHO GET THINGS DONE RATHER THAN TALK THEM TO DEATH.

II. DIOTREPES - THE KIND OF LEADER EVERY CHURCH COULD DO WITHOUT - VERSES 9-10

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT DIOTREPES WAS A SELF-APPOINTED, SELF-WILLED, SELF-SERVING LEADER OF A LOCAL CHURCH IN THE PROVINCE OF ASIA

* Hulson -
how? Nobody Believed -4-
To ch. I him out!

MINOR. HOW HE GOT INTO THAT POSITION IS NO MORE KNOWN THAN HOW JUDAS ISCARIOT COULD GET ON THE INSIDE OF THE DISCIPLES BUT HE DID. JOHN ADDRESSED THE SITUATION IN ASIA AND LEVELED FIVE CHARGES OR INDICTMENTS AGAINST DIOTREPHES:

(1) DIOTREPHES HAD A BAD CASE OF THE BIG HEAD. THE WORD PREEMINENCE MEANS "FIRST PLACE". IT IS A COMBINATION OF THE WORD TO BE FOND OF AND THE WORD FIRST. IT IS USED ONLY ONE OTHER PLACE IN SCRIPTURE, COLOSSIANS 1:18, AND REFERS TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

DIOTREPHES WANTED THE PLACE IN THE CHURCH RESERVED FOR CHRIST ALONE. HE WAS A CHURCH BOSS, A DICTATOR, A MAN WITH A PAPAL COMPLEX WHO CONSIDERED HIMSELF A GIANT AMONG PYGMIES. HIS MOTTO: "WHAT I CAN'T RUN OR RULE, I WILL RUIN." HE CONSIDERED HIMSELF THE "MOST EXALTED RULER" OF THE CHURCH. HIS VOICE, THE LOUDEST AND LAST ON ANY SUBJECT. BY THE WAY, SOMETIMES DIOTREPHES IS A MRS. DIOTREPHES!

(SOME DAY MY SECOND BOOK WILL BE "DIOTREPHES DISEASE - THE PLAGUE OF CHURCH LIFE." THIS BOOK FOLLOWS NUMBER ONE WHICH HAS TO DO WITH EXCUSES I HAVE HEARD IN THE CHURCH. SOMETIMES DIOTREPHES IS A LAYMAN, BUT SOMETIMES HE IS A PASTOR! ("PASTOR DIOTREPHES")

(2) DIOTREPHES HAD A HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD CHURCH LEADERS AND CHURCH AUTHORITY - SIMPLY STATED HE HAD AN ANTI-APOSTLE SYNDROME. "BE HOSTILE TO AN APOSTLE" WAS HIS THEME SONG. SIMPLY STATED, THIS MAN DID NOT LOVE THE MAN WHO BOTH LOVED JESUS AND WHOM JESUS LOVED! NOBODY COULD GIVE DIOTREPHES SPIRITUAL DIRECTION OR CORRECTION. HE CONSIDERED OTHER PEOPLE A THREAT TO HIS POSITION. HE RESISTED AND REBELLED AGAINST CHURCH AUTHORITY. HE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO THE BELOVED APOSTLE JOHN. (COMMENT REGARDING "JOHNNY".) IT IS

No Self-Esteem Problem!

H. Rungger

Self-Empowerment

Swaggard's Problem

PARADOXICAL THAT WHAT IS OFTEN THE STRENGTH OF AN ORGANIZATION OR GROUP MAY ALSO BE ITS WEAKNESS! FOR EXAMPLE, THE STRENGTH OF INDEPENDENCE IS WONDERFUL BUT IT ALSO HAS ITS DRAWBACKS BECAUSE LEADERS TEND TO TAKE NO DIRECTION OR INSTRUCTION FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES. HEBREWS 13:7 SAYS "REMEMBER THEM WHICH HAVE THE RULE OVER YOU, WHO HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU THE WORD OF GOD: WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW...."

(3) DIOTREPES USED THE TACTIC OF TERRIBLE TALK TO SUSTAIN HIS POSITION IN THE CHURCH - *→ Tough*
 THE WORD "PRATING" LITERALLY MEANS TO TALK AGAINST ANOTHER WITH THE IDEA OF TATTLING OR TALE-BEARING IN VIEW. DIOTREPES ADOPTED A "MOW 'EM DOWN WITH THE MOUTH" ATTITUDE. HE USED INSULTING, BITING, SARCASTIC LANGUAGE TO UNDERCUT HIS OPPOSITION AND TO CREATE AN UNDERCURRENT IN THE CHURCH. HE LIED ABOUT JOHN. PERHAPS HE USED THE OLD PHRASES SYNONYMOUS WITH GOSSIP SUCH AS: "THEY SAY, I'VE HEARD, IT IS RUMORED, I HAVE IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY" TO MENTION A FEW. DIOTREPES WAS DOMINATED BY BOTH HIS TEMPER AND HIS TONGUE. HE USED BOTH TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE.

(4) DIOTREPES WAS ANTI-SOCIAL TOWARD FELLOW BELIEVERS OUTSIDE HIS OWN LOCAL CHURCH - *(Weapons of Bullys')*
 BRETHREN FROM OTHER CHURCHES WERE SIMPLY NOT WELCOME IN HIS CHURCH. THE FACT THAT PEOPLE LOVED JESUS HAD NO BEARING ON THEIR ACCEPTANCE IN THIS CHURCH, THEY MUST AGREE WITH DIOTREPES OR THEY WERE NOT WELCOME. THIS INCLUDED APOSTLES OR ANY OTHERS WHO CAME INTO THAT ASSEMBLY.

(5) DIOTREPES KICKED PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH WHO DID NOT AGREE WITH HIM - IT IS SAD BUT TRUE THAT SOME FOLK IN CHURCH LIKE TO SHOVE OR PUSH OTHER PEOPLE AROUND. THEIR BRAWLING, BARROOM APPROACH TO LIFE CARRIES

OR DO WHAT HE SAID.

"Mort. Snayal"

*Dr. Diotrepes
my way
and Highway*

OVER INTO CHURCHLIFE. THEY GET A KICK OUT OF KICKING OTHERS OUT OF THE CHURCH. PERHAPS IT IS A SENSE OF POWER BUT IT IS CERTAINLY NOT ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE. WHEN PAUL DEALT WITH THE SINNING BROTHER IN I CORINTHIANS 5 IT WAS ALWAYS WITH THE IDEA OF RESTORATION IN MIND. QUESTION: HOW COULD DIOTREPHES GET INTO A PLACE OF LEADERSHIP IN A LOCAL CHURCH? WHEN THERE IS A LEADERSHIP VACUUM, OFTEN THE PERSON WHO IS THE MOST BOLD, OUTGOING, AND OVERBEARING STEPS INTO THAT VACUUM. TIMID, HUMBLE PEOPLE OFTEN LET THEM DO IT UNOPPOSED. OTHERS SIMPLY DO NOT WANT TO CAUSE TROUBLE SO THEY LET A TROUBLEMAKER STEP INTO THE PLACE OF LEADERSHIP AND DESTROY A LOCAL CHURCH. ONE OF THE TIMES OF MAXIMUM DANGER FOR SUCH A TAKEOVER IS DURING A PASTORAL CHANGE. (COMMENT REGARDING HERB WARE, MRS. CORRELL, DORIS RAY GARNER.) TO SOME IN THE CHURCH, DIOTREPHES WAS A HERO. THEY LOOKED UP TO HIM BECAUSE HE COULD GET THINGS DONE. HE DID NOT LABOR UNDER THE BURDEN OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS, CONGREGATIONAL RULE. HE SIMPLY DID THINGS HIS WAY AND IT WAS A SWIFT WAY BUT A SHALLOW WAY.

III. DEMETRIUS - THE KIND OF MAN AND MESSAGE THE CHURCH MUST HAVE - VERSE 12

THERE ARE TWO OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT THIS MAN:

(A) TESTIMONY - THE WORDS GOOD REPORT SUGGEST THAT BOTH BELIEVERS AND NON-BELIEVERS WERE IMPRESSED WITH HIM. SUCH A REPORT IS NECESSARY FOR CHURCH LEADERS. (I TIM. 3:7 - COMMENT REGARDING BILLY GRAHAM AND THE ATTITUDE OF UNBELIEVERS TOWARD HIM AND HIS CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.)

Successful

Do as I say

(B) TRUTH - THE WORD FOR TRUTH IS THE GREEK ALOETHIA - SECOND MOST POPULAR NAME FOR BIBLE CLASS/SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS AFTER CALVARY. TRUTH WAS THE TRADEMARK OF DEMETRIUS. I COULD BELIEVE THAT DEMETRIUS DID NOT SING SOLOS BUT DID SING IN THE CHOIR. HE DID NOT PRESIDE AT THE BUSINESS MEETING BUT HE WAS ALWAYS PRESENT. HE DID NOT MAKE LARGE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LOCAL CHURCH BUT RATHER REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS. HE WAS A STEADY, FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN WHOSE PRIMARY INTEREST IN LIFE WAS THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD. VERSES: JOHN 8:32, 40, 44, 45, 46. JOHN 14:6, 17 - TRUTH AS AN EXPRESSION - BEING. JOHN 16:7, 13. JOHN 17:17, JOHN 18:37. COULD IT BE THAT DIOTREPHES AND DEMETRIUS WORSHIPPED IN THE SAME CHURCH, ONE WAS INVOLVED WITH TRASH, THE OTHER INVOLVED WITH TRUTH. ACCORDING TO II THESS. 2:12 ~~3~~ OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD TRUTH AND ADHERENCE TO TRUTH DETERMINES DESTINY.

KINGS AND NIGHTS

MANY YEARS AGO, F. E. MARSH WROTE A BOOK ENTITLED "NIGHT SCENES FROM THE BIBLE." IN THE BOOK HE DEVELOPS THE IDEA THAT MANY OF THE GREAT EVENTS IN BIBLE HISTORY OCCURRED AT NIGHT. EVEN WITHOUT CONSULTING A CONCORDANCE, ONE MAY THINK OF A NUMBER OF INTERESTING EVENTS THAT TRANSPIRED AT NIGHT:

(1) "AND THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY SHEPHERDS ABIDING IN THE FIELDS, KEEPING WATCH OVER THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT."
(LUKE 2:8)

(2) "AND THERE WAS A MAN OF THE PHARISEES, NAMED NICODEMUS, A RULER OF THE JEWS: THE SAME CAME TO JESUS BY NIGHT..."
(JOHN 3:1-2)

(3) "AND GOD SAID UNTO HIM, THOU FOOL, THIS NIGHT THY SOUL SHALL BE REQUIRED OF THEE: THEN WHOSE SHALL THESE THINGS BE, WHICH THOU HAST PROVIDED?" (LUKE 12:20)

(4) "AND THEN HAVING RECEIVED THE SOP, WENT IMMEDIATELY OUT: AND IT WAS NIGHT."
(JOHN 13:30)

THESE FOUR REFERENCES MAY BE MULTIPLIED MANY TIMES TO RECORD THE GREAT NIGHT SCENES OF THE BIBLE. FOR OUR STUDY, WE WILL CONSIDER THREE KINGS AND THREE SIGNIFICANT NIGHTS WHICH CHANGED THE KINGS AND HUMAN HISTORY FOREVER.

See
Samuel
28:8, 25

I. THE NIGHT OF A KING'S INQUIRY - I SAMUEL 28:8, 25

THIS CHAPTER RECORDS THE EVENTS OF THE LAST NIGHT OF KING SAUL'S LIFE. SAMUEL WAS DEAD. THE PHILISTINES WERE THREATENING. THE RECOGNIZED MODES OF DIVINE REVELATION WERE SILENT. SAUL WAS SCARED. IN ANCIENT TIMES, TO BEGIN A BATTLE WITHOUT OMEN OR COUNSEL FROM THE GODS WAS UNTHINKABLE. WHEN NO WORD WAS FORTHCOMING FROM GOD, SAUL ATTEMPTED TO GET SOME PREVIEW BY UNACCEPTABLE METHODS. HE VIOLATED HIS OWN DIRECTIVE WHICH HAD ALL NECK ROMANCERS EXILED FROM THE LAND. LIKE MANY PEOPLE, HE ENTERED INTO A FORBIDDEN ACTIVITY WHEN GOD DID NOT DO AS SAUL WANTED. THERE IS SOMETHING VERY SAD ABOUT THIS NATIONAL FIGURE SEEKING COUNSEL FROM A SPIRIT MEDIUM. LIKE MANY PEOPLE, WHEN SAUL REFUSED TO DO THINGS GOD'S WAY, HE MADE HIMSELF A CANDIDATE FOR THE CULTS! IN MY OPINION, MUCH THAT IS DONE BY MEDIUMS IS TRICKERY AND CLEVER DECEPTION, PREYING UPON THE WEAKNESS OF MAN'S SUPERSTITIOUS NATURE. AMERICA IS EXPERIENCING AN OCCULT EXPLOSION. ONE IN FIVE AMERICANS BELIEVE IN ASTROLOGY AND READ THE COLUMNS IN OVER 12,000 NEWSPAPERS DAILY. THE FILM "THE EXORCIST" GROSSED OVER 70 MILLION DOLLARS IN ONE YEAR'S TIME. PEOPLE ARE ANXIOUS TO HAVE SOME SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND RESORT TO PSYCHICS, ASTROLOGERS, NUMEROLOGISTS AND ALL KINDS OF EFFORTS TO GAIN SUCH KNOWLEDGE. LET ME STATE CATEGORICALLY, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR YOU AND ME TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD. THE QUESTION ARISES CONCERNING WHAT HAPPENED AT ENDOR. IT WAS A UNIQUE

EXPERIENCE. THIS WOMAN, A SPIRIT MEDIUM, DID NOT HAVE POWER TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD AND SHE WAS THE MOST SURPRISED AND FRIGHTENED PERSON AT THAT SEANCE!

✓ SHE PLANNED TO STAGE AN EVENT BUT GOD SUPERNATURALLY INTERVENED TO REBUKE SAUL!

✓ IF THE WOMAN HAD BEEN IN CHARGE OR IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION, SHE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO TERRIFIED. THIS WAS GOD'S FINAL CONFRONTATION WITH SAUL AND HE DID IT THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF GODLY SAMUEL. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, ALL DEAD BOTH SAVED AND UNSAVED WENT TO A PLACE CALLED SHEOL. THIS PASSAGE SHOULD BE A WARNING TO ALL PEOPLE OF THE DANGER OF DABBLING WITH CULTS. IT MAY BE BOTH DANGEROUS AND DESTRUCTIVE. SAUL DIED THE NEXT DAY ON THE HILLS OF GILBOA, ALONG WITH HIS SONS TO CONCLUDE A SAD SELFISH LIFE OF UNYIELDING DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD.

(DR. BARNHOUSE TELLS THE STORY ABOUT ONE OF HIS CHILDREN WHOM HE INSTRUCTED TO DO A CERTAIN THING. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AND DETAILS HAD BEEN GIVEN SO AS HE STARTED WORKING AT HIS DESK, THE CHILD LINGERED UNTIL MRS. BARNHOUSE CAME INTO THE STUDY AND INQUIRED ABOUT THE CHILD'S PRESENCE. "I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT DADDY WANTS ME TO DO." THE DOCTOR REPLIED: "NO, YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND OUT IF YOU CAN GET ME TO CHANGE THE CONDITIONS SO THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO INSTEAD OF DOING WHAT I TOLD YOU TO DO. NOW GO AND DO WHAT YOU WERE TOLD RIGHT NOW.") THAT WAS SAUL. GOD GAVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT WHAT HE WAS TO DO BUT SAUL WAS TOO STUBBORN TO OBEY.

II. THE NIGHT OF A KING'S INSOMNIA - ESTHER 6:1

NOT MANY BELIEVERS KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE BOOK OF ESTHER OTHER THAN IT IS ONE OF TWO BOOKS IN THE BIBLE BEARING A WOMAN'S NAME - THE OTHER IS RUTH. THE NAME OF GOD DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE BOOK, HOWEVER, SOMEONE HAS POINTED OUT THAT EVEN THOUGH GOD'S NAME IS NOT IN PRINT, HIS PRESENCE MAY BE SEEN IN THE WATERMARK! THE BOOK TAKES PLACE IN ANCIENT PERSIA WHICH IS THE BIBLE NAME FOR MODERN IRAN. THE EVENTS OF THE BOOK SPAN A 20 YEAR PERIOD AND TOOK PLACE DURING THE TIME OF EZRA. STUDENTS OF BIBLE PROPHECY WILL IDENTIFY PERSIA WITH THE SECOND KINGDOM IN DANIEL'S IMAGE. (DANIEL 2) THE PERSIAN EMPIRE WAS PRESIDED OVER BY A MAN NAMED AHASUERUS OR XERXES. THE BOOK OPENS IN A PERSIAN PALACE DURING THE GREAT FEAST, AS A MATTER OF FACT THE FESTIVE OCCASION HAD LASTED FOR 6 MONTHS. FOR THAT PERIOD OF TIME, THE KING HAD ENGAGED IN SHOWING THE GLORIES OF HIS KINGDOM TO 127 PRINCES. EATING, DRINKING, MUSIC AND SENSUAL DANCING WERE ALL PART OF THE FESTIVE MOOD. AHASUERUS, LOOKING FOR ONE LAST GREAT FINALE TO IMPRESS AND EXCITE HIS GUESTS DESIRED QUEEN VASHTI TO MAKE A PUBLIC APPEARANCE AND DISPLAY HER FEMININE BEAUTY TO THE DRUNKEN GUESTS. (WHATEVER MEN MAY SAY ABOUT DRINKING, THIS CHAPTER AND OTHERS IN THE BIBLE ARE REMINDERS THAT THERE IS NOTHING FASHIONABLE OR REDEEMING ABOUT SOCIAL DRINKING. DRINKING PEOPLE KNOW THAT IT STIRS PASSIONS AND RELAXES NORMAL SAFEGUARDS AND QUEEN VASHTI REFUSED TO EXPOSE HERSELF TO THE LUSTFUL GAZE OF HER HUSBAND'S DRUNKEN FRIENDS. HER LEGENDARY

BEAUTY WAS KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND SHE WILL GO DOWN IN THE PAGES OF HISTORY NOT SIMPLY AS A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN BUT ONE WHOSE CHARACTER AND SELF RESPECT MEANT MORE TO HER THAN BEING THE QUEEN OF PERSIA. STRIPPED OF HER CROWN, THE KING SCoured HIS KINGDOM FOR VASHTI'S SUCCESSOR. THE KINGDOM PUT ON A KIND OF "BEAUTY CONTEST" AND THE WINNER WAS A GIRL NAMED ESTHER. ESTHER HAD NO CHOICE IN THE MATTER, SHE WAS SIMPLY DRAFTED AND BECAME THE FINAL CHOICE TO BE QUEEN. SHE CHARMED EVERYONE WHO MET HER AND HER BEAUTY WAS ONLY SURPASSED BY HER GOODNESS AND CHARACTER. THE OTHER CHARACTERS IN THE PLOT OF THE STORY ARE HAMAN, PRIME MINISTER OF PERSIA, THE SECOND MOST POWERFUL MAN IN ALL THE CIVILIZED WORLD. SOMEONE SAID OF HIM: "FROM THE PERSIAN GULF TO THE CASPIAN SEA, FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO INDIA, THERE WAS NOT A JEWEL, HORSE, CAMEL, GARMENT, FRUIT, OR WOMAN THAT HAMAN COULD NOT HAVE FOR THE ASKING. HOWEVER, ALL OF THAT LOST ITS LUSTER BECAUSE ONE JEW NAMED MORDECAI REFUSED TO GIVE HIM THE REVERENCE AND WORSHIP HAMAN DESIRED AS A MAN OF HIGH RANK AND PRESTIGE." WHAT HAMAN WANTED WAS A KIND OF WORSHIP AND EVERYTHING HE OWNED WAS SPOILED BECAUSE ONE DISSENTING JEW WOULD NOT YIELD TO THAT PRIDE. FOR THAT, HAMAN WAS WILLING TO DESTROY EVERY JEW IN THE EMPIRE AND HE TOOK SWIFT AND DECISIVE ACTION TO ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL. HAMAN CONVINCED AHASUERUS THAT THE JEWS WERE THE ENEMIES OF PERSIA AND A LAW OR DECREE WAS MADE TO EXTERMINATE THE JEWS FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH - ONE OF THE MOST BRUTAL AND COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-SEMITIC PROGRAMS EVER DEvised! THE BOOK OF ESTHER TELLS

HOW ESTHER THE QUEEN HAD NEVER REVEALED TO HER HUSBAND THAT SHE WAS A JEWESS. HAMAN MADE EXTENSIVE PLANS TO HAVE MORDECAI HANGED. HOWEVER, THROUGH THE WISDOM OF ESTHER AND THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD HAMAN WAS HANGED ON THE VERY GALLOWS HE HAD PREPARED FOR MORDECAI. THUS, THE CENTRAL TRUTH OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER EMERGES, THAT IS, THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. IT MEANS THAT GOD GUIDES THE WORLD TOWARD A PRE-DETERMINED GOAL. THE WORLD AND EVERYTHING IN IT IS UNDER HIS CARE AND CONTROL AND GOD IS DIRECTING EVERYTHING TOWARDS HIS ETERNAL PLAN. THIS DOCTRINE IS ESPECIALLY HELPFUL TO THE CHRISTIAN BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT THE WORLD IS NOT A GREAT COSMIC SHIP LAUNCHED ON AN UNDETERMINED COURSE WITH NO ONE AT THE HELM. GOD HAS A PLAN FOR MAN AND HUMAN HISTORY AND OFTEN TIMES IS CONTROLLING HISTORY BY HIS PITTED HAND. BECAUSE OF THE DECREE MADE BY A PERSIAN MONARCH WHICH WAS UNALTERABLE, EVERY JEW UNDER PERSIAN DOMINATION WAS SUBJECT TO DIE. WITH SO MUCH AT STAKE, ONE WOULD EXPECT GOD TO SHAKE HEAVEN AND EARTH TO PRESERVE HIS ANCIENT PEOPLE THROUGH WHOM THE MESSIAH WOULD COME. HOWEVER, IN GOD'S SOVEREIGN PLAN HE CHANGED HUMAN HISTORY IN A SINGLE NIGHT THROUGH A VERY TRIVIAL INCIDENTAL MATTER, NAMELY A SPELL OF REGAL INSOMNIA. THE SUPPOSED CHANCE READING OF A PAGE FROM THE ROYAL CHRONICLES TURNED THE ENTIRE TIDE OF HAMAN'S PLOT AGAINST HAMAN. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE MOVEMENTS OF HUMAN HISTORY ARE IN REALITY THE MOVEMENTS OF GOD. GOD IS EVER MOVING BEHIND THE SCENES TO FRUSTRATE THE PLANS OF MEN LIKE HAMAN AND ACCOMPLISH HIS OWN PURPOSE. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL SAID IT

Friday
Pills!



THIS WAY: "CARELESS SEEMS THE GREAT AVENGER: HISTORY'S PAGES BUT RECORD ONE DEATH GRAPPLE IN THE DARKNESS TWIXT OLD SYSTEMS AND THE WORD. TRUTH FOREVER ON THE SCAFFOLD WRONG FOREVER ON THE THRONE, YET THE SCAFFOLD SWAYS THE FUTURE AND BEHIND THE DIM UNKNOWN STANDETH GOD WITHIN THE SHADOW, KEEPING WATCH ABOVE HIS OWN." THIS IS BUT ONE CHAPTER IN THE CONTINUING SAGA OF GOD'S MARVELOUS PRESERVATION OF HIS MIRACLE PEOPLE, THE JEWS!

III. THE NIGHT OF A KING'S INSOLENC - DANIEL 5:30

THE SCENE IN THIS CHAPTER TOOK PLACE IN THE CITY OF BABYLON 500 YEARS BEFORE JESUS WAS BORN. BABYLON WAS THE CENTER OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD. ITS TREASURY OVERFLOWED WITH THE RESULTS OF WORLD-WIDE CONQUESTS. THE CITY OF BABYLON WAS BELIEVED TO BE BEYOND TAKING WITH MILITARY FORCE. IT WAS SAID BABYLON COULD STAND A 20-YEAR SIEGE SO GREAT WAS ITS SUPPLY IN STORE. THE VERY NIGHT OF THIS GREAT BANQUET, IT WAS KNOWN THAT HOSTILE ARMIES WERE APPROACHING THE CITY, BUT BELSHAZZAR WAS SO CONFIDENT OF HIS SAFETY THAT HE CONTINUED THROUGH THE NIGHT WITH A DRUNKEN ORGY DEDICATED TO HEATHEN GODS. LITTLE DID BELSHAZZAR KNOW THAT THE RIVER WHICH RAN THROUGH THE CITY OF BABYLON WOULD BE DIVERTED AND MEDIAN TROOPS WOULD SOON FILL THE CITY AND THOUSANDS WOULD BE SLAIN - BABYLON WOULD FALL. DURING THE GREAT BANQUET, SUDDENLY THE DRUNKEN CROWD WAS SOBERED BY A STRANGE EVENT - THE FINGERS OF A MAN'S HAND WRITING ON THE HUGE

WALL OF THE PALACE. THE EVENT WAS SO STARTLING THAT DANIEL, THE MAN OF GOD, WAS CALLED TO INTERPRET THE THREE WORDS WRITTEN ON THE WALL. SIMPLY STATED THE MESSAGE WAS THIS: GOD HAD LIMITED THE DAYS OF BABYLON, THEY WOULD NOT GO BEYOND HIS APPOINTED TIME. THE NATION HAD NOT MEASURED UP ON THE SCALES OF GOD SO JUDGMENT WAS IMMINENT. THE STORY IS SAD INDEED FOR HISTORY RECORDS THAT THE SOLDIERS CAME INTO THE CITY THAT NIGHT THROUGH THE HELP OF TRAITORS WHO LEFT THEIR POSTS UNGUARDED. SURPRISE AND PANIC GRIPPED THE CITY AND THOUSANDS WERE SLAUGHTERED WITHOUT MERCY. GOD PUT THIS STORY IN HIS WORD FOR A REASON. BELSHAZZAR WAS THE GRANDSON OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR WITH WHOM GOD HAD DEALT FAIRLY AND FIRMLY REGARDING THE SINS OF BABYLON. HOWEVER, IT WAS APPARENT THAT BELSHAZZAR PAID NO ATTENTION TO GOD'S DEALING WITH BABYLON. THE LESSON IS SIMPLE. THE NATION OR INDIVIDUAL WHO IGNORES GOD MUST FACE THAT GOD IN JUDGMENT OFTEN HERE ON EARTH AND FOR SURE IN THE FUTURE. BELSHAZZAR'S INTEMPERANCE AND LACK OF RESPECT FOR SACRED THINGS LED TO HIS DEATH. WHETHER IT BE A NATION OR AN INDIVIDUAL, THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH THE LAST NIGHT ON EARTH WILL COME. MEN AND NATIONS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD. LUKE 12:19-20 RELATES THE LAST NIGHT ON EARTH OF A MAN WHO IS IMPLY CALLED, A RICH FOOL. AS A MATTER OF FACT, A MAN MAY BE A POOR FOOL AND MEET THE SAME FATE. TO IGNORE GOD, HIS TRUTH AND HIS PLAN FOR HUMAN HISTORY IS A FATAL MISTAKE FOR INDIVIDUALS OR NATIONS.

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

SEPTEMBER 1, 1991

"LASTING LOVE: The Jacob & Rachel Story"
A LOVE STORY: "When Time Stands still"
SEVEN YEARS THAT SEEMED LIKE A FEW DAYS

GENESIS 29:20 Background:

(SEE CLIPPING FROM U.S.A. TODAY)

PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN LOVE STORIES, BOTH IN FANTASY AND REALITY. FROM ROMEO AND JULIET TO BROWNING AND BURNS, TO CHARLES AND DI LOVE STORIES FASCINATE US. THE LOVE STORIES OF THE BIBLE ARE AMONG THE BEST KNOWN IN THE WORLD. RUTH AND BOAZ, MARY AND JOSEPH CAPTIVATE THE READER'S INTEREST EVERY TIME THEY ARE READ. TODAY WE WILL CONSIDER THE LOVE STORY OF JACOB AND RACHEL. QUESTION: HOW MUCH WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PAY FOR YOUR WIFE? JACOB WAS WILLING TO WORK FOURTEEN YEARS FOR RACHEL. IN TODAY'S WORLD, WITH AN AVERAGE SALARY OF \$35,000 PER YEAR, SUCH A DOWRY WOULD RUN CLOSE TO A HALF MILLION DOLLARS! LET US EXAMINE THE CHAPTER IN GENESIS WHICH TELLS THIS TALE OF ROMANTIC ENCOUNTER.

I. WHAT LOVE SEES - VERSES 1-12

VERSE 10 - REVIEW JACOB'S DEPARTURE AND PRESENT STATUS. WHEN JACOB SAW RACHEL, IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT. SHE WAS THE ONLY WOMAN OTHER THAN HIS MOTHER JACOB EVER REALLY LOVED. AS IN THE CASE OF REBEKAH, HER SON FOUND THE TRUE LOVE OF HIS LIFE AT A WELL. SOMEONE HAS SAID THAT IN MODERN LANGUAGE, RACHEL WAS A TEN! FROM THIS DAY FORWARD JACOB BEGAN TO SING A NEW SONG ENTITLED: "GOODBYE REBEKAH, HELLO RACHEL!" THE KISS OF VERSE 11 RELATES A CUSTOM AND NOT A CARESS. THESE TWO WERE "KISSING COUSINS." JACOB WEPT FOR JOY AT DISCOVERING PART OF HIS MOTHER'S FAMILY AND ESPECIALLY SAID THIS PARTICULAR MEMBER WAS BEAUTIFUL BOTH IN FACE AND FORM. (VERSE 17 - BERKLEY VERSION) JACOB SAW

IN RACHEL MORE THAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY. THIS WAS AND IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MARRIAGE. IT IS AMAZING THAT MANY PEOPLE SO CAREFUL IN BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE SO CARELESS ABOUT LOVE! YET, HOW COULD A PERSON EXPECT TO FIND HAPPINESS WITH ANOTHER HUMAN BEING ABOUT WHOM THEY KNOW SO VERY LITTLE AND HAVE HAD SUCH QUICK AND CASUAL CONTACT? JACOB WAS IMPRESSED WITH RACHEL'S DEVOTION TO DUTY - VERSE 10. SHE WAS A SHEPHERDESS. SHE DID HER JOB CAREFULLY, ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND FAITHFULLY. JACOB WAS IMPRESSED WITH HER THE VERY FIRST TIME THEY MET AND THAT IMPRESSION NEVER CHANGED - SHE WAS THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE. IT IS INTERESTING THAT ROMANCE CAME TO JACOB AND RACHEL NOT ON A MOONLIT, STAR-FILLED NIGHT BUT IN THE ORDINARY COURSE OF LIFE BY A WELL, WATERING SHEEP, DOING ONE'S DUTY!

II. HOW LOVE SERVES - VERSES 13-20

THIS SECTION OF THE CHAPTER INTRODUCES THE READER TO THE SECOND MAJOR CHARACTER IN THIS DRAMA - UNCLE LABAN, REBEKAH'S BROTHER AND RACHEL'S FATHER. HE WAS THE SCHEMER'S SCHEMER AND GAVE JACOB LESSONS IN CRAFTINESS AND DECEIT JACOB WOULD NEVER FORGET OR FORSAKE! AFTER JACOB HAD BEEN IN LABAN'S HOUSE FOR THIRTY DAYS AND WHILE JACOB WAS INTERESTED IN A WEDDING, LABAN WAS CONCENTRATING ON WAGES. JACOB WAS SUFFERING FROM A DILAPIDATED DOWRY - HE WAS FLAT BROKE. ALL HE HAD WAS HIS ABILITY TO WORK. LABAN HAD TWO DAUGHTERS AND SEEMED TO BE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT LEAH THAN RACHEL. THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY THAT LEAH WAS UGLY, IT EMPHASIZED THE FACT THAT RACHEL WAS BEAUTIFUL. LEAH'S TENDER EYES OR WEAK EYES MEAN THAT SHE WAS DULL IN THE EYES. THAT IS,

Jacob! Esau!
deceived by Laban
saw saw re Joseph!

+2 Jacob
chose her
Not Parents!
of Jacob & Abigail

ONE MARK OF BEAUTY AMONG ORIENTAL WOMEN WAS THE DEEP SPARKLE OR FIRE IN THE EYES. APPARENTLY LEAH LACKED THAT QUALITY BUT RACHEL DID NOT - SHE WAS BRIGHT-EYED AND BEAUTIFUL. LEAH'S PROBLEM WAS THAT SHE WAS THE SISTER OF AN EXCEPTIONALLY BEAUTIFUL GIRL AND HER OWN LOOKS PALED IN THE PRESENCE OF RACHEL. THE INTERESTING FEATURE OF THIS FACET OF THE STORY IS THE AGREEMENT OR CONTRACT MADE BETWEEN JACOB AND LABAN CONCERNING RACHEL. IT WAS A 7-YEAR AGREEMENT - PERHAPS THE LONGEST IN BIBLE HISTORY. IN THIS STORY, THE ELEMENT OF LOVE IS SEEN IN COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE IN A VERY SPECIAL WAY, NAMELY, JACOB WAS WILLING TO WORK AND WAIT BEFORE MARRIAGE. HE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE AND NOT RUSH INTO MARRIAGE IN ORDER TO SECURE THE WOMAN HE TRULY LOVED. MOREOVER, THE 7 YEARS DID NOT SEEM LONG OR BURDENSOME TO JACOB. THE PRESENCE OF LOVE CHANGED THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND SHORTENED THE TIME IN JACOB'S MIND. F. B. MEYER HAS WELL SAID: "LOVE'S LABOR IS ALWAYS LIGHT." WE ALL UNDERSTAND THIS MYSTIFYING PRINCIPLE. FOR EXAMPLE, FOR LOVE A GIRL WILL GIVE UP THE COMFORTS OF HER PARENT'S HOME, LIVE IN A FAR AWAY LAND WITH FEW COMFORTS AND YET BE SIMPLY AND PLEASANTLY HAPPY IN HER OWN HOME EVEN THOUGH THE FURNISHINGS ARE SPARTAN. SHE IS WILLING TO SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH HER OWN HOME WITH THE MAN SHE LOVES. LOVE TAKES THE DREARINESS OUT OF SERVICE. THIS PASSAGE SPEAKS OF AT LEAST THREE SIGNIFICANT FACTS ABOUT COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE:

(1) LOVE IS IMPORTANT IN ESTABLISHING THE LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP CALLED MARRIAGE - V 18

GENUINE LOVE IS WILLING TO SACRIFICE, WORK, PUT UP WITH AND GIVE IN TO OTHERS IN ORDER THAT THE RELATIONSHIP MAY BLOSSOM. WHERE THIS

(Phillips Trans)
(or 1 Cor 13!)

SKIM

Leah
waiting
5 m. 15

Be Sure
on Be
Sorry!

INGREDIENT IS MISSING, RELATIONSHIPS ARE SHORT-LIVED.

(2) SPIRITUAL COMPATIBILITY IS IMPORTANT IN MARRIAGE (27:46) (cf. 27:46) (26:34-35)

THE MIXED MARRIAGE OF HEBREWS AND HITTITES DEMONSTRATED IN THE LIFE OF ESAU SIMPLY DID NOT WORK WELL. NEITHER DOES THE MIXED MARRIAGE OF A BELIEVER AND A NON-BELIEVER WORK WELL. ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IS A FORMULA FOR MISERY AND FAILURE. ANY BELIEVER WHO BELIEVES HE OR SHE WILL EXERT FORCE ON ANOTHER PERSON AFTER MARRIAGE AND GET THEM TO CONFORM TO SPIRITUAL STANDARDS IS IN FOR A SUDDEN SHOCK. COURTSHIP IS THE PERIOD WHEN MAXIMUM INFLUENCE IS EXERTED. THE UNGODLY WILL HAVE NO RESPECT FOR A CHRISTIAN WHO DISREGARDS HIS PRINCIPLES IN ORDER TO GET MARRIED.

(3) FAMILY APPROVAL HELPS IN GETTING STARTED

SOME YOUNG PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHETHER FAMILIES ACCEPT ONE'S MATE OR NOT. IN SOME INSTANCES THAT MAY BE TRUE BUT GENERALLY SPEAKING IT IS WELL TO HAVE THE APPROVAL OF BOTH PARENTS IF THAT IS POSSIBLE. ALSO, FRIENDS' APPROVAL MAY LEND A FAVORABLE INFLUENCE. THE PARENTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS MARRIAGE WERE INVOLVED IN THE PROCEDURE. TO BE SURE, A LOT DEPENDS ON THE KIND OF PARENTS, WHETHER THEY ARE SENSIBLE OR SELFISH. HOWEVER, THE OVERRIDING PRINCIPLE IN THIS PASSAGE IS THE WILLINGNESS OF JACOB TO WORK FOR RACHEL.

LaBar liked
Jacob!

My Ceremony
Public Approval

Ox
T.e

2 Cor
6:14

III. WHEN LOVE IS SURPRISED - VERSES 21-30

JACOB WAS NOT THE FIRST MAN TO WAKE UP ON HIS HONEYMOON AND DISCOVER HE HAD MARRIED THE WRONG PERSON! THE TERMS OF THE 7-YEAR CONTRACT HAD BEEN COMPLETED. WHEN JACOB ASKED THAT THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY TAKE PLACE, LABAN MARSHALED PUBLIC SUPPORT AND PRESSURE TO GIVE WEIGHT TO HIS PLAN TO DECEIVE JACOB. THE WEDDING FEAST PUT THE PLAN INTO OPERATION. JACOB WAS EASILY DECEIVED ON THE NIGHT OF HIS WEDDING FOR MULTIPLE REASONS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN THE HEAVY DRINKING OF WINE AT THE FESTIVITIES. WHEN JACOB REALIZED HE HAD BEEN TRICKED, IT WAS TOO LATE. LABAN READ JACOB THE FINE PRINT OF HIS CONTRACT AND ALSO A FEW FOOTNOTES AND CLAUSES JACOB HAD NEVER CONSIDERED, NAMELY, TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE! OR BETTER STILL, TWO FOR THE PRICE OF TWO! THERE WAS NO WAY LABAN WAS GOING TO LET HIS SPINSTER DAUGHTER REMAIN UNMARRIED IF HE COULD HELP IT - AND HE COULD HELP IT! THE PHRASE "FULFILLED HER WEEK" IN VERSE 26 IS A REFERENCE TO THE 7-DAY WEEK OR MARRIAGE FEAST THAT LASTED A WEEK. TO FORSAKE LEAH DURING THAT PERIOD WOULD HAVE BEEN A SOCIAL DISGRACE AND AN INSULT WHICH THE FAMILY COULD NEVER LIVE DOWN. LABAN IS SUGGESTING THAT JACOB SHOULD CONTINUE THE FESTIVE WEEK WITH LEAH AND AT THE END OF THE WEEK HE COULD HAVE RACHEL. THE SECOND UNION WOULD CULMINATE AT THE CLOSE OF THE MARRIAGE FESTIVITIES WHICH LASTED 7 DAYS. SO, ACCORDING TO VERSE 30, JACOB HAD TWO WIVES AT THE END OF EIGHT DAYS. THEN HE CONTINUED TO WORK 7 MORE YEARS TO FULFILL THE ADDED RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIS CONTRACT WITH LABAN. JACOB WAS THE HUSBAND OF TWO WIVES, NOT BY DESIGN BUT BY DECEPTION. GOD DOES NOT SANCTION POLYGAMY. GOD DID NOT RECORD THIS EVENT IN THE BIBLE TO ENCOURAGE

OR SANCTION POLYGAMY BUT AS A WARNING TO ITS DANGERS. OFTEN, THE BIBLE RECORDS THE EVENTS WITHOUT SANCTIONING THE PROCEDURE. POLYGAMY WAS TOLERATED BUT NOT ADVOCATED. IT WAS PERMITTED BUT NOT THE PATTERN FOR MARRIAGE. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH DIVORCE WAS TOLERATED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BUT IS NEVER SHOWN AS AN ACCEPTABLE PROCEDURE. JACOB LEARNED THAT THOSE WHO SCHEME THEIR WAY THROUGH LIFE WILL SOMEDAY MEET THEIR MATCH. IT IS TRUE THAT THE CHICKENS ALWAYS COME HOME TO ROOST, THE COWS COME HOME AT MILKING TIME, THE BOOMERANG RETURNS TO THE HAND OF THE THROWER. JACOB DECEIVED HIS FATHER WITH THE FIRST-BORN AND NOW HE GETS A DOSE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE. AND THE DECEIVER IS ALWAYS SURPRISED WHEN HE IS THE VICTIM OF HIS OWN PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES. WE ARE USUALLY PAID BACK WITH THE COIN WE PAY OUT. THERE IS A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE THAT WE REAP WHAT WE SOW. ACCORDING TO GAL. 6:7 THIS PRINCIPLE ALWAYS PREVAILS. DAVID COMMITTED MURDER AND ADULTRY AND LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO SEE HIS OWN DAUGHTER RAPED AND HIS OWN SON MURDERED. AHAB MURDERED NABOTH, STOLE HIS VINEYARD BUT WAS HIMSELF MURDERED IN A SIMILAR FASHION. PHARAOH SLEW THE MALE CHILDREN OF THE HEBREWS THROUGHOUT THE LAND OF EGYPT ONLY TO SEE HIS OWN CHILDREN AND THE FIRST-BORN DIE IN A SIMILAR FASHION. SO, THE JACOB WHO TRICKED HIS OWN FATHER SIMPLY WAITED FOR A PERIOD OF TIME UNTIL HE HIMSELF WAS TRICKED IN A SIMILAR FASHION. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID THAT LIVING BY FAITH IS LIVING WITHOUT SCHEMING. IF JACOB COULD GIVE ADVICE TODAY, HE MIGHT SAY TO ALL OF US: "LIVE BY FAITH IN GOD - STOP SCHEMING."

I Sees
II Sees
III Sees

508m15

V. 32-35

IV. HOW LOVE SACRIFICES - VERSES 31-35

V. 30

THE WORD HATED IN THE TEXT CARRIES THE IDEA THAT LEAH WAS NOT LOVED AS JACOB'S WIFE. HE LOVED RACHEL. JACOB HAD TWO WIVES - ONE HE WANTED - ONE HE DIDN'T BUT UNDER THESE ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES HE DID NOT IGNORE LEAH BUT MAINTAINED HIS RESPONSIBILITY AS A FATHER AND PROVIDER FOR HER CHILDREN. ACCORDING TO THE NIV, WHEN REUBEN WAS BORN, LEAH SAID: "SURELY MY HUSBAND WILL LOVE ME NOW." - SIMON VERSE 31. WHEN LEVI WAS BORN SHE SAID: "NOW AT LAST MY HUSBAND WILL BECOME ATTACHED TO ME." - VERSE 34. WHEN JUDAH WAS BORN SHE SAID: "THIS TIME I WILL PRAISE THE LORD." LEAH LEARNED TO LIVE IN HER SITUATION WHEN HER HUSBAND DID NOT LOVE HER. SHE DISCOVERED THAT DESPITE THIS LAMENTABLE CONDITION, SHE COULD RAISE HER CHILDREN, ENJOY THEM, TEACH THEM AND GROW IN HER FAITH TOWARD GOD. JACOB CARED FOR HIS FAMILY, ALL OF THEM, AND GOD BLESSED HIM - ALL OF HIS FAMILY. LOVE ALWAYS SACRIFICES FOR THAT IS THE NATURE OF LOVE. MOTHERS SACRIFICE FOR THEIR CHILDREN, PARENTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN, WE SEND THEM TO COLLEGE TO GET THEM STARTED IN LIFE. WHATEVER ONE'S STATION IN LIFE, THERE ARE LESSONS TO LEARN ABOUT MARRIAGE IN THIS CHAPTER. ARE YOU SINGLE? LIFE NEED NOT BE INCOMPLETE OR UNSATISFACTORY. IT IS POSSIBLE TO LIVE A HAPPY FULL LIFE UNMARRIED. ARE YOU UNHAPPILY MARRIED? MARRIED TO A LEAH - SOMEONE YOU MAY NOT LOVE. IT IS POSSIBLE TO FIND FULFILLMENT EVEN WHEN MARRIED TO SOMEONE YOU DO NOT LOVE. COMPENSATIONS ARE IN FAMILY AND FAITH. ARE YOU MARRIED TO SOMEONE WHOM YOU LOVE? THEN REJOICE AND SEEK TO SERVE THE LORD TO ONE'S FULLEST CAPACITY.

Lessons For all:

1. NIV
2. Big
3. 1 Sam. 25

Conclusion:

Christina Quassis - "poor little Rich girl"

Dee Windsor Story

He chose her!

Choose: Prayfully, Carefully, Spiritually, ..

Gen 29:27

THE BLESSINGS OF THE BLESSED

(THE BEATITUDES OF REVELATION)

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, MATTHEW, CONTAINS A WELL-KNOWN PORTION IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT CALLED THE BEATITUDES. THIS WORD IS NOT FOUND IN THE ENGLISH BIBLE BUT THE LATIN "BEATITUDO" APPEARS IN THE VULGATE - A CHURCH WORD REFERRING TO BLESSEDNESS. THE WORD BLESSED OCCURS 9 TIMES IN THE FIRST 11 VERSES OF MATTHEW 5, SO THE PASSAGE IS KNOWN AS THE BEATITUDES. THE LAST BOOK OF THE BIBLE, REVELATION, ALSO USES THE WORD BLESSED WITH REFERENCE TO BELIEVERS. THERE ARE NO LESS THAN 7 SUCH REFERENCES. THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS THE UNVEILING (APOKALUPHIS). GOD DRAWS BACK THE VEIL OF HUMAN HISTORY AND INVITES THE READERS TO GAZE INTO THE FUTURE REGARDING COMING EVENTS ON EARTH. PLEASE NOTICE THAT IT IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. THE WORDS "ST. JOHN THE DIVINE" WERE ADDED BY THE TRANSLATORS. JOHN WAS NO MORE DIVINE THAN ANY OTHER BELIEVER. THIS IS A TERM USED IN 1611 TO REFER TO A CLERGYMAN - "A DIVINE." (AS A MATTER OF FACT, GRADUATE DEGREES GIVEN IN STANDARD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES BEAR THE TERM DIVINITY DENOTING A PERSON WHO HAS FINISHED A PRESCRIBED COURSE STUDYING FOR THE MINISTRY.)

I. THE BLESSED READER - 1:3

THIS VERSE IS MORE THAN A PROMISED BLESSING FOR READING THE BIBLE. IT SPEAKS OF THE BLESSED CONDITION OF THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN READING, HEARING AND KEEPING THE TRUTHS OF THIS BOOK. (THE WORD KEEPING IS USED IN SCRIPTURE OF A JAILER WHO HAS A "LOCK" ON CERTAIN PEOPLE. THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK

(*)

"Lock on to"
Word of God
misses

SHOULD BE LISTENED TO AND LOCKED UP IN OUR MINDS. NOTICE THAT THERE IS A CHANGE IN THE PRONOUN FROM "HE" TO "THEY." THE HE REFERS TO THE PUBLIC READER OF SCRIPTURE. IN ANCIENT TIMES, BEFORE THE INVENTION OF PRINTING, OFTEN THE PUBLIC READER IN CHURCH WAS THE PASTOR. THIS COULD BE THE MEANING OF 1 TIM. 4:13: "TILL I COME, GIVE ATTENDANCE TO READING, TO EXHORTATION, TO DOCTRINE." ALSO, COLOSSIANS 4:16: "AND WHEN THIS EPISTLE IS READ AMONG YOU CAUSE THAT IT BE READ ALSO IN THE CHURCHES OF THE LAODICEANS." THE THEY, OF COURSE, ARE THE ASSEMBLED IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. THE READING OF SCRIPTURE WAS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF WORSHIP IN THE SYNAGOGUE. FOR EXAMPLE, LUKE 4:16: "AND HE CAME TO NAZARETH WHERE HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP: AND, AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY AND STOOD UP FOR TO READ..." ONE OF THE MOST OFTEN REPEATED PHRASES OF JESUS WAS "...DID YE NEVER READ IN THE SCRIPTURES...?" REMINDING MEN OF THE IMPORTANCE OF READING THE WORD OF GOD IS OF VITAL SPIRITUAL NECESSITY. COMMENT REGARDING SPURGEON'S PUBLIC READING OF SCRIPTURE...A HIGHPOINT IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE AT METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.) BY THE WAY, THE WORD READ MEANS MORE THAN JUST SOUNDING WORDS. IT MEANS TO GATHER EXACT KNOWLEDGE, TO RECOGNIZE AND TO DISCERN. (JEREMIAH 15:16, JOSHUA 1:8, PSALM 1)

*Why words we find ...
get them*

II. THE BLESSED REWARD - REVELATION 14:13

THIS WORD IS A MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN FROM GOD TO THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH. DISPENSATIONALLY IT WAS A MESSAGE TO THE MARTYRS OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION PERIOD. NO PEOPLE IN HISTORY WILL SUFFER AS THOSE WHO REMAIN TRUE TO GOD UNDER THE REIGN OF ANTICHRIST. THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP IN MANY CASES WILL BE DEATH.

BELIEVERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE CHOICES. IN ORDER TO EAT THEY WILL HAVE TO WORSHIP THE ANTICHRIST OR SUFFER DEATH. THE UNSAVED MAN LOOKS UPON DEATH AS THE END OF EVERYTHING WORTHWHILE, IT IS A FEARFUL JOURNEY INTO THE UNSEEN AND UNKNOWN. THERE IS A SINGLE PHRASE WHICH GIVES SPECIAL MEANING TO THIS VERSE WITH REFERENCE TO THE DEAD "IN THE LORD." THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THE LIFE OF THE MAN WHO IS IN CHRIST. IT ALSO SPEAKS OF THE BLESSEDNESS THAT FOLLOWS HIM INTO THE LIFE HEREAFTER. THE TWO SIGNIFICANT TERMS WHICH SPEAK OF THE AFTER-LIFE OF THE BELIEVER:

(1) REST - SERVING THE LORD IS WORK. IN SOME RESPECTS, IT IS A NEVER-ENDING JOB AS LONG AS THE BELIEVER IS ON EARTH. HOWEVER, THERE IS A KIND OF "DIVINE R&R" IN THE NEXT LIFE. HOWEVER, THE UNRIGHTEOUS DO NOT NOW, NOR WILL THEY EVER HAVE - REST. THERE IS A PORT CALLED PARADISE FROM THE STORMS AND HARDSHIPS OF LIFE. WHEN A PERSON DIES HE LEAVES EVERYTHING BEHIND. (PSALM 49:17) "BE NOT THOU AFRAID WHEN ONE IS MADE RICH, WHEN THE GLORY OF HIS HOUSE IS INCREASED; FOR WHEN HE DIETH HE SHALL CARRY NOTHING AWAY: HIS GLORY SHALL NOT DESCEND AFTER HIM." (THIS IS THE BIBLE WAY OF SAYING THERE ARE NO RYDER TRUCKS OR U-HAUL TRAILERS IN THE FUNERAL PROCESSION!) EVEN THE RICH CANNOT TAKE IT WITH THEM. WHEN THEY DIE THEY CARRY NOTHING AT ALL, THEIR HONORS DO NOT MARCH IN PROCESSION BEHIND THEM TO THE GRAVE. THE WORLD MAY LAUD A PERSON'S GREAT SUCCESS BUT WHEN HE DIES HE IS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE - THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

(2) REWARD - THE BIBLE ENCOURAGES US TO PUT OUR INVESTMENTS ON THE RIGHT STREET. EVERYTHING ON WALL STREET AND NOTHING ON THE GOLDEN STREET ENDS IN DISASTER. (REV. 21:21)

- ① Salvation - given in free
- ② Rewards - earned!

1 Cor 3:13

Main Street (Broad way)

Work for the Lord
ISA. 57:20
21

Retired
Revised
(*)

Notes

DON'T SPEND IT NOW, BUT IT SEND IT AHEAD.
 (THE TEXT ALSO SPEAKS OF WORKS THAT FOLLOW
 AFTER THE BELIEVER. ALMOST EVERY CHRISTIAN
 HAS HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING THE BENEFACTOR
OF ANOTHER LABORER'S WORK. COMPARE BUCKFIELD
MISSIONARIES AND BURR OAK - MR. SANFORD.)

III. THE BLESSED RESISTANCE - Rev. 16:15

... Resist the Devil ... (Ja 4:7)
GARMENTS IN THE BIBLE ARE OFTEN SPOKEN AS
SYMBOLS OF THE SOUL. HOW ADAM AND EVE WERE
OUTWARDLY DRESSED OR COVERED REVEALED AN
INWARD ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD. VERSES SUCH AS
ISAIAH 64:6 SPEAK OF THE SAME ISSUE. THE LOSS
 OR ABSENCE OF A GARMENT AND ESPECIALLY NAKED-
NESS SPEAK OF PUBLIC SHAME. DURING THE NIGHT
 IN THE TEMPLE AREA, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEMPLE
GUARD WOULD MAKE HIS ROUNDS. WHEN HE
 APPROACHED THE GUARDS HE EXPECTED THEM TO
 ARISE AND SALUTE HIM. IF HE FOUND A GUARD
 ASLEEP HE COULD DO ONE OF SEVERAL THINGS:

- (1) HAVE THE MAN BEATEN
- (2) SET HIS GARMENTS ON FIRE. THIS WAS
 A SYMBOL OF SHAME AND DISGRACE. (Blaze)

THE GREAT ENEMY OF BELIEVERS DURING THE
 TRIBULATION PERIOD WILL BE THE BEAST. HE
 WILL BE A WILD, UNCIVILIZED, EVIL RULER WHOSE
 HATRED FOR GOD WILL INVOLVE THE WHOLE WORLD
 IN A MASSIVE SELF-WORSHIP PROGRAM. IN THIS
 PASSAGE, JOHN WARNS BELIEVERS OF THAT AGE
 AND EVERY AGE WHO ARE PRONE TO BE CARELESS
ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATTERS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY
 TRUE AS WE APPROACH THE END OF THE DISPENSA-
 TION. IN MY OPINION, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN
 A TIME WHEN MORE PEOPLE HAVE LISTENED TO MORE
WRONG DOCTRINE AND WRONG IDEAS THAN TODAY.

*Can't discern (see P. 44) New Age
 new kind of doctrine*

JOHN SPOKE TO THE SUBJECT AS FOLLOWS:

"AND NOW, LITTLE CHILDREN, ABIDE IN HIM; THAT WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, WE MAY HAVE CONFIDENCE AND NOT BE ASHAMED BEFORE HIM AT HIS COMING."
(1 JOHN 2:28)

IV. THE BLESSED REIGN - REVELATION 19:9

or RULE

20:4

THE CALL TO FUTURE BLESSING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS BY INVITATION ONLY. THERE ARE NO LAST-MINUTE INVITATIONS OR RESERVATIONS, IT MUST BE DONE IN ADVANCE. THE LAMB'S SUPPER AND THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE GO TOGETHER. REGISTER IN ADVANCE OR BE REJECTED FROM THE BANQUET. IN THIS PASSAGE THE EASTERN WEDDING IS IN VIEW. IT CONSISTED OF THREE ASPECTS.

BPM

(1) BETROTHAL. THE ENGAGEMENT OF A HEBREW COUPLE WAS CONSUMMATED BY A LEGAL CONTRACT. OFTEN IT WAS MADE BETWEEN FATHERS, SOMETIMES BEFORE THE CHILDREN WERE BORN OR SHORTLY THEREAFTER. IT WAS SO BINDING THAT THE CONTRACT WAS WITNESSED AND SIGNED BEFORE JUDGES.

(2) PRESENTATION. WHEN THE COUPLE REACHED MARRIAGEABLE AGE, THE YOUNG MAN WOULD APPROACH HIS FATHER AND ASK THAT THE CONTRACT BE FULFILLED. THE FATHER WOULD SEND A DELEGATION TO THE HOUSE OF THE BRIDE TO BE. SHE WAS BROUGHT TO THE HOUSE OF THE GROOM'S FATHER. THE BRIDE'S FATHER WOULD ACCOMPANY THE GROUP AND AT THE HOUSE IT WAS HIS DUTY TO PLACE THE BRIDE'S HAND INTO THE HAND OF THE GROOM'S FATHER WHO IN TURN PLACED IT IN THE GROOM'S HAND. THIS WAS THE FORMAL CEREMONY. IT WAS NOT UNCOMMON FOR THE BRIDE TO BE VEILED AND SOME INSTANCES NEVER HAVING BEEN SEEN BEFORE THE SNATCHING OFF OF THE VEIL WHICH WAS A FORMAL WAY OF SHOWING AUTHORITY OVER HER.

(3) MARRIAGE SUPPER. THIS WAS THE FESTIVE PART OF THE WEDDING. HERE THE BRIDE WAS INTRODUCED TO THE FRIENDS OF THE GROOM. AT THIS FEAST, THE BRIDEGROOM HAD HELD THE PLACE OF ATTENTION AND INTEREST. THEY CAME TO HONOR HIM. (SOMEONE HAS SAID AT THE HEBREW WEDDING THE ORGANIST PLAYED "HERE COMES THE GROOM." THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES THAT THE CHURCH IS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. HE WILL RETURN FOR THAT BRIDE WHO WILL IN TURN SPEND A 1000 YEAR HEAVENLY HONEYMOON ON EARTH AS MEN ADMIRE HIM AND ARE INTRODUCED TO THE BRIDE. THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY, MEN HAVE LONGED FOR A GOLDEN AGE - A EUTOPIA ON EARTH. EVERY ATTEMPT OF MAN TO THIS END HAS FAILED. THE OLD TESTAMENT ABOUNDS WITH MULTIPLE REFERENCES TO A LITERAL KINGDOM ON EARTH WITH MESSIAH RULING WITH A ROD OF IRON FOR 1000 YEARS. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE TERM 1000 YEARS IS USED 6 TIMES IN THE 20TH CHAPTER OF REVELATION.

V. THE BLESSED RESURRECTION - REVELATION 20:6

THE USAGE OF THE TERM "FIRST" RESURRECTION IMPLIES A SECOND. THE FIRST RESURRECTION DEALS WITH SAVED PEOPLE. THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION INCLUDE SEVERAL CLASSES OF REDEEMED PEOPLE COVERING A LONG DURATION OF TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CHURCH. IN PHILIPPIANS 3:11, PAUL SPOKE OF THE "OUT FROM AMONG THE DEAD" RESURRECTION. 2. OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS - DANIEL 12:2-3. 3. TRIBULATION SAINTS - REVELATION 20:3-5. UNSAVED DEAD ARE MENTIONED IN REV. 20:5 AS "THE REST OF THE DEAD" AND THEY ARE SEEN IN REV. 20:11-15 AND ARE CATEGORIZED THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE AS THE WICKED DEAD. (JOHN 5:28-29) SOME PEOPLE CHARACTERIZE BELIEVERS AS "HOLY ROLLERS". THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT THEIR FUTURE AS BEING "HOLY RISERS!"

②
Two
Witnesses

VI. THE BLESSED RESIDENCE - REVELATION 22:7,14

THE WORD HOME CARRIES A GREAT DEAL OF NOSTALGIA. UNDER FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS A PLACE OF GREAT HAPPINESS AND BLESSING ON EARTH. THE BIBLE TELLS OF ABRAHAM WHO, BY FAITH, HAD FIXED HIS EYE ON A CITY WHOSE ARCHITECT AND BUILDER WAS GOD. (HEB. 11:9-10)
IN 1956, I HEARD DR. ALVA MCCLAIN USE AN ILLUSTRATION ABOUT HOME. GOING BACK TO FARMHOUSE AND FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS, SOMETHING MISSING - HIS MOTHER AND FATHER WERE NOT THERE. IN 1981 THAT EXPERIENCE BECAME A REALITY. (RELATE STORY OF MAN WHO RECEIVED HIS SIGHT - FIRST TO SEE, NOT WIFE, CHILDREN, MOTHER BUT THE ONE WHO GAVE HIM HIS SIGHT.)
"WHEN MY LIFE'S WORK IS ENDED AND I CROSS THE SWELLING TIDE, WHEN THE BRIGHT AND GLORIOUS MORNING I SHALL SEE; I SHALL KNOW MY REDEEMER WHEN I REACH THE OTHER SIDE, AND HIS SMILE WILL BE THE FIRST TO WELCOME ME. THROUGH THE GATES OF THE CITY IN A ROBE OF SPOTLESS WHITE, HE WILL LEAD ME WHERE NO TEARS WILL EVER FALL; IN THE GLAD SONG OF AGES I SHALL MINGLE WITH DELIGHT, BUT I LONG TO SEE MY SAVIOUR FIRST OF ALL."

OPTIONAL:

Dr. Sterling -
To Washington

B. 7
Dad = phy. life
Christ = sp. life
S

"MEN AS TREES"*Walking*

MARK 8:22-25

(24)

Cloudy

THIS IS THE ONLY MIRACLE IN SCRIPTURE THAT JESUS DID IN STAGES: IT MOVED FROM PARTIAL TO PLAIN OR CLEAR SIGHT. IN OTHER WORDS, IT WAS A GRADUAL HEALING OR CURE. ALSO, HE USED MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THE HEALING. (SOME PENTECOSTAL BRETHREN GET THEIR "SECOND TOUCH" THEOLOGY FROM THIS PASSAGE.) SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THIS IS GOD'S WAY OF SHOWING US THAT WE DO NOT ALWAYS SEE SPIRITUAL TRUTH CLEARLY AT FIRST. JUST AS THERE IS PROGRESSIVE REVELATION, SO THERE IS PROGRESSIVE ILLUMINATION. THINGS THAT ARE CLOUDY AT FIRST WILL CLEAR UP LATER. «ILLUSTRATE WITH THE DOCTRINE OF SECURITY» OUR LORD USED MEANS IN SOME HEALINGS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS HEALING THAT IS IMPORTANT AND NOT THE HOW! LET US EXAMINE SEVERAL PASSAGES THAT DEAL WITH THE SUBJECT OF MEN AND TREES:

I. THE SINNING MAN AMONG THE TREES -GENESIS 3:8 - "*among*"

WHEN ADAM DISOBEYED GOD, SHAME REPLACED THE SECURITY HE HAD ONCE KNOWN IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. ADAM'S TEST WAS CONCERNING GOD'S WORD AND HIS OBEDIENCE TO IT. (GENESIS 2:15-17) ADAM'S MORAL TEST THEN AND NOW WAS WHETHER OR NOT HE WOULD PERMIT GOD TO DIRECT HIS LIFE. HIS APPROACH WITH REFERENCE TO THE WORD WAS: (1) DOUBT - 3:1; (2) DISTORTION - 3:2; (3) DENIAL - 3:4. ADAM'S MORAL FAILURE AFFECTED THE ENTIRE RACE OF MEN. (ROMANS 5:12) ADAM WAS CREATED WITH A HOLY NATURE AND A TENDENCY TO DO RIGHT. HOWEVER

God's Word -
man's word

Andrew found Peter v. 41
Philip "Nathaniel" v. 45-3-

To Spinski lady.

Susley

"under"

II. THE SINCERE MAN UNDER A TREE - JOHN 1:48

IN THIS PASSAGE, WE LEARN SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT NATHANIEL. (FIND SOME BODY)

① Wron (A) HE WAS SKEPTICAL - 46 - "Can..."

1 Cor 1:21
His words not clear!
1:15 3:51
"we here done!"
NAZARETH WAS A RURAL VILLAGE IN THE HILLS OF ISRAEL AND THE GREAT EVENTS IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY TOOK PLACE IN JERUSALEM. NATHANIEL DOUBTED IF ISRAEL'S MESSIAH COULD COME FROM SUCH AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY REMOTE PLACE. IN THIS REGARD HE REPRESENTS ALL MEN WHO THINK GOD MUST ACT IN WAYS ACCORDING TO THEIR DESIGN OR EXPECTATION. AS A MATTER OF FACT, GOD OFTEN DOES NOT DO WHAT MEN EXPECT! IF MEN WERE TO SEARCH FOR GOD THEY WOULD GO TO GREAT CENTERS OF LEARNING AND WORSHIP, PERHAPS TO A GREAT UNIVERSITY COMPLEX OR A GREAT CATHEDRAL OR WELL-KNOWN CHURCH. THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH BEING SKEPTICAL IF WHEN ONE FACES THE FACTS HE IS ABLE TO ACCEPT THEM.

(B) HE WAS SINCERE - 47 - "nothing false"

1 Cor 1:21
His words not clear!
1:15 3:51
"we here done!"
JESUS SAW IN NATHANIEL A MAN OF HONESTY OF MIND AND HIGH MORAL CHARACTER. HIS DOUBTS WERE HONEST DOUBTS AND NOT THAT OF A CLOSED-MINDED CRITIC. HOWEVER, SINCERITY IS NOT ENOUGH. A PERSON MAY BE SINCERE, AND SINCERELY WRONG! THE FACT THAT HE WAS SITTING UNDER THE FIG TREE OR THE SYMBOLIC PLACE OF SINCERE RELIGIOUS MEN WHO WENT THERE FOR PRAYER AND MEDITATION.

(C) HE WAS SEARCHING - 48 - (Act 17:11)

APPARENTLY NATHANIEL WAS READING THE SCRIPTURES. MANY CRITICS AND SKEPTICS WILL NOT TAKE TIME TO EXAMINE THE SCRIPTURES. THEY PARROT TIRED CLICHES OF UNBELIEF AND ARE

Lehman -
never had
hear say over "he say"
says



MESSIAH TO ORIGINATE. NATHANIEL, LIKE ALL NATURAL MEN, HAD TO LEARN A VERY IMPORTANT LESSON, NAMELY, GOD DOES NOT DO THINGS THE WAY MEN MIGHT OR THE WAY MEN EXPECT GOD TO OPERATE. DESPITE HIS HONEST DOUBTS HE SHOWED AN OPENNESS AND SINCERITY THAT REVEALED HIGH MORAL CHARACTER. THE FIG TREE WAS A PLACE WHERE MEN WENT TO MEDITATE AND PRAY. AT LEAST, NATHANIEL WAS MAKING AN EFFORT TO FIND OUT WHAT THE BIBLE HAD TO SAY ABOUT MESSIAH. NATHANIEL'S QUESTIONING NATURE REVEALS THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH. (SOMEONE HAS SAID IT IS IMPORTANT TO BELIEVE YOUR BELIEFS AND EVEN DOUBT YOUR DOUBTS BUT NEVER BELIEVE YOUR DOUBTS OR DOUBT YOUR BELIEFS!) TOO MANY ARE ASKING THE WRONG QUESTIONS TODAY. THEY OUGHT TO BE ASKING: "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? HOW MAY I GET TO HEAVEN AND ESCAPE HELL? HOW MAY I RAISE MY CHILDREN IN A CHRISTIAN HOME? HOW MAY I HELP OTHERS IN A WORLD GONE MAD OVER SIN? DOES GOD HAVE MEANING AND PURPOSE FOR MY LIFE? HOW MAY I KNOW HIM?" THESE ARE THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS MEN OUGHT TO BE ASKING. THERE IS INDICATION THAT NATHANIEL WAS SEEKING SOME ANSWERS IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT OBEY OR FOLLOW THE DIRECTION OF TRUTH. VERSE 49 WOULD INDICATE THAT HE DID INDEED TRUST CHRIST FOR SALVATION. NATHANIEL DEMONSTRATES THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE SINCERE IN ORDER TO BE SAVED. IN FACT, ONE MAY BE SINCERELY WRONG.

III. THE SEEKING MAN UP A TREE - LUKE 19:10

ZACCHAEUS WAS A SINNER. THIS PERSONAL SINNERSHIP IS INDICATED IN SEVERAL WAYS.

(A) HE WAS A SINNER BY IMPLICATION - "JERICHO" THERE ARE SOME CITIES WHICH SPEAK MORE OF SIN

OF MEN AND TREES

(MARIC. 8:24)

VISITORS TO ISRAEL ARE STRUCK BY THE ABSENCE OF TREES. WHEN THE TURKS OCCUPIED THE LAND MANY YEARS AGO, THEY CHOPPED DOWN MANY OF THE TREES TO FUEL THE TRAINS. FOR THE PAST 50 60+ YEARS, PLANTING TREES IN ISRAEL HAS BEEN A MAJOR CONSERVATION PROGRAM. SOME 26 DIFFERENT KINDS OF TREES ARE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE. IN EDEN, THE TEXT SAYS "AND OUT OF THE GROUND MADE THE LORD GOD TO GROW EVERY TREE THAT IS PLEASANT TO THE SIGHT, AND GOOD FOR FOOD; THE TREE OF LIFE, ALSO IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, AND THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL." (GEN. 2:9) THESE TWO TREES WERE SYMBOLS OF MAN'S MORAL CONDITION. ① THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, A SYMBOL OF MAN'S MORAL TESTING. THE TREE OF LIFE, A SYMBOL OF MAN'S FIXED MORAL STATE. (EXPLAIN) LET US EXAMINE CERTAIN MEN AND CERTAIN TREES IN ORDER TO LEARN CERTAIN SPIRITUAL LESSONS.

I. THE SINNING MAN AMONG THE TREES - GEN. 3:8

WHEN ADAM AND EVE SINNED AGAINST GOD THEY TRIED TO RUN FROM AND HIDE FROM GOD. MAN'S FIRST GREAT MORAL DECISION WAS IN THE AREA OF BELIEF AND OBEDIENCE. ADAM HAD TO DECIDE IF HE WOULD BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID AND OBEY GOD. IF MAN WAS TO DEVELOP AS GOD INTENDED, THE MATTER OF HUMAN CHOICE AND FREEDOM HAD TO BE CONSIDERED. THE TEST IN THE TEXT WAS CONCERNING THE WORD OF GOD. EITHER MAN WOULD BELIEVE GOD, HIS CREATOR, OR SATAN, THE GREAT DECEIVER. ADAM AND EVE FAILED THIS TEST AND CONSEQUENTLY INVOLVED THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE IN SIN AS A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE. (ROM. 5:12, ROM 3:23, ISAIAH 53:6) BECAUSE OF ADAM'S DISOBEDIENCE, ALL MEN WERE BORN WITH A SINFUL NATURE AND THE CAPACITY TO SIN. THERE ARE NO

Universal experience!

Refers to man's disposition to sin -2-
not the depth on degree = a bias toward evil
left to himself, man's downward toward sin, not upward toward God.

MAN FAILED THE TEST!

Full's

WITH A WILL CAPABLE OF CHOICE, GOD PERMITTED MAN TO BE TESTED IN ORDER THAT THROUGH MORE EXPERIENCE HE MIGHT DEVELOP HOLY CHARACTER. AS A RESULT OF ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION, SIN BECAME A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE HUMAN RACE. (ISAIAH 53:6, ROMANS 3:10, 3:23) IN THEOLOGY, THIS IS CALLED THE DOCTRINE OF TOTAL DEPRAVITY. THIS TERM DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE UNSAVED MAN HAS NO DISPOSITION WHATEVER TO DO RIGHT, OR THAT HE NEVER DOES ANYTHING GOOD, OR HE IS AS BAD AS HE COULD BE. IT DOES MEAN THAT ALL MEN HAVE A SINFUL NATURE AND UNDER FAVORABLE CONDITIONS ARE CAPABLE OF THE WORST KIND OF SIN. ALSO, THE MAN OUTSIDE OF CHRIST IS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT GOD'S GLORY AND GOD IS NOWHERE IN HIS GOAL OR OBJECTIVES IN LIFE. MAN HAS NO MEANS OF RECOVERY FROM SIN WITHIN HIMSELF BUT IS DEPENDENT UPON GOD FOR SUCH DELIVERANCE. HAVING LOST HIS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD, ADAM SOUGHT TO MAKE HIS ENVIRONMENT MORE COMFORTABLE AND TO COVER HIS GUILT. ACCORDING TO 3:7, MAN MADE A COVERING WITH HIS OWN HANDS. SIN STRUCK FEAR IN HIS HEART AND HE TRIED TO HIDE FROM GOD - 3:8. IN THIS CHAPTER IN THE BIBLE, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND BASIC BIBLE TRUTHS IS ILLUSTRATED, NAMELY, WHEN MAN SINS AGAINST GOD HE ATTEMPTS TO COVER HIS SIN AND SENSE OF GUILT WITH THE WORKS OF HIS OWN HANDS. HOWEVER, ALL SUCH ATTEMPTS OF HAND-MADE, MAN-MADE RELIGION ARE FUTILE BEFORE GOD. GOD REQUIRES A COVERING OF HIS OWN DESIGN - 3:21. IN THIS EARLY ILLUSTRATION THERE IS A PICTURE OF ATONEMENT, NAMELY THE INNOCENT DYING FOR THE GUILTY.

Obedience = run to meet God
Disobedience = run & hide

Hide

Cover

Some high in church

↑ "where get them?"

① Comm. I

EXCEPTIONS! THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT ALL MEN SIN AS MUCH AS OTHER MEN BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT ALL MEN ARE **CAPABLE** OF ALL KINDS OF SIN. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT MEN ARE NOT CAPABLE OF KIND, GENEROUS, LOVING DEEDS, BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT ALL MEN HAVE A **SINFUL NATURE** AND UNDER FAVORABLE CONDITIONS ARE CAPABLE OF THE WORST KINDS OF SINS. MEN DO NOT HAVE THE ABILITY TO **CURE** THIS PROBLEM. THE CURE IS DIVINE IN NATURE. WHEN ADAM AND EVE SINNED AGAINST GOD IT MADE THEM **LIARS** AND **COWARDS** BEFORE HIM. INSTEAD OF SEEKING **FELLOWSHIP** WITH GOD AND A SUSTAINED **FRIENDSHIP** WITH HIM, THEY **RAN AND HID**. THEN THEY ATTEMPTED TO **MAKE SOMETHING WITH THEIR OWN HANDS** TO COVER THEIR **NAKEDNESS**. SINCE THAT TIME, MEN HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING TO DO THE SAME THING. IN **THEOLOGY**, THIS CONDITION OF MAN IS CALLED **TOTAL DEPRAVITY**. A **PROBLEM** HAS ARISEN IN THE PAST FEW DECADES WITH PEOPLE SHYING AWAY FROM THE WORD **SIN** AND **SINNER**. A GREAT REDEFINING PROCESS HAS TAKEN PLACE TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND A **SINNER** ANYWHERE TODAY. SIN HAS BEEN REDEFINED AS **SICKNESS** EVEN **INSANITY** BUT THE **CHANGING OF THE NAME** HAS NOT CHANGED THE **CONDITION**!

II. THE SINCERE MAN UNDER THE TREE - JOHN 1:48

NATHANIEL IS THE CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF THE **HONEST DOUBTER**. CURE FOR HIS DOUBT WAS NOT **ARGUMENT** BUT **INVITATION**. HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE FACT THAT **JESUS** COULD READ HIS INNERMOST THOUGHTS! WHEN **NATHANIEL** HEARD THAT **JESUS** WAS FROM **NAZARETH**, HE WAS A BIT SKEPTICAL BECAUSE **NAZARETH** WAS A VERY **UNDISTINGUISHED** PLACE - SOMEWHERE ONE WOULD NOT EXPECT ANYTHING SPECTACULAR TO HAPPEN. THIS TOWN WAS IN A **RURAL PART** OF PALESTINE, IT WAS NOT IN THE **MAINSTREAM** OF JEWISH LIFE AND HISTORY, CERTAINLY NOT THE PLACE WHERE ONE WOULD EXPECT

"rooted in dry ground"
22.53.

John 1:48
"You are a son of David"

✓ Cows get out
 ✓ Cows to Barn
 ✓ Balls
 Walk to school bus - to 2nd
 Feed Stock - milk cow. (chicken - pigs - 60)
 Cut wood - garden - 5 - pick fruit (wild berries)
 Farm - work -
 Describe - To tired to get into mischief!!!
 before school bus!

CITIES WELCOME THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL;
 OTHERS ARE HOSTILE TO IT. OUR ENVIRONMENT
 ISN'T EVERYTHING BUT IT MAY PLAY A PART IN
 OUR SPIRITUAL INTERESTS. (I SHALL BE
 ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR PARENTS WHO MOVED TO
 THE COUNTRY AT A CRUCIAL TIME IN MY LIFE.)

(2) HE WAS A SINNER BY VOCATION OR OCCUPATION - VERSE 2

ZACCHAEUS' JOB COULD HAVE BEEN A HINDRANCE
 TO HIS CONVERSION. WHEN ROME TOOK OVER
 PALESTINE, THE GOVERNMENT LEVIED CERTAIN
 TAXES ON THE COUNTRY. THE POSITION OF TAX
 COLLECTOR OR PUBLICAN WAS SOLD TO THE
 HIGHEST BIDDER. THESE COLLECTORS HAD A CERTAIN
 TAX JURISDICTION FROM WHICH AN ASSESSED
 AMOUNT WAS REQUIRED. ANYTHING ELSE ABOVE THAT
 AMOUNT THAT COULD BE SQUEEZED OUT WAS PROFIT
 FOR THEM. THE FACT THAT ZACCHAEUS WAS THE
 HEAD COMMISSIONER OVER HIS TAX DIVISION
 INDICATES THAT HE WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL AT HIS
 JOB. HE COULD WELL HAVE BEEN VERY UNPOPULAR
 AND HATED FOR DOING HIS JOB SO WELL. CERTAIN
 TYPES OF JOBS MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE
 TO BE SAVED. IF DISHONESTY AND IMMORALITY IS
 PART OF YOUR JOB LIFESTYLE, THEN IT COULD BE
 A HINDRANCE TO YOUR SALVATION. POINT: IS
 A PERSON'S JOB MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIS ETERNAL
 SOUL?

(3) HE WAS A SINNER BY REPUTATION - VERSE 7
 CURRENT LITERATURE SUGGESTS THAT THE WORD
 "SINNER" IS OUT, THAT IS, WELL-BRED, WELL-
 READ, WELL-ADJUSTED PEOPLE SIMPLY DON'T USE
 THAT TERM. IT IS A NO-NO - A TABOO. WHO
 SAYS SO? DECLARING IT AN UNDESIRABLE TERM
 WILL NOT CHANGE MAN'S CONDITION. THE OVER-
 RIDING TRUTH OF THIS PASSAGE IS THAT ZACCHAEUS

well-fed

UNWILLING TO HONESTLY EXAMINE THE SCRIPTURE.
(COMMENT REGARDING COLSON AND MADALYN MURRAY
IN TV STUDIO.)

(D) HE WAS SAVED 49

Context - *Ability of Christ
to save
King of Israel
(Isaiah 53:8)*

SALVATION IS REVEALED IN THE CHANGED ATTITUDE
TOWARD JESUS. WHEN A PERSON IS SAVED, THE
BIBLE IS NO LONGER A CHORE TO READ BUT IT IS
FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY SOUL. CHURCH IS NO LONGER
A BURDEN BUT A BLESSING. PRAYER IS NO LONGER
SOMETHING WE DO IN EMERGENCY ONLY BUT IT IS
THE BREATH OF THE SOUL. THERE WAS A CHANGE
IN HIS LANGUAGE. NATHANIEL CALLED JESUS
BY THE RIGHT TERMS! *(Whole new vocabulary!)*

III. THE SEEKING MAN UP A TREE - Luke 19:4

"A Sinner ... Sought And Saved" - (19:10)

ZACCHAEUS HAD NOT LIVED UP TO HIS NAME, FOR
THE WORD MEANS "JUST" AND IN THIS PASSAGE HE
IS BOTH A SINNER AND LOST. THE PASSAGE
SUGGESTS THAT HE WAS A SINNER ON SEVERAL
COUNTS:

(1) HE WAS A SINNER BY IMPLICATION AND
LOCATION - "JERICHO"

JERICHO WAS KNOWN
AS A WILD, WICKED CITY. LIVING THERE MADE
IT EASIER TO SIN. JERICHO WAS NOTED FOR
ITS SPICES AND PERFUME. IT HAD BEEN CALLED
THE EDEN OF PALESTINE FOR THE CLIMATE WAS
ONE OF PERPETUAL SUMMER. IN SPITE OF ITS
PHYSICAL BEAUTY IT WAS A TOWN OF GREAT
WICKEDNESS FILLED WITH THIEVES AND ROBBERS.
THE 21 MILE SECTION OF ROAD BETWEEN JERUSALEM
AND JERICHO WAS CALLED THE "DARK AND BLOODY
WAY." THE CAVES AND GORGES ALONG THE ROAD
PROVIDED AMPLE PLACE FOR THIEVES TO HIDE.
POINT: IT IS NEVER EASY TO BE SAVED BUT
THERE ARE SOME PLACES WHERE IT IS MORE
CONDUCTIVE TO SALVATION THAN OTHERS. SOME

*"Evening
in
Jericho"*

Sinners
"church"

3

HOW IS A SAVED MAN LIKE A TREE? HE IS ROOTED
IN THE WORD OF GOD. HE IS FRUITFUL IN THE
WORK OF GOD. HE IS PROSPEROUS IN THE WAY
OF GOD. HE IS STEADFAST IN THE THINGS
OF GOD.

*Plant a post and it begins to rot!
" " tree " " , begin " grow!*

THE WORD TREE IN OUR TEXT IN HEBREW IS SOMETIMES TRANSLATED GALLOWS. THREE TIMES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, THE WORD "TREE" IS USED REGARDING THE CROSS OF CHRIST. NOTICE THE WORDS HE AND OUR. THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM ILLUSTRATES THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSTITUTION, THAT IS THE INNOCENT BEARING THE SINS OF THE GUILTY. FOR EXAMPLE, TWO MEN PASSING ALONG THE STREET AT NIGHT HEAR THE GROANING IN THE GUTTER, STRIKING A MATCH THEY SEE TWO MEN LYING IN THE STREET WITH THEIR FACES ALL GNASHED AND BLEEDING. IN A DRUNKEN BRAWL THEY HAVE ALMOST KILLED EACH

Rom. 5: 8

IV. THE SAVED MAN LIKE A TREE - Psalm 1:3

AC
D, XG
→ THIS PSALM PAINTS A WORD PICTURE OF THE TWO MAJOR CLASSES OF MEN IN SOCIETY - THE BLESSED, THE UNGODLY. THE SAVED MAN IS NOT CALLED A FLOWER, A WEED OR A BUSH BUT THE SPIRITUALLY STABLE PERSON IS LIKE A WELL-ESTABLISHED TREE. (RECENTLY WE BUILT A FENCE. THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TREE AND A FENCE POST. PLANT A TREE AND IT BEGINS TO GROW, PLANT A FENCE POST AND IT BEGINS TO ROT. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TREE AND A POST IS A MATTER OF LIFE. ONE IS ALIVE, THE OTHER IS DEAD. LIVING CHRISTIANS ARE LIKE LIVING TREES. THE PROBLEM IS THAT IN MANY CHURCHES SOME WHO PROFESS TO BE TREES ARE REALLY POSTS. THEY NEED PROPPING UP, PAINTING, AND THEY ARE IN A CONSTANT CONDITION OF DETERIORATION.)

V. THE SAVIOUR ON THE TREE - I PETER 2:24

THREE TIMES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS THE CROSS IS CALLED A TREE. (ACTS 5:30, ACTS 10:39, ACTS 13:29) THE WORD TREE AND ME ARE LINKED FOREVER THROUGH CHRIST'S WORK THERE. (II COR. 5:21, ISAIAH 53:6)