

"THE RETURN OF THE GALATIANS"  
ORTHE GOSPEL AND THE GALATIANS

GALATIANS 1:1-24

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL PRESENT DIFFERENT BENEFITS THE BELIEVER HAS IN CHRIST. FOR EXAMPLE, ROMANS STATES WE ARE JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST. EPHESIANS - EXALTED IN CHRIST. PHILIPPIANS - JOY IN CHRIST. COLOSSIANS - COMPLETE IN CHRIST. THESSALONIANS - HOPE IN CHRIST. IN GALATIANS, OUR LIBERTY IN CHRIST. (5:1) GALATIANS IS THE EPISTLE OF LIBERTY, THAT IS, THE BELIEVER IS FREE FROM THE LAW. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE IS LAWLESS BUT THE LAW AS LAW HAS NO HOLD OVER HIM. ALL OF THE FREEDOM AND LIBERTY OF THE BELIEVER COMES TO HIM THROUGH GRACE. • THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S GOOD NEWS TO MEN. MARTIN LUTHER FOUND IN GALATIANS THE SECRET OF HIS OWN DELIVERANCE, HE CALLED IT "MY EPISTLE." "GALATIANS WAS THE BATTLE AX WHICH LUTHER BROUGHT DOWN WITH TERRIFIC AND TELLING FORCE UPON THE HELMET OF HIS FOES." WHEN PAUL WROTE GALATIANS, HE AND THE GOSPEL WERE BOTH UNDER ATTACK. SOME INSISTED THAT PAUL WAS NOT AN APOSTLE AND THAT GRACE WAS NOT ENOUGH TO SAVE THE SOUL, THEY BELIEVED KEEPING THE LAW WAS NECESSARY TOO.

I. THE PERSON WHO IS THE THEME OF THE GOSPEL-  
VERSES 3-41:7 "gospel of Christ" = <sup>Script</sup>

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY IS "PREACHING HIM" - 1:16  
VERSE 16. (11 COR. 4:5) THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT EVERYTHING ELSE ABOUT THE LIFE OF OUR LORD IS SUBORDINATE TO HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. ALL THROUGH THE BIBLE THE

"Our message is not about us... it's about Him!"

1 Cor 15:1-3

WHOM/WHAT

THEME OF CHRIST AND HIS DEATH IS CENTRAL. THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE ABOUT A PERSON. (II TIM. 1:12) THOSE WHO HAVE A GENUINE CONVERSION EXPERIENCE ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH CHRIST. RELIGION IS PREOCCUPIED WITH A SYSTEM - MAKING IT FUNCTION AND BEING INVOLVED IN IT WHILE SALVATION IS INVOLVED IN MAKING HIM KNOWN AND KNOWING HIM BETTER. (RELATE STORY OF MAN IN HOLE) THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S MEANS OF RESCUING MEN FROM SIN. (THE STORY IS TOLD OF AN ARMENIAN KING AND HIS FAMILY WHO WERE TAKEN CAPTIVE BY THE ROMAN ARMY. THE KING AND HIS FAMILY WERE SENTENCED TO DIE. "TAKE ME AND DO WHAT YOU WILL, ONLY SPARE MY WIFE AND CHILDREN," WAS THE KING'S APPEAL. THE APPEAL SO MOVED THE ROMAN GENERAL THAT HE SET THE ENTIRE FAMILY FREE. AS THEY LEFT THEIR CAPTORS THE KING SAID TO HIS WIFE: "WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE ROMAN GENERAL?" "I PAID NO ATTENTION TO HIM AT ALL," SAID HIS WIFE. "MY EYES WERE ON THE ONE WHO WAS WILLING TO DIE FOR ME. I SAW NO ONE ELSE."

## II. THE PERVERSION OF THE GOSPEL - 6+9

HISTORIANS TELL THAT ONE OF THE WEAKNESS OF THE GAULS WAS THEIR FICKLENESS AND WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS EASILY. THEY LACKED DEEP CONVICTION ABOUT ANYTHING NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS THE WORD OF GOD. INSTEAD OF SYMPATHY FROM PAUL, THE GALATIANS RECEIVED STRONG REBUKE. THEY WERE TAMPERING WITH THE WRONG THINGS. THE TERM "REMOVED" MEANS TO TRANSFER FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER OR LITERALLY TO CHANGE PLACES. IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE IT WAS USED OF A TURNCOAT OR DEFECTOR. PAUL FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THESE PEOPLE COULD TURN SO QUICKLY AWAY FROM THE GOSPEL TO SOMETHING ELSE.

Use intro Notes here (yellow)

(Korean War)

Not on  
similarity  
Spaul  
Lack  
depth  
thought

(2) Relationship

(2)

THESE PEOPLE HAD ACCEPTED ANOTHER GOSPEL WHICH WAS REALLY NOT THE GOSPEL, THAT IS WAS NOT GOOD NEWS! THIS IS A PLACE WHERE THERE IS NO ROOM FOR ERROR. IF MEN ARE MISLED ABOUT THE GOSPEL THE CONSEQUENCES ARE ETERNAL IN THEIR DIMENSION AND RAMIFICATION. DR. HARRY IRONSIDE TELLS THE STORY ABOUT A LADY AND HER BABY WHO GOT ON THE TRAIN. SHE ASKED THE CONDUCTOR TO LET HER KNOW WHEN HER STATION CAME. SHE WAS ASSURED THAT HE WOULD NOT FORGET AND DO HIS JOB. SITTING OPPOSITE THE WOMAN WAS A MAN WHO HAD LITTLE FAITH IN RAILROADS AND RAILROAD PERSONNEL. HE NOTICED THAT THE LADY WAS NERVOUS AND ILL AT EASE AND HE TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT CONDUCTORS IN THE PAST WHO HAD BEEN FORGETFUL AND NEGLIGENT OF THEIR JOB BUT ASSURED THE LADY THAT HE KNEW OF HER STOP AND WOULD TELL HER WHEN IT WAS TIME TO GET OFF. THIS HE DID SUGGESTING THAT THE NEXT STOP WAS HERS, HELPED HER WITH HER LUGGAGE AND SHE GOT OFF THE TRAIN. HIS PARTING COMMENT WAS, "YOU SEE I TOLD YOU, THE CONDUCTOR HAS FORGOTTEN YOU."

A FEW MINUTES AFTER THE LADY HAD GOTTEN OFF THE CONDUCTOR PASSED THROUGH THE TRAIN INQUIRING OF HER PRESENCE. THE SUPPOSED HELPFUL PASSENGER TOLD THE CONDUCTOR THAT HE REALIZED THAT HE HAD FORGOTTEN HER AND THAT HE HAD HELPED HER OFF THE TRAIN. HE LEARNED TO HIS AMAZEMENT THAT THE TRAIN HAD MADE AN EMERGENCY STOP AT A REMOTE STATION. THIS WOMAN HAD BEEN THE VICTIM OF A SINCERE EFFORT BUT THE MAN WAS SINCERELY WRONG.

(SEVERAL YEARS AGO AN ARTICLE APPEARED IN OUR DAILY BREAD. I CANNOT SPEAK FOR ITS VALIDITY BUT THE IDEA IS WORTH CONSIDERING. IT SUGGESTED THAT ONE OF THE REASONS WHY DRUG PRESCRIPTIONS ARE WRITTEN IN LANGUAGE IS THAT LATIN IS A MORE EXACT LANGUAGE THAN

Gospel: Sign Post  
- City of Refuge

Phases of Asylum

...accidental manslaughter

"A Vengeance of Blood"

dicty of  
Nagat. 17  
Rin

Roads open - more for the than 30 miles

ENGLISH AND BEING A DEAD LANGUAGE DOES NOT CHANGE. MANY OF THE DRUGS PRESCRIBED HAVE NO ENGLISH NAME AT ALL. AS IN THE CASE OF PRESCRIPTIONS, THE ONE FILLING THE PRESCRIPTION IS NOT CALLED UPON TO DECIPHER OR GUESS OR FIGURE OUT OR MAKE SUBSTITUTES, HE IS CALLED UPON TO DO WHAT THE PRESCRIPTION ASKS FOR.)

### III. THE PLEASURE OF GOD IN THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL - VERSES 10-12

PAUL WANTED TO PLEASE GOD. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THINGS THAT PLEASE GOD NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS HIS SON AND THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL. (1 COR. 1:21) GOD IS PLEASED WHEN CHRIST IS PREACHED.

*Preacher's mistaken performance = pleased everyone except ONE! The One who matters!*

### IV. THE PERSECUTION THAT AROSE OVER THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL - VERSES 13-14

PAUL, BEFORE HIS CONVERSION, WAS FURIOUS OVER THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL. YOU SEE, IF THEIR MESSAGE WAS RIGHT HE, A DEVOUT JEW, WAS TOTALLY WRONG. THIS FACT MADE HIM FURIOUS AND THAT FURY TURNED INTO RELIGIOUS FANATICISM AND HATRED TOWARD CHRISTIANS. HE SOUGHT TO ELIMINATE CHRISTIANITY FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH. (W. A. CRISWELL TELLS THE STORY OF PERSECUTION IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY. ON JUNE 4, 1768, THREE BAPTIST PREACHERS WERE ARRAIGNED IN THE COURTHOUSE AT FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA. THAT SAME DAY THEY WERE BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING'S COURT. THE KING'S ATTORNEY WAS READY TO PROSECUTE THESE PREACHERS FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL. THE CHARGE READ: "FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD CONTRARY TO THE STATUTE IN THAT CASE PROVIDED AND CONSEQUENTLY DISTURBERS OF THE PEACE." WHILE ALL THIS

WAS GOING ON, A YOUNG PATRIOT NAMED PATRICK HENRY HAD MADE HIS WAY TO FREDERICKSBURG TO DEFEND THESE MEN. HISTORY RECORDS HIS PASSIONED DEFENSE AND THE POINT HE MADE TO THE JUDGE AND THE ATTORNEYS WAS SO POWERFUL THAT HE SHAMED THEM AND THE MEN WERE SENT FREE. OUT OF THEIR PERSECUTION THE WRITERS OF THE CONSTITUTION SHOWED A DEEP CONCERN FOR FREEDOM OF WORSHIP. (STORY OF THE LITTLE WHITE CHURCH - KOREA) (LOVING GOD - COLSON)

V. THE POWER OF GOD <sup>IN</sup> THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL - VERSE 23

THE SPORTS WORLD WAS STUNNED THIS PAST WEEK WITH THE DEATH OF PETE MAROVICH. THEY WERE IMPRESSED WITH HIS CAREER BUT SOME WERE EQUALLY IMPRESSED WITH HIS CONVERSION. ADNIRAM JUDSON WAS A MISSIONARY TO BURMA. HE HAD BEEN RAISED IN A PARSONAGE AND WENT AWAY TO COLLEGE WHERE ONE OF HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS WAS AN ATHEIST. THIS ATHEIST CONVINCED JUDSON THAT HE SHOULDN'T BE SO PROVINCIAL BUT RATHER MORE OPEN-MINDED AND SHOULD GO WEST AND SEE THE WORLD. ONE NIGHT JUDSON FOUND HIMSELF IN A CROWDED INN. IT WAS NOISY AND THE PERSON NEXT DOOR WAS AWFULLY SICK AND SOUNDED AS IF HE WERE DYING. HE TRIED TO SLEEP BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT AND HE HEARD THE WALKING OF PEOPLE NEXT DOOR AND THEIR MUFFLED VOICES. THE PERSON IN THE NEXT ROOM DIED THAT NIGHT. THE PROPRIETOR OF THE INN TOLD HIM THE SHAME OF THE DEATH OF THIS YOUNG UNIVERSITY GRADUATE WHO WHEN JUDSON HEARD HIS NAME WAS STUNNED TO DISCOVER THAT IT WAS HIS FRIEND WHO HAD DIED. THE FELLOW WHO HAD ALL THE ANSWERS AND KNEW HOW TO LIVE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT GOD OR THE GOSPEL. GOD DID SOMETHING TO JUDSON THAT

Bce - 2015

1856 - what was scenario

Joseph Parker to Spurgeon

How to see  
have to say?

Rm 1:16

Westphals  
(MVL)

NIGHT FOR HE RETURNED HOME, TO SEMINARY,  
TO THE MISSION FIELD AND TO THE LIFE-ABSORBING  
TASK OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN BURMA.  
THE HISTORY OF A ~~GREAT~~ CHURCH MUST BE  
RECORDED IN THE ~~(GREAT)~~ CONVERSIONS THAT  
RESULT THROUGH ITS GOSPEL MINISTRY. ~~OUR~~  
STATE HAS A GENERALLY POOR IMAGE OUTSIDE  
OUR BORDERS. AFTER ALL, ONE FORMER GOVERNOR  
BECAME AN ALCOHOLIC AND WOUND UP DRIVING A  
CAB IN CHICAGO BEFORE HIS DEATH. ANOTHER  
WAS INDICTED AND SENT TO PRISON. ~~LOCAL~~  
OFFICIALS HAVE MADE THE NEWSPAPER REPEATEDLY,  
INCLUDING THIS WEEK OVER GRAFT AND GREED AND  
SIN AND YOU NAME IT. WHAT PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW  
ABOUT ~~OUR STATE~~ ARE THE OTHER PEOPLE WHO HAVE  
LIVED HERE AND WORKED HERE LIKE ~~PAT WITHROW,~~  
~~EARNEST REVEAL, PAPPY BYUS,~~ TO MENTION A FEW.

① 2800s

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To  
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Legislators

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RKS.  
Conversion

Don Lammale -  
- Now Chairman  
of Board -

Roseva  
Mission

"THE GOSPEL LOUD AND CLEAR"

## GALATIANS 1:1-12

BOOK BACKGROUND: KEY VERSE - 5:1. KEY WORD - LIBERTY. KEY PROBLEM - LEGALISM. THE BOOKS OF GALATIANS AND ROMANS ARE SIMILAR. GALATIANS IS THE PENCILLED SKETCH OF JUSTIFICATION WHILE ROMANS IS THE OIL PAINTING! TWO KEY WORDS IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE BOOK:

(1) JUDAIZERS - JEWISH PROFESSING CHRISTIANS WHO BELIEVED CEREMONIAL PRACTICES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE BINDING ON NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS. (AND BIND IT DID - MADE THEM INTO LEGAL SLAVES.) JUDAIZERS SAID THAT PAUL WAS NOT A TRUE APOSTLE AND THAT HE HAD TAMPERED WITH THE TRUTH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ORDER TO MAKE IT MORE APPEALING TO GENTILES.

(2) LEGALISM - LEGALISM HAS TO DO WITH THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW AS A WAY OF LIFE. IT SEES CHRISTIAN LIVING CLEARLY IN DOS AND DON'TS. THE FLESH LOVES RELIGIOUS RITUAL, HIGH HOLY DAYS, RELIGIOUS RULES AND RITES. IN GALATIA AND LIFE SOME LEGALISTIC BELIEVERS BELIEVE IN PART GRACE AND PART WORKS. LEGALISTS DO NOT DENY THAT ONE IS SAVED BY GRACE BUT THAT THE LAW IS CRUCIAL IN STAYING SAVED. SWINDOLL DEFINES LEGALISM AS FOLLOWS: "CONFORMING TO A CODE OR SYSTEM OF DEEDS AND OBSERVANCES IN THE ENERGIES OF THE FLESH, HOPING TO GAIN THE BLESSING AND FAVOR OF GOD BY SUCH ACTS. LEGALISM INVARIABLY DENIES THE PRINCIPLE OF GRACE AND EXALTS THE PRIDE OF MAN. THE ENTIRE BOOK OF GALATIANS WAS WRITTEN AS A MAGNA CARTA AGAINST SUCH ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES. THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF GALATIANS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED SUCH AS THE NORTH AND SOUTH GALATIAN THEORY. TO BE SURE,

THIS BOOK IS NOT POPULAR AMONG THE CULTS. ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTED THAT GALATIANS WAS ONE OF MARTIN LUTHER'S FAVORITE BOOKS AND IN ONE SENSE OF THE WORD HE USED THIS BOOK AS A BATTLE AXE BROUGHT DOWN WITH TELLING AND TERRIFIC FORCE UPON THE HELMENTS OF HIS FOES! THE THEME OF THE FIRST CHAPTER IS THE GOSPEL. (GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT HIS SON THAT MEN TREAT AS BAD NEWS ABOUT THEIR SINS!)

## I. PAUL WAS A GOSPEL PREACHER AND A GENUINE APOSTLE - VERSES 1-2

PAUL WAS UNDER ATTACK FROM HIS CRITICS. THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL. ANYONE WHO SEEKS TO START AND SUSTAIN LOCAL CHURCHES WILL BE UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK - SATAN WILL SEE TO THAT. HE HATES THE CHURCH! BY THE WAY, IF YOU WANT A HARD JOB, START A CHURCH! IF IT WEREN'T SUCH A HARD JOB MORE PEOPLE WOULD DO IT. BUT IN ALL CANDOR, NOT MANY TRY! PAUL'S CRITICS QUESTIONED HIS AUTHORITY. HE WAS NOT ONE OF THE TWELVE ORIGINAL APOSTLES. NO SCHOOL OR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION HAD SANCTIONED HIS MINISTRY SO THEY QUESTIONED HIS AUTHORITY. (1 COR. 15:5-9) THE POINT PAUL MAKES HERE AND ELSEWHERE IS THAT HIS APOSTLESHIP WAS NOT CONFERRED UPON HIM BY MEN BUT RATHER BY GOD HIMSELF ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD WHERE PAUL MET JESUS CHRIST FACE TO FACE. THE SUPREME RELIGIOUS TEST IS NOT HAVE YOU TAKEN THE PROGRAM BUT HAVE YOU SEEN THE PERSON! PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP AND MINISTRY WAS NOT BY HUMAN APPROVAL BUT BY HEAVENLY APPOINTMENT! HIS HEADQUARTERS ~~WAS~~ IN HEAVEN! CHRIST'S NAME WAS ON PAUL'S CREDENTIALS - THAT WAS ENOUGH! (SUCH AN ATTITUDE WOULD BE FOOLHARDY FOR ANYONE OTHER THAN SOMEONE WHO INDEED POSSESSED THE AUTHORITY OF GOD HIMSELF!)

*others - need human & divine accountability.*

## II. THE GOSPEL MESSAGE RESCUES MEN FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE - VERSES 3-5

IT IS INTERESTING TO OBSERVE THE CAUSES TO WHICH MEN "GIVE THEMSELVES." SUCH GIVING IS OFTEN WITH SUBTLE SELFISH REASONS. CHRIST GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS AND OUR REDEMPTION. FORGIVENESS OF SINS IS SO IMPERATIVE THAT JESUS DIED TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE. IF SOMETHING WAS THAT IMPORTANT TO HIM, SURELY IT SHOULD BE THE FOCAL POINT OF THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY. SIMPLY STATED, OUR MISSION IS OPERATION RESCUE - THE CHURCH SHOULD BE GOD'S 911 EMERGENCY PROGRAM REACHING MEN FOR CHRIST. THE "AGE" IN WHICH WE LIVE IS DESCRIBED AS EVIL. THE WORLD SYSTEM IS NOT INTERESTED IN FORGIVENESS BUT FOSTERING SINS! THIS WORLD SYSTEM OR AGE HAS AS ITS PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM ONE WITHOUT GOD. IT IS NOT INTERESTED IN NOR DOES IT ACCEPT DIVINE DIRECTION! IF ONE QUESTIONS THE VALIDITY OF THIS PHRASE CONCERNING EVIL LET ME SUGGEST THAT YOU TAKE THE "MORAL TEMPERATURE" OF THE WORLD TODAY AND COMPARE IT WITH THE WORLD FIFTY YEARS AGO. IF YOU THINK THE WORLD IS GETTING BETTER MORALLY AND SPIRITUALLY THEN I CHALLENGE YOU NOT TO LOCK YOUR CAR DOOR, HOUSE, OR EVEN OUR CHURCH - AND LET HUMANITY PROVE THE THEOLOGICAL TRUTHFULNESS OF THIS STATEMENT! THE CHURCH IS ON A RESCUE MISSION. REMEMBER D. L. MOODY'S STATEMENT THAT THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE IS LIKE A GIGANTIC OCEAN LINER THAT HAS JUST HAD A TERRIBLE HOLE IN ITS SIDE. OUR JOB IS TO RESCUE THE PASSENGERS. OF COURSE WE'RE INTERESTED IN REPAIRING THE HOLE BUT THE PASSENGERS ARE OUR PARAMOUNT CONCERN! MEN NEED TO BE RESCUED FROM THEIR SINS AND THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S MEANS OF GETTING THAT GOOD NEWS TO THEM. REMEMBER THE STORY OF THE MAN WHO WAS WALKING NEAR THE EDGE

OF A CLIFF AT NIGHT WHEN HE FELL OVER WITHOUT WARNING ONLY TO LAND ON A LEDGE SEVERAL FEET IN THE CREST OF THE HILL. NEXT DAY PEOPLE HEARD HIS SHOUTING AND SEVERAL RESPONDED. ① ONE PERSON LOWERED FOOD, WATER, BLANKETS, FLASH LIGHT AND CLOTHES TO HIM. ② A SECOND BROUGHT A TENT AND SLEEPING BAGS. ③ THE THIRD BROUGHT A RADIO PLUS 2-WAY HAND RADIO AND BOOKS TO READ TO MAKE THE TIME PASS QUICKER. HOWEVER, THE POINT OF THE STORY IS THAT THE MAN WAS STILL ON THE LEDGE THOUGH COMFORTABLE, DRY, FED AND ENTERTAINED BUT NOT RESCUED!)

### III. THE GOSPEL HAS DEFECTORS - VERSES 6-7

IF NOT agree  
THERE ARE SOME THINGS IN CHURCH LIFE THAT SURPRISE ME. FOR EXAMPLE, I AM SURPRISED THAT PEOPLE LEAVE A CHURCH FOR NO SOLID DOCTRINAL REASON WHERE SOMEONE IN THE CHURCH LED THEM TO CHRIST. GRATITUDE FOR GRACE IN THIS SITUATION IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE A CHURCH SIMPLY BECAUSE IT DID NOT FIT THEIR PERSONAL PREFERENCE OR LIFESTYLE - CHURCHES ARE LIKE PEOPLE AND HAVE DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES. WHAT WAS UTTERLY AMAZING EVEN ASTONISHING TO PAUL WAS THAT THESE FICKLE GALATIANS HAD NO FIDELITY TO THEIR FAITH AND TRANSFERRED THEIR LOYALTY AWAY FROM THE GOSPEL TO ANOTHER MESSAGE THAT CLAIMED TO BE A GOSPEL BUT WASN'T! HISTORIANS SAY THAT ONE WEAKNESS OF THE GAULS WAS THEIR TENDENCY TO FICKLENESS OR TO CHANGE THEIR MIND EASILY AND QUICKLY. THAT IS TO SAY, THEY LACKED DEEP CONVICTION ABOUT ANYTHING - INCLUDING THE GOSPEL. THE WORD REMOVED LITERALLY MEANS "REMOVING YOURSELVES" AND SUGGESTS THAT THEY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF DOING THIS WHEN PAUL WROTE THIS EPISTLE. IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE THIS WORD WAS USED TO DESCRIBE A DEFECTOR TURNCOAT IN MILITARY SERVICE. IT WAS UTTERLY ASTONISHING TO

PAUL THAT THESE PEOPLE COULD SO READILY ACCEPT AND JUST AS READILY ACCEPT SOMETHING ELSE TO REPLACE IT! IT IS NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND THAT PEOPLE WOULD DESERT THE RANKS OF THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL AND EMBRACE ERROR WITH ENTHUSIASM. ((MANY YEARS AGO I SAT IN A GREEK EXEGESIS CLASS OF GALATIANS IN WHICH THE PROFESSOR POINTED OUT THAT THE WORD ANOTHER IN VERSE 6 AND THE WORD ANOTHER IN VERSE 7 ARE TWO DIFFERENT WORDS. I SAT SPELLBOUND AT THE BRILLIANCE OF THE LECTURE AND DIDN'T HAVE THE FAINTEST IDEA WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT! THE POINT SEEMS TO BE THAT PAUL SAYS CALLING A MESSAGE THE GOSPEL DOESN'T MAKE IT GOSPEL. THE GOSPEL HAS TO DO WITH THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND ANY OTHER MESSAGE BY EVEN CHRISTIAN NAMES SIMPLY ISN'T THE GOSPEL AND YOU SHOULDN'T CALL IT A GOSPEL. IT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF MESSAGE ALTOGETHER - IT CANNOT REDEEM ANYONE! TECHNICALLY, THE FIRST ANOTHER MEANS ANOTHER OF A DIFFERENT KIND. THE SECOND MEANS ANOTHER OF THE SAME KIND OR QUALITY. PAUL WAS SAYING THAT THERE IS NO OTHER GOSPEL AND THOSE WHO WERE TROUBLING THE GALATIANS WERE TEACHING THEM A DIFFERENT KIND OR FALSE GOSPEL. THE EFFECT OF THAT FALSE TEACHING WAS TO DISTURB AND UNSETTLE THE GALATIANS WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FAITH. ONE OF THE MYSTERIES OF CHURCH LIFE IS HOW SLOWLY MEN GRASP BIBLE TRUTH AND HOW QUICKLY THEY RUN AFTER ERROR! ERROR SEEMS TO HAVE A FATAL FASCINATION TO SOME PEOPLE AND TRUTH SEEMS TO BE JUST TOO DIFFICULT TO GRASP. (THE WORD PICTURE IN OUR TEXT IS THAT OF A SOLDIER LEAVING HIS POST OF DUTY DESERTING HIS COUNTRY AND CAUSE IN ORDER TO SERVE ANOTHER COUNTRY AND CAUSE - I THINK THEY CALL THAT TREASON!)

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Eastern  
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- how  
- nobody  
you?

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#### IV. THERE ARE PENALTIES FOR PREACHING A FALSE GOSPEL - V. 8-9

IN THESE VERSES PAUL SUGGESTS "A TRIPLE-A PROGRAM OF APOSTASY" <sup>1</sup> HE SUGGESTS APOSTLES - <sup>2</sup> HIMSELF, ANGELS, ANYBODY <sup>3</sup> WHO PREACHES A FALSE GOSPEL MUST BE PREPARED TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES. THIS VERSE CONTAINS SOME VERY STRONG LANGUAGE. THE PERSON WHO TAMPERS WITH THE GOSPEL CAN PLACE HIMSELF UNDER THE ANATHEMA OF GOD. THE WORD ACCURSED IS USED ONE OTHER PLACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT - I COR. 16:22. LET ME SUGGEST A HYPOTHETICAL YET UNREALISTIC SITUATION. AN ANGEL WITH ALL OF THE SPLENDOR AND GLORY SURROUNDING THESE HEAVENLY BEINGS ENTERS A LOCAL CHURCH, SPEAKS OF HIS CREDENTIALS AND MANIFESTS HIS AUTHORITY AND POWER FOR ALL TO SEE. HE COULD SAY THAT HE WAS PRESENT IN THE DAY OF CREATION AND HAS BEEN IN THE VERY PRESENCE OF GOD HIMSELF. IF THAT GREAT ANGEL OR SAY ONE OF THE APOSTLES RESURRECTED SHOULD SAY THAT GRACE IS NOT THE METHOD WHEREBY GOD IS SAVING PEOPLE WOULD BE AN ERROR AND UNDER SEVEREST PENALTY POSSIBLE FROM GOD. IF WE ARE EVER ACCURATE AT ANY PLACE IN THE BIBLE - IT MUST BE HERE.

DR. IRONSIDE TOLD THE STORY OF A LADY AND HER BABY WHO GOT ON A TRAIN YEARS AGO. SHE ASKED THE CONDUCTOR TO LET HER KNOW WHEN THE TRAIN ARRIVED AT A CERTAIN STATION. HE ASSURED HER THAT HE WOULD NOT FORGET. SITTING OPPOSITE THIS WOMAN WAS A MAN WHO RODE THAT TRAIN OFTEN AND SPOKE DISPARINGLY OF ITS SERVICE. HE COULD SEE THAT THE WOMAN WAS NERVOUS BUT ASSURED HER THAT EVEN IF THE CONDUCTOR WAS FORGETFUL - AS MANY OF THEM WERE - HE WOULD TELL THE WOMAN WHEN HER STOP ARRIVED. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS, THE MAN TOLD HER THE NEXT STOP WAS HERS. HE OFFERED TO HELP WITH HER LUGGAGE

AND AS THE TRAIN STOPPED, SHE LOOKED FOR THE CONDUCTOR BUT COULD NOT FIND HIM. HER FELLOW PASSENGER ASSURED HER THAT SHE HAD NOTHING TO FEAR FOR HE KNEW THE ROUTE WELL AND IN ALL PROBABILITY THE WELL-MEANING CONDUCTOR HAD FORGOTTEN HER. SHE GOT OFF IN THE NIGHT WITH HER BABY AND SUITCASES. THE TRAIN PULLED OUT. SEVERAL MINUTES LATER THE CONDUCTOR CAME BY TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE LADY. THE FELLOW PASSENGER MENTIONED THAT HE KNEW THE CONDUCTOR HAD BEEN BUSY AND PROBABLY FORGOTTEN HER SO HE ASSISTED HER IN GETTING OFF THE TRAIN. THE CONDUCTOR WAS UTTERLY ASTONISHED. DID THE PASSENGER NOT KNOW THAT THAT PARTICULAR STOP WAS AN EMERGENCY STOP AT A REMOTE, UNMANNED STATION? THE WOMAN HAD BEEN THE VICTIM OF A SINCERE EFFORT BY A SINCERE PERSON WHO WAS SINCERELY WRONG.)

#### V. THE GOSPEL IS OF DIVINE ORIGIN AND CAME TO PAUL BY DIRECT REVELATION - V. 11-12

THE GOSPEL IS NOT A HUMAN INVENTION BUT RATHER DIVINE REVELATION. IT IS NOT A HAND ME DOWN, SECOND HAND MESSAGE - IT IS SOMETHING DIRECTLY FROM GOD. (LET US SUPPOSE THAT DURING A SERVICE AN USHER HASTENED TO THE PLATFORM AND HANDED ME WHAT HE WHISPERED WAS A VERY URGENT MESSAGE CONCERNING A DIRE EMERGENCY. GLANCING OVER THE MESSAGE IT READ: "PLEASE EVACUATE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED A BOMB THREAT. THIS IS NO JOKE. EVACUATE." HOWEVER, IN READING THE MESSAGE, CERTAIN LIBERTIES ARE TAKEN WITH THE MESSAGE. SUPPOSE THE MESSENGER SAID THERE IS A RUMOR, THOUGH POORLY FOUNDED, THAT SOMEWHERE, PERHAPS IN A REMOTE STAIRWELL IN THIS BUILDING, THERE MAY OR MAY NOT BE A BOMB. IT'S NO TIME TO PANIC AND IT IS PROBABLY NOT

AS URGENT AS SUGGESTED SO MAYBE IF YOU THINK IT WORTHWHILE YOU OUGHT TO GIVE IT SOME CONSIDERATION. THAT'S NOT THE WAY TO CONSIDER AN URGENT MESSAGE. IT IS NOT MAN'S SIGNATURE THAT APPEARS ON THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL.

PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL HAVE NO RIGHT TO DETERMINE IF IT SHOULD BE PREACHED BUT RATHER THEY HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE IT IS PREACHED! (SPURGEON TOLD THE STORY OF A MAN WHO VISITED A POOR WOMAN IN ORDER TO BRING A SUM OF MONEY WHICH SHE NEEDED DESPERATELY FOR RENT. HE KNOCKED AT THE DOOR SEVERAL TIMES BUT NO RESPONSE. FINALLY, DISAPPOINTED, HE

POCKETED THE MONEY AND LEFT. HE MET THE POOR LADY SEVERAL DAYS LATER AND SPOKE OF HIS ~~PRIVATE~~ VISIT. SHE REPLIED WITH TEARS THAT SHE HAD HEARD HIM KNOCKING BUT THOUGHT IT WAS THE LANDLORD WHO HAD COME TO COLLECT THE MONTHLY RENT AND DID NOT OPEN THE DOOR.

SPURGEON'S OBSERVATION SAYS THAT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THE GOSPEL MESSAGE IS SIMILAR TO THAT. HE STANDS AT THE DOOR OF EVERY MAN'S HEART AND KNOCKS. HE KNOCKS GENTLY AND PERSISTENTLY BUT IT IS NOT THE KNOCK OF A HEARTLESS LANDLORD, IT IS THE GENTLE KNOCK OF A HEAVENLY VISITOR. THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S GOOD NEWS, NOT NEWS OF DEBT THAT WE CANNOT PAY OR RENT WE DO NOT HAVE BUT IT IS THE MESSAGE OF A FREE GIFT WE DO NOT DESERVE BUT GOD IS WILLING TO GIVE FREELY. (COMMENT ON BISHOP SHEEN STORY.)

Prv.T  
less

MAKE A PERSON THINK TWICE BEFORE THINKING ABOUT JESUS CHRIST. HOWEVER, THE REAL QUESTION IS, IS A PERSON'S JOB MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIS ETERNAL SOUL? THAT IS THE TRUE ISSUE. THE FACT THAT PEOPLE WERE STANDING IN THE WAY TO KEEP ZACCHAEUS FROM SEEING JESUS POINTS TO A SIMPLE FACT OF LIFE - ANYTIME SOMEONE WANTS TO GET SAVED THERE WILL BE SOMETHING OR SOMEBODY STANDING IN HIS WAY TO KEEP HIM FROM IT. I FEEL SURE THERE ARE PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCH WHO ARE NOT SAVED BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID OF WHAT FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, FELLOW EMPLOYEES - THE CROWD WILL SAY. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE AVERAGE MAN IS THAT HE IS MORE CONCERNED WITH WHAT HIS NEIGHBOR THINKS ABOUT THAN WITH WHAT GOD THINKS ABOUT HIM! IF ZACCHAEUS HAD BEEN FOLLOWING THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE HE WOULD HAVE NEVER SEEN JESUS. ONLY HIS STRONG DETERMINATION TO OVERCOME THE PRESS OF THE CROWD GOT HIM SAVED. IF SOMEONE WERE TO ASK WHY YOU ARE NOT SAVED TODAY IT WOULD PROBABLY BOIL DOWN TO ONE OF TWO REASONS; (1) FEAR OF WHAT OTHERS MAY SAY (2) PRIDE OF HUMBLING ONESELF TO RECEIVE CHRIST.

B. OPPORTUNITY THERE IS HOPE FOR THE MAN WHO WILL SEEK TO GO WHERE HE CAN SEE JESUS PASSING BY. GOD IS NOT LIMITED TO WHERE HE SAVES MEN. HOWEVER, IT IS PROBABLY EASIER TO GET SAVED IN CHURCH THAN IN A BAR. IT IS EASIER TO GET SAVED IN A HOSPITAL THAN IN A THEATRE. THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE SAVED IS NOW MORE THAN THEN. NOTICE THAT JESUS KNEW WHO ZACCHAEUS WAS, WHERE HE WAS, WHAT HE NEEDED AND WHEN HE NEEDED IT. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS WAS THE LAST TIME JESUS PASSED THAT WAY AND IN FACT IT WAS ZACCHAEUS' LAST OPPORTUNITY TO SEE JESUS.

THE LAST INVITATION AND OPPORTUNITY  
WILL COME TO EVERY MAN SOMEDAY. FOR  
SOME, GOD FORBID, THIS COULD BE THE  
LAST INVITATION. QUESTION: IF JESUS  
STOPPED AT YOUR ~~Door~~ AND ASKED OR INQUIRED  
ABOUT GOING HOME WITH YOU TODAY WOULD  
YOU RESPOND IN THE AFFIRMATIVE? (REV.  
3:20)

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS

I TIMOTHY 2:5 (ἀνθρώπος)

AT CHRISTMASTIME WE EMPHASIZE THE DIETY OF CHRIST (JOHN 1:14) OUR LORD WAS ALSO HUMAN, THE GOD-MAN, THE ONLY PERFECT PERSON TO LIVE ON THIS PLANET. CHRIST WAS DIVINE, BUT HE WAS ALSO HUMAN. APPARENTLY THERE WAS NOTHING SO UNUSUAL ABOUT CHRIST'S PHYSICAL PRESENCE, SUCH AS A HALO, THAT IT WAS EASY FOR SOME TO MISTAKE HIM AS A GARDNER OR AS THE MEN WHO WALKED ALONG THE EMMAUS ROAD REGARDED HIM AS JUST ANOTHER TRAVELER. LIKE EVERY OTHER MAN, JESUS WAS HUNGRY, WEARY, WEPT, TEMPTED, SLEPT AND DIED. ONE TITLE HE USED OFTEN TO DESCRIBE HIMSELF WAS "THE SON OF MAN". IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL HUMANITY. IN HIS INCARNATE STATE, JESUS DID NOT LOSE HIS DIETY OR DIVINE ATTRIBUTES, HE SIMPLY LIMITED HIS USE OF THEM. HE CHOSE TO SUBMIT TO THE ORDINARY PROCESS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. RECONCILING THE HUMAN AND DIVINE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S PERSON HAS BEEN THE "STUFF" OF THEOLOGIAN'S FOR MANY CENTURIES. WHILE CONSIDERING OUR LORD'S HUMANITY, TODAY WE WILL TAKE ONE STEP FURTHER AND CONSIDER HIS MANLINESS. WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS JESUS? TODAY, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO PUT TOGETHER A VERBAL PICTURE OR PORTRAIT TO DESCRIBE THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

I. HE WAS A COURAGEOUS MAN - LUKE 9:51  
(COMPARE VERSE 31)

JESUS KNEW WHAT AWAITED HIM AT JERUSALEM BUT HIS MIND WAS SET. WITH STEADFAST RESOLVE HE MOVED TOWARD JERUSALEM AND

NOTHING MOVED HIM FROM THAT COURSE OF ACTION. HE WAS COMMITTED TO THE FATHER'S WILL. HIS OWN PERSONAL SAFETY WAS NOT A FACTOR. AT JERUSALEM HE WOULD BE BETRAYED, MOCKED, SCOURGED, TRIED AND CRUCIFIED. HE KNEW THIS WAS COMING. (MATTHEW 16:21) THE COURAGE OF CHRIST DURING THE PASSION WEEK IS REFLECTED IN:

- (1) HE ANSWERED NOT HIS ACCUSERS
- (2) HE CURSED NOT HIS KILLERS
- (3) HE FORGOT NOT HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY
- (4) HE BEGGED NOT TO BE SPARED

THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO KINDS OF COURAGE:

- (1) THE COURAGE OF REACTION. THAT IS, THE ABILITY TO MEET A SUDDEN CRISIS OR EMERGENCY.
- (2) THE COURAGE OF RESOLVE. THE CAPACITY TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT KNOWING FULL WELL THE CONSEQUENCES AND THE IMPACT ON ONE'S OWN WELL BEING.

JESUS TURNED TOWARD JERUSALEM AS A BOAT CAPTAIN OR PILOT WOULD HEAD HIS VESSEL INTO THE WIND AND TOWARD THE STORM. HE FACED ADVERSITY, HE DID NOT RUN AWAY. MARTIN LUTHER FOLLOWED HIS LORD'S EXAMPLE IN COURAGE WHEN HE WAS SUMMONED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE DIET OF WORMS. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT LUTHER WAS AN UTTERLY FEARLESS MAN. WHEN HE SET OUT FOR HIS JOURNEY TO WORMS, HE SAID: "YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME EVERYTHING SAVE FEAR OR RECONTATION". I SHALL

Diet = lawmaking body - a rep group - a general assembly.

NOT FLEE, MUCH LESS RECENT." LUTHER'S FRIENDS WARNED HIM OF THE DANGERS TO HIS LIFE AND SOUGHT TO CHANGE HIS MIND BUT TO NO AVAIL. LUTHER SUGGESTED THAT NOT TO GO TO WORMS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM. HE SAID: "I SHALL GO TO WORMS THOUGH THERE WERE AS MANY DEVILS AS TILES ON THE ROOFS." AS LUTHER STOOD BEFORE THE EMPEROR AND WAS CALLED TO RECENT AND RETRACT ALL HE HAD SAID AND WRITTEN, HIS REPLY WAS: "UNLESS CONVINCED BY THE HOLY SCRIPTURE, OR BY CLEAR REASONS FROM OTHER SOURCES, I CANNOT RECENT. TO COUNCIL OR POPE I CANNOT DEFER, FOR THEY HAVE OFTEN ERRED. MY CONSCIOUS IS A PRISONER TO GOD'S WORD." HIS FINAL DECLARATION TO THAT COUNCIL WAS: "HERE I STAND, I CAN DO NO OTHER. GOD HELP ME."

## II. HE WAS A CANDID MAN - LUKE 9:57-62

JESUS NEVER FAILED TO SAY WHAT WAS NEEDED EVEN IF THE CONSEQUENCES WERE PAINFUL. HE DID NOT BEAT AROUND THE BUSH TO AVOID PROBLEMS OR PROBLEM PEOPLE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN JOHN 8:40-44, 58-59 JESUS TOLD HIS HEARERS THAT GOD WAS NOT THEIR FATHER! HOWEVER, THAT WASN'T THE HARD PART, HE TOLD THEM THAT THE DEVIL WAS! ON TOP OF THIS, HE DECLARED HIS OWN SINLESSNESS! (VERSE 46) HE SAID AS ONE COMMENTATOR THAT THESE PEOPLE TO THEM "LYING WAS THEIR NATIVE TONGUE!" THE POINT WAS THAT THESE SELF-RIGHTEOUS HYPOCRITES CLAIMED TO BE BOTH THE SONS OF ABRAHAM AND THE SONS OF GOD. JESUS TOLD THEM OTHERWISE. THEY PREFERRED LIES, HE TOLD THEM THE TRUTH. OUR LORD DID THE SAME THING IN MATTHEW 23. THERE IS ANOTHER AREA WHERE CHRIST'S CANDOR WAS EVIDENT, IN THE CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP.

"Bergs"  
"Bonus"  
"Be Somebody"

-4-

WHEN JESUS ENLISTED HIS DISCIPLES, HE TOLD THEM THAT THEY SHOULD COUNT THE COST UP FRONT. OUR LORD SOUGHT NOT A BAND OF BLINDED BIGOTS BUT INTELLIGENT VOLUNTEERS WHO UNDERSTOOD THE COST AND THE GOALS TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN CALLED. THE LORD SPOKE OF SACRIFICE AND A CROSS FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH HIM. COMPARE THIS APPEAL TO THOSE OF OUR TIME. SOME RELIGIOUS TEACHERS PROMISE ANYTHING TO GET SOMETHING. OUR LORD PROMISED NO BENEFIT PACKAGE OR FRINGES FOR SERVING HIM. HIS DECLARATION WAS SIMPLY "FOLLOW ME. I WILL LEAD YOU, THAT'S ALL YOU NEED."

### III. HE WAS A COMPASSIONATE MAN - MATT. 9:36

THE SAME WORD IN THIS TEXT IS USED IN THE STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON TO DESCRIBE THE FATHER'S EMOTION WHEN HE SAW HIS WAYWARD SON COMING UP THE ROAD HEADED FOR HOME. (LUKE 15:20) "BUT WHEN HE WAS YET A GREAT WAY OFF, HIS FATHER SAW HIM AND HAD COMPASSION AND RAN AND FELL ON HIS NECK AND KISSED HIM." IT IS THE SAME WORD USED TO DESCRIBE THE CONCERN AND CARE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN TOWARD THE POOR MAN WHO HAD BEEN BEATEN AND LEFT BESIDE THE ROAD FOR DEAD. (LUKE 10:33) "BUT A CERTAIN SAMARITAN AS HE JOURNEYED, CAME WHERE HE WAS AND WHEN HE SAW HIM HE HAD COMPASSION ON HIM." HIS WAS THE KIND OF COMPASSION THAT DID SOMETHING TO HELP OTHERS. OUR LORD'S COMPASSION OR PITY FOR HUMANKIND WAS REVEALED AT THE FUNERALS HE ATTENDED. HE BROKE UP EVERY ONE!

- (1) JARIUS' DAUGHTER - MARK 5:34-43
- (2) THE WIDOW'S AT NAIN - LUKE 7:13-15
- (3) LAZARUS - JOHN 11:44

#### IV. HE WAS A CONTROLLED MAN - Luke 23:35

THERE WAS NEVER THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION THAT OUR LORD LOST CONTROL OF HIMSELF, HIS COMPOSURE. WHEN HE STOOD BEFORE PILATE, IT WAS PILATE WHO SEEMED TO BE ON TRIAL, NOT JESUS. AT THE CROSS, SOLDIERS SENSED THEIR OWN GUILT, NOT HIS. JESUS WAS EVER IN CONTROL OF HIS MOUTH AND MOVEMENTS. IN THE MIDST OF CROWDS AND CONFUSION HE WAS CALM. HE WAS BUSY FROM DAWN TO DARK BUT THERE WAS NEVER A SENSE OF BUSINESS ABOUT HIM. HE DID HIS WORK, TRUSTING, TRODDING, TELLING AND TRIUMPHING OVER EVIL. TO BE SURE, THE SECRET OF HIS CONTROLLED LIFE HAS TO DO WITH WHO IS IN CONTROL. IN OUR TIME, WE SEE WITH REGULARITY WHAT THE CONSTANT PRESSURE OF PUBLIC SCRUTINY DOES EVEN TO THE BEST OF PEOPLE. MOST CRUMBLE UNDER THE INTENSITY OF THE PRESSURE. THIS WAS NOT TRUE OF OUR LORD.

#### V. HE WAS A COURTEOUS MAN - John 8:11

(WE MIGHT ADD TO THE WORD COURTEOUS ALSO KIND, CHARMING, GENTLE, TACTFUL, AND DIPLOMATIC.) THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES IN THIS CHAPTER WERE RELIGIOUS PEOPLE BUT THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WOMAN TAKEN IN THE ACT OF ADULTRY WAS TO STONE HER. JESUS' ATTITUDE WAS ENTIRELY THE OPPOSITE. HIS ATTITUDE OR DESIRE WAS TO SAVE HER. THERE ARE FEW PLACES WHERE OUR EVANGELICAL MANNERS ARE MORE RAGGED THAN IN THE AREA OF EVANGELISM. WE EMBARRASS, OFFEND, AND ALIENATE PEOPLE FROM THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL BY OUR METHODS IN THE GOSPEL. (RELATE THE EVENT REGARDING HYMAN APPLEMAN IN MICHIGAN.)

BARCLAY SAYS WE DO NOT STAND OVER SINNERS BUT BESIDE THEM. ONE HELL-DESERVING SINNER TO ANOTHER. ONE PERSON WHO HAS FOUND THE BREAD OF LIFE TELLING ANOTHER STARVING PERSON WHERE HE MAY FIND IT. ALSO, JESUS LISTENED TO WHAT PEOPLE HAD TO SAY, SO SHOULD WE! (COMPARE JOHN 4) RECALL BOOK ON ANSWERS WHERE A PERSON ASKED A FRIEND IF HE COULD BE WRONG, HIS RESPONSE SURE I COULD. EXAMPLE: PAPPY JOE OTTESON NEARLY KNOCKING A WOMAN DOWN GOING THROUGH A DOOR. EXAMPLE: SUDGEN, WIERSBE - WAITRESS, RESTAURANT, SMILES EVERYWHERE. BLESS YOU AND TIPS. EXAMPLE: PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR - SUGAR CREEK. EXAMPLE: STORY OF TWO SALESMEN WAITING ON THE SAME LADY. ONE SAID, "MADAM, YOUR FOOT IS TOO BIG FOR THE SHOE." THE OTHER SAID: "MADAM, THE SHOE IS TOO SMALL FOR YOUR FOOT." BOTH SALESMEN ADDRESSED THE SAME SITUATION BUT FROM A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. IF OUR LORD WERE ON EARTH TODAY, HE WOULD BE A MAN OF UNCOMMON COMMON COURTESY! RELATE TO ELEVATORS, DOORS, NAMES, ELDERLY, CHILDREN, POOR, TABLE MANNERS, THANK YOUS, LETTERS, PHONE CALLS - ALL WOULD BE IN HIS SOCIAL GRACES MAKEUP!

## VI. HE WAS A CHASTE MAN - HEBREWS 4:15

TOO OFTEN, A PERSON OF APPARENTLY GOOD MORALS AND CHARACTER RISES TO A PLACE OF PROMINENCE ONLY TO BE EMBARRASSED BY A CHAPTER IN THEIR HISTORY OF SOME SORT OF CORRUPTION. (COMPARE J.F.K.) THE LIVES OF GREAT RELIGIOUS LEADERS CANNOT STAND CAREFUL SCRUTINY. THEY ARE ALL MORALLY FLAWED - ALL OF THEM! IN THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST, THERE WERE NO SCANDALS, SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET, NO STEALING, NO SELFISHNESS - NONE. OUR LORD LED BY EXAMPLE

2:1 Then...

APPROACH TO PRAYER. IT IS LIKE JONAH CRYING OUT TO GOD FROM THE BELLY OF THE GREAT FISH! (JONAH 3:3,5,8). TWO IDEAS WERE IN DAVID'S MIND IN THESE VERSES. HE WANTED AN ANSWER FROM GOD AND HE DEALT WITH THE SUBJECT OF BEING ABANDONED. THE WORD FORSAKE LITERALLY MEANS ABANDONMENT. NORMALLY SPEAKING, PARENTS ARE OUR STRONGEST TIES ON EARTH. WE ARE BOUND TO THEM BY CORDS VERY DIFFICULT TO SEVER. HOWEVER, THERE ARE EVEN STRONGER ETERNAL CORDS WHICH BIND THE BELIEVER TO GOD. THROUGH THE YEARS HEBREWS 13:5 HAS BEEN A FAVORITE VERSE IN HOSPITAL SITUATIONS. RELATE STATEMENT OF CINDY AT AGE 4: "ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP ME?" RELATE EXPERIENCE WITH MACKIE AT SWIMMING HOLE. GOD WILL NEVER RUN OFF AND LEAVE HIS OWN. ON EASTER SUNDAY MORNING, 1908, DR. WILFRED GRENFELL, WHO WAS A DOCTOR IN LABRADOR, WAS CALLED UPON TO VISIT A MAN WHO WAS DYING OF INFECTION SOME TWENTY MILES AWAY. DR. GRENFELL HARNESSSED A DOG TEAM, TOOK A SHORT CUT ACROSS A PORTION OF ICE THAT JUTTED OUT FROM THE MAINLAND. AS HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE ICE, IT BROKE AWAY FROM THE MAINLAND AND HE FOUND HIMSELF ADRIFT AT SEA. HE KILLED THREE OF THE DOGS, USED THE SKINS TO KEEP WARM AND WITH THEIR FROZEN LEGS MADE A FLAGPOLE AND ATTACHED A PIECE OF HIS SHIRT TO WAVE AT THE SHORE MILES AWAY. HIS OBSERVATION IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY CONCERNING THIS GOD FORSAKEN EXPERIENCE WAS AS FOLLOWS: "I COULD NOT HELP LAUGHING AT MY SITUATION, STANDING THERE HOUR BY HOUR, WAVING MY SHIRT AT THOSE BARREN LONELY CLIFFS, BUT I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT FROM THE FIRST TO THE LAST, NOT A SINGLE SENSATION OF FEAR CROSSED MY MIND. I KEPT THINKING OF THE WORDS OF AN OLD HYMN: "MY GOD, MY FATHER, WHILE I STRAY FAR FROM HOME ON LIFE'S ROUGH WAY, O HELP ME FROM MY HEART TO SAY, THY WILL BE DONE." SOME PEOPLE DID SEE DR. GRENFELL AND HE WAS RESCUED BY THOSE WHO SAW HIM WAVING THE FLAG WITH ONLY MINOR FROSTBITE TO HIS HANDS AND FEET.

AND REQUIRES THAT HIS FOLLOWERS ADOPT THE SAME STANDARDS.

## VII. HE WAS A CRUCIFIED MAN - Acts 2:23

NO PERSON IN ANCIENT TIMES NEEDED TO BE TOLD THE HORROR OF CRUCIFIXION. AFTER THE SIEGE OF TYRE, ALEXANDER THE GREAT CRUCIFIED 2000 OF HIS CAPTIVES. CRUCIFIXION WAS A PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON SLAVES, CAPTIVES AND CRIMINALS. EVEN IN A WORLD OF CRUEL BARBARIC METHODS, CRUCIFIXION WAS A FATE ONE WOULD NOT WISH ON HIS WORST ENEMY. THEREFORE THE CROSS BECAME THE SYMBOL OF ULTIMATE SHAME AND DISGRACE. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS FOR OUR SINS, THAT IS, WHAT HE DID THERE, HE DID FOR MANKIND. WHAT HE ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS SOMEHOW ENABLES THE GREAT GULF BETWEEN SINFUL MAN AND HOLY GOD TO BE BRIDGED BY GOD'S GRACE. I PETER 2:24

THIS VERSE TEACHES THAT JESUS DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE. WE WERE ALL GOING ASTRAY AND HAVE BEEN BROUGHT BACK BY THE SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS BY JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS. SIMPLY STATED, WHEN HE DIED THERE HE BORE THE PENALTY OF YOUR SINS AND MINE.

I PETER 3:18 THIS VERSE DECLARES THAT JESUS CHRIST IS JUST AND WE ARE UNJUST. HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS MADE IT POSSIBLE TO BRING SINNERS TO GOD. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL. THE SONG WRITER DESCRIBED IT WELL WHEN HE SAID, "I MUST NEEDS GO HOME BY THE WAY OF THE CROSS, THERE'S NO OTHER WAY BUT THIS, I SHALL NE'ER GET SIGHT OF THE GATES OF LIGHT, IF THE WAY OF THE CROSS I MISS. I MUST NEEDS GO ON IN THE BLOOD-SPRINKLED WAY, THE PATH THAT THE SAVIOUR TROD, IF I EVER CLIMB TO THE HEIGHTS SUBLIME WHERE THE SOUL IS AT HOME WITH GOD.

*The way of the Cross leads home, the way of the Cross leads home, it is sweet to know as I onward go, the way of the Cross leads home.*

"A GLIMPSE OF HIS GLORY"

(16:28 - 17:1-8)  
 MATTHEW 17:1-8 (Like 9:28-36)

WE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS FROM HIS TESTING, TEACHING, AND TODAY HIS TRANSFIGURATION. THERE ARE FOUR KEY WORDS IN THE TEXT:

- (1) TAKETH - VERSE 1
- (2) TRANSFIGURED - VERSE 2
- (3) TALKING - VERSE 3
- (4) TOUCHED - VERSE 7

19th Cent.  
 Stephen Langdon

THE CHAPTER DIVISIONS IN THE BIBLE ARE NOT INSPIRED. THE CHAPTER AND VERSE DIVISIONS WERE ADDED MUCH LATER IN ORDER FOR READERS TO LOCATE PASSAGES MORE READILY. HERE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CHAPTER DIVISION BREAKS UP THE THOUGHT. THE CONTEXT TEACHES THAT THE DISCIPLES WOULD HAVE A PRE-VIEW OF THE COMING KINGDOM. (IN THE LATE 1930s, IT WAS A SATURDAY AFTERNOON RITUAL OF MANY "COAL FIELD KIDS" TO ENJOY A FILM PROGRAM THAT INVOLVED SERIALS AND PREVUES OF COMING ATTRACTIONS.)

Sat.  
 "prevues"  
 Moses - by death  
 2/3 of - 10 transfiguration  
 1/3 of - 10 transfiguration

I. JESUS TOOK THE INNER CIRCLE OF DISCIPLES

TO A MOUNTAINTOP PRAYER MEETING - VERSE 1

PETER, JAMES AND JOHN HAVE BEEN CALLED THE "INNER CIRCLE" OF THE DISCIPLES. SOME SAY THEY WERE SUCH BECAUSE THEY WERE THE WEAKEST; OTHERS SAY THEY WERE THE WILLING. WHATEVER THE REASON, THE INNER CIRCLE DID NOT INVOLVE FAVORITISM ON JESUS' PART. THERE SEEMS TO BE A DECLENSION FROM 70, TO 12, TO 3, TO 1 - JOHN 13:25. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT EACH DISCIPLE THEN AND NOW MAY BE AS CLOSE TO JESUS AS HE CHOOSES TO BE.

?  
Vague  
LK!  
It was NOT FAVORITISM ON HIS PART BUT FELLOWSHIP ON THEIRS. DISTANCE WAS DETERMINED BY DESIRE, ATTITUDE OR EVEN ALTITUDE WAS DETERMINED BY APPETITE. AS MORGAN HAS WELL SAID, THERE WERE NO FAVORITES, ONLY INTIMATES. IT WAS THEIR DECISION TO MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR THESE SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES. LUKE REMINDS HIS READERS THAT THEY WENT UP HIGH ON THE MOUNTAIN TO GO DOWN LOW IN PRAYER. IN OTHER WORDS, THIS WAS A PRAYER CONFERENCE. WE ENJOY BIBLE, FAMILY, MISSIONS, SUNDAY SCHOOL, SCIENCE, AND EVERY OTHER SPECIAL FEATURE OF CONFERENCE MINISTRY IMAGINABLE. I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A PRAYER CONFERENCE BEFORE. (MENTION TANZEY LETTER.) I SUSPECT THAT A PRAYER CONFERENCE WOULD BRING OUT ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER TODAY AS THEN - 3! PRAYER IS NOT USUALLY A POPULAR PART OF CHURCH LIFE. IN MANY CHURCHES, THE PRAYER MEETING IS THE ORPHAN WHILE SUPPERS AND SINGS WIN THE POPULARITY POLL. THE WORD APART MEANS THEY WENT TO A PRIVATE PLACE BY THEMSELVES. IT IS A BIBLICAL REFERENCE TO THE SOLITUDE OF SANCTIFICATION. (EAGLES NEEDS SOLITUDE. CHICKENS DON'T!) THIS MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE WITH CHRIST REMINDS ALL BELIEVERS THAT WE DRAW NEAR TO GOD ON HIS TERMS - NOT OURS. (A STUDY OF THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS IS HOLY GROUND). AT LEAST 15 OCCASIONS ARE MENTIONED IN THE GOSPELS CONCERNING HIS PRAYER LIFE. HIS MINISTRY BEGAN AND ENDED WITH PRAYER. HE DIED PRAYING. (COMPARE LUKE 3:21, LUKE 21:46) HIS PRAYER MINISTRY CONTINUES IN HEAVEN TODAY. (HEBREWS 7:25.) HE HAS PRAYED FOR US TODAY.

(mk 1:35)  
Day of Prayer

50:14

## II. JESUS WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE THE EYES OF THE ASTONISHED THREESOME - VERSE 2

THE WORD "TRANSFIGURED" IS A GREEK COMPOUND WORD, "META" WHICH MEANS AFTER OR BEYOND AND "MORPHE" WHICH MEANS FORM OR SHAPE. THE WORD

Transfigured before Disfigured - (Dan. 52:14)

METAMORPHOSIS IS USED TO DESCRIBE A PROCESS OF CHANGE. IT IS THE PROCESS WHEREBY A CATERPILLAR BECOMES A BUTTERFLY. IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE A CHANGE IN PERSONALITY OR LIFESTYLE. A RADICAL TRANSFORMATION IN THIS REGARD IS SOMETIMES CALLED A METAMORPHOSIS. THE GLORY HERE WAS NOT A REFLECTED BUT A RESIDING GLORY. THE LIGHT SHONE FROM WITHIN HIM AND UPON HIM. (JOHN 1:14, II PETER 1:16-18) THE DISCIPLES HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS. IT WAS AN EVENT SO STARTLING THAT IT SENT TOUGH SAILORS TO THEIR KNEES AND FACES IN SHEER FRIGHT. (VERSE 6) TODAY, CELEBRITIES CARRY THEIR OWN LIGHTS - SPOT LIGHTS, BIG LIGHTS, LITTLE LIGHTS, COLORED LIGHTS BUT NOT CHRIST. HIS WAS AN ESSENTIAL, OFFICIAL AND MORAL GLORY. NO JEW COULD HAVE WITNESSED THIS SCENE WITHOUT BEING CONSCIOUS OF THE SHECHINAH - THE GLORY OF GOD RESTING AND RESIDING WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. THE GLORY OF CHRIST IS A MUCH NEGLECTED THEME IN THE CHURCH TODAY. THE GLORY OF MEN SEEMS TO BE A MUCH MORE INTERESTING TOPIC. HOWEVER, THE SONG WRITER HAS SAID IT WELL, "THE LAMB IS ALL THE GLORY IN EMMANUEL'S LAND." IN THIS PASSAGE THE GLORY OF THE KING IS THE KING OF GLORY AND THE GLORY OF HIMSELF AND HIS KINGDOM IS SEEN IN MINATURE PREVIEW. (REVELATION 5:13-14)

### III. JESUS TALKED WITH TWO OLD TESTAMENT

#### SAINTS - VERSE 3

MOSES HAD BEEN DEAD APPROXIMATELY 1500 YEARS. ELIJAH HAD BEEN IN HEAVEN 900 YEARS. THESE TWO PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT ABOVE ALL OTHERS WERE SURROUNDED IN MYSTERY REGARDING DEATH. MOSES DIED ON MT. NEBO AND NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE IS BURIED EXCEPT GOD. NONE CAN GO TO HIS TOMB. GOD ALONE KNOWS THE SPOT AND CONDUCTED THE FUNERAL SERVICE. ELIJAH'S NOW FAMOUS CHARIOT RIDE WAS SECOND TO NONE INCLUDING BEN HUR.

Talk Show Topics:

\* THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME MOSES HAD EVER SET FOOT IN PALESTINE. THESE MEN REPRESENTED THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW AND PROPHETS. HERE THEY WERE ALIVE TALKING WITH JESUS ABOUT SOMETHING OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THEM. LUKE REVEALS THAT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT HIS "EXODUS" WHICH HE WOULD ACCOMPLISH AT JERUSALEM. THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT CALVARY AND THE CROSS. MEN IN HEAVEN WERE INTERESTED IN THE CROSS WHILE MEN ON EARTH WERE NOT. THE CROSS WAS A TOPIC OF HEAVENLY PEOPLE. IF YOU AND I TALKED WITH MOSES WE MIGHT SPEAK WITH HIM ABOUT THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA. IF WE COULD TALK WITH ELIJAH - WE'D PROBABLY TALK ABOUT JEZABELL. CALVARY AND THE CROSS WERE IMPORTANT TO THESE TWO BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS SAID THAT THEY WENT TO HEAVEN "ON CREDIT" SO TO SPEAK. THEIR SIN DEBT HAD NOT YET BEEN PAID AND THEIR NOTE WAS OVERDUE SO TO SPEAK! JESUS PAID THAT SIN DEBT IN FULL FOR THEM AND US. THE CROSS WAS CENTRAL TO THEM AND SHOULD BE TO US. BY THE WAY, THIS PASSAGE GIVES SEVERAL INTERESTING INSIGHTS ABOUT HEAVEN.

- (1) PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE ALIVE AND CONSCIOUS. THEY HAVE THE CAPACITY TO CONVERSE WITH CHRIST.
- (2) PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE INTERESTED IN ACTIVITIES ON EARTH.
- (3) APPARENTLY PEOPLE IN HEAVEN RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER THROUGH INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT BEING INTRODUCED.
- (4) PEOPLE IN HEAVEN HAVE BODIES.

BY THE WAY, IT IS INTERESTING TO HEAR WHAT PETER HAD TO SAY ON THIS OCCASION AS JESUS WAS TALKING WITH MOSES AND ELIJAH.

(1) "IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE." THIS IS NOT ONE OF PETER'S PROFOUND STATEMENTS!! ANYONE COULD FIGURE THAT OUT. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED

PETER HAD A GOOD GRASP OF THE OBVIOUS! ANYWHERE JESUS IS IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE AND ANY PLACE WITHOUT HIM IS A GOOD PLACE TO STAY AWAY FROM. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE GOOD PLACES AND THINGS IN LIFE COME TO US BECAUSE OF HIM.

(2) "LET US MAKE THREE TABERNACLES." THE WORD FOR TABERNACLE IS THE WORD SKIN OR TENT OR BOOTH. SIMPLY STATED, PETER WAS REFERING TO A RESTING PLACE, THAT IS, HE WANTED TO MAKE PROVISION TO STAY ON THE MOUNTAIN FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. IT WAS GREAT TO BE THERE AND ENJOY THE SERENITY AND AVOID THE SERVICE IN THE VALLEY. HOWEVER, OUR LORD DESPITE THE HEAVENLY ATMOSPHERE, DID NOT NEGLECT HIS DUTY OR DESTINY. THE DISCIPLES COULD NOT PROLONG THEIR STAY BECAUSE THERE WAS WORK TO BE DONE. PETER, LIKE YOU AND ME, NEEDED TO LEARN THAT A PROGRAM WAS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PERSON OF CHRIST. *Wrong! Moses & Elijah not in Jesus category!! Not equal!!*

(3) "NOT KNOWING WHAT HE SAID." LUKE REVEALS THAT PETER HAD BEEN SOUND ASLEEP AND WAS STARTLED AWAKE AND IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TALKING. ONE MIGHT SUGGEST A NEW CHRISTIAN CLUB - NOT THE 700 CLUB OR THE PTL CLUB BUT A C.U.C. - CLAM UP CLUB. THAT IS, A FRATERNITY OF CHRISTIANS WHO REFUSE TO ENGAGE THE MOUTH UNTIL THE MIND IS IN GEAR! *Point: Not a Hermit on Mt. a hermit in valley!!*

#### IV. JESUS TOUCHED THE DISCIPLES AND CALMED THEIR FEARS - VERSE 7

THE THINGS AND PEOPLE JESUS TOUCHED WERE NEVER THE SAME AGAIN. HE TOUCHED THE DISEASES AND THEY WERE HEALED. HE TOUCHED THE DEAF AND THEY HEARD. HE TOUCHED THE DEMENTED AND THEY WERE SANE. HE TOUCHED THE DEAD AND THEY LIVED. (COMPARE LUKE 7:14) THE HEAVY HANDED ARE NOT USUALLY GOOD HELPERS OR HEALERS. BY THE WAY

THE WORD FOR TACT MEANS TO TOUCH. THINK OF A DOCTOR, SPECIFICALLY AN EYE DOCTOR WHO IS CLUMSILY AND AWKWARD. WHEN TOUCHING THE EYES, SKILL IS REQUIRED. OUR LORD'S HANDS WERE THE HANDS THAT HELPED - NOT HURT. (COMPARE BARBARA ASHLEY - HUG THAT HELPED - A TENDER TOUCH WHEN IT WAS DESPERATELY NEEDED.)

APPLICATION: THE KEY WORD IN THIS PASSAGE IS THE TERM TRANSFIGURED. IT IS USED ONLY FOUR TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, TWICE TO DESCRIBE THIS SCENE, TWICE WITH REFERENCE TO BELIEVERS. ROMANS 12:2. A REFERENCE TO A TRANSFORMED OR RENEWED MIND. II COR. 3:18. CONFIRMED NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S STORY ABOUT THE GREAT STONE FACE ILLUSTRATES THIS TRUTH. IF YOU REMEMBER THE STORY IT HAD TO DO WITH A BOY WHO LIVED IN A VILLAGE BELOW A MOUNTAIN WHERE THERE WAS CARVED ON THE FACE OF THE MOUNTAIN A GREAT IMAGE OF STONE THAT LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE A MAN'S FACE. IT WAS A FREAK OF NATURE. LEGEND SAID THAT SOME DAY SOMEONE WAS COMING TO THE VILLAGE WHO WOULD LOOK LIKE THE GREAT STONE FACE AND WOULD DO WONDERFUL THINGS FOR THE VILLAGE. THE STORY SO GRIPPED THE BOY THAT HE USED TO SIT FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME LOOKING AT THE GREAT STONE FACE THINKING OF THE DAY WHEN THAT MAN WOULD COME. YEARS PASSED AND THE PERSON DID NOT COME AND STILL THE YOUNG MAN DID WHAT HE HAD DONE AS A BOY - HE LOOKED AT THE FACE WITH ALL OF ITS MAJESTY AND BEAUTY EXPECTING THE MAN TO COME. BY AND BY THE YOUTH PASSED INTO MIDDLE AGE AND OLD AGE STILL THE MAN OF THE LEGEND DID NOT COME. ONE DAY THE LAD WHO WAS NOW AN OLD MAN WALKED THROUGH THE VILLAGE WHEN SOMEONE LOOKED AT HIM AND EXCLAIMED, "HE IS COME, HE IS COME, THE ONE WHO LOOKS LIKE THE GREAT STONE FACE HAS COME." THE LAD WHO WAS NOW AN OLD MAN HAD LOOKED AT THE FACE SO LONG THAT HE'D BECOME IN APPEARANCE LIKE THE ONE AT WHICH HE GAZED.

Room for us with his  
Picture — Rom. 12:2

- 7 - (We are changed into the  
image of that at which  
we gaze!) Look like  
look at?

IF WE WANT TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST, WE MUST LOOK -  
LONG - AT HIM. DR. LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER WAS  
PRONE TO INTERRUPT THE SINGING OF A HYMN  
ENTITLED "TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY" AND CHANGE THE  
WORDS TO TAKE TIME TO BEHOLD HIM.

"TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS;  
LOOK FULL IN HIS WONDERFUL FACE;  
AND THE THINGS OF EARTH WILL GROW STRANGELY DIM  
IN THE LIGHT OF HIS GLORY AND GRACE."

TRANSFIGURED

MATTHEW 17:1-9

OUR LORD WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE HE WAS DISFIGURED. ISAIAH 52:14 - "HIS VISAGE (APPEARANCE) WAS SO MARRED, (DISFIGURED) MORE THAN ANY MAN." JESUS' DISCIPLES WOULD SEE HIM IN HIS GLORY BEFORE HE BEGAN THE GORY ORDEAL OF THE CROSS. LET US EXAMINE THE PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE TRANSFIGURATION EXPERIENCE:

I. THE THREE DISCIPLES - VERSE 1

THESE THREE WERE CALLED THE "INNER CIRCLE." JESUS DID NOT SHOW FAVORITISM AMONG THE TWELVE, BUT THESE THREE SEEMED TO DESIRE CLOSER FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD AND IT WAS THEIR DECISION TO MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR MORE INTENSIVE STUDY IN THE SCHOOL OF THE DISCIPLES. THEIR DESIRE TO BE CLOSER TO THE LORD OPENED THE DOOR TO OPPORTUNITIES AND SPECIAL MOMENTS IN JESUS' LIFE, SUCH AS GETHSEMANE AND HERE. THESE MEN WERE THE LEADERS OF THE TWELVE AND MADE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR EXTRA WORK. THESE THREE SEEMED TO BE UNLIKELY CANDIDATES FOR SPECIAL PRIVILEGE. THEY WERE THE SONS OF THUNDER AND THE OUTSPOKEN, IMPETUOUS FISHERMEN. "HIGH MOUNTAIN APART" THE MOUNTAIN WAS PROBABLY MT. HERMON IN THE NORTH OF ISRAEL, SOME TEN THOUSAND FEET HIGH. MOUNTAINS WERE OFTEN THE PLACE WHERE MEN DREW NEAR TO GOD, BOTH PUBLICALLY AND PRIVATELY. LUKE STATES WHY THEY WENT TO THE MOUNTAIN, TO PRAY. SIMPLY STATED, THIS WAS A "PRAYER CONFERENCE". WE ENJOY

BIBLE, MISSIONS, FAMILY, SUNDAY SCHOOL, EVANGELISM AND ALL KINDS OF CONFERENCES BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER EVER HAVING HEARD OF A PRAYER CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, OUR NUMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WOULD BE ABOUT THE SAME AS HIS - JESUS AND THREE OTHERS. PRAYER IS NOT A POPULAR ITEM IN MOST CHURCHES. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE PRAYER MEETING IS THE CHURCH ORPHAN WHILE SUPPERS AND SINGS WIN ALL THE POLLS! THE WORD APART MEANS PRIVATELY OR BY THEMSELVES. SOLITUDE HAS BEEN AND IS NOW A VITAL PART OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. EAGLES NEED SOLITUDE, CHICKENS DON'T. THIS MOUNTAIN-TOP EXPERIENCE BY OUR LORD REMINDS US THAT WE MAY DRAW NEAR TO GOD BUT ON HIS TERMS. AND WE ARE AS CLOSE TO THE LORD AS WE CARE OR CHOOSE TO BE. IT IS OUR, NOT HIS, RESPONSIBILITY TO DRAW NEAR.

## II. JESUS - VERSE 2

RELATE 1930'S SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN THEATER, COAL FIELDS OF McDOWELL COUNTY. THERE WAS USUALLY A WESTERN AND A SERIAL. ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AFTERNOON WAS THE SEGMENT CALLED "PREVUES OF COMING ATTRACTIONS." OUR LORD GAVE HIS DISCIPLES A PREVIEW OF HIS COMING KINGDOM (16:28). THE WORD IS A COMPOUND WORD, META WHICH MEANS AFTER OR BEYOND AND MORPHE WHICH MEANS FORM. THE WORD METAMORPHOSIS COMES FROM THESE TWO WORDS. METAMORPHOSIS IS USED TO DESCRIBE A PROCESS OF CHANGE. THE PROCESS BY WHICH A CATERPILLAR BECOMES A BUTTERFLY BEARS THAT TITLE. IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE A CHANGE IN PERSONALITY AND LIFESTYLE, WE SAY THAT ANYONE THAT IS GOING THROUGH A RADICAL TRANSFORMATION IS UNDERGOING A METAMORPHOSIS. IN THE

CASE OF JESUS, IT WAS NOT A REFLECTED BUT A RESIDING GLORY. (HEBREWS 1:3) IT WAS A CHANGE ON THE INSIDE NOT THE OUTSIDE. THE LIGHT SHONE FROM WITHIN HIM, NOT UPON HIM. (JOHN 1:14, II PETER 1:16-18) LUKE SAYS HIS GARMENTS WERE GLEAMING LIKE LIGHT. THE DISCIPLES HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN THEIR ENTIRE LIVES. THREE STRONG MEN FELL ON THEIR FACES IN SHEER FRIGHT. TODAY, CELEBRITIES CARRY THEIR OWN LIGHTS, SPOTLIGHTS AND OTHER LIGHTS. CHRIST'S DEITY SIMPLY BURST THROUGH THE VEIL OF HUMAN FLESH.

*See Morgan*  
III. MOSES AND ELIJAH - VERSE 3

MOSES HAD BEEN DEAD APPROXIMATELY 1500 YEARS AND ELIJAH HAD BEEN IN HEAVEN 900 YEARS. THESE TWO PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT ABOVE ALL OTHERS IN DEATH WERE SURROUNDED BY MYSTERY. MOSES DIED ON MT. NEBO AND NO ONE KNOWS HIS BURIAL SITE, NONE CAN GO AND SEE HIS TOMB. GOD ALONE KNOWS THE SPOT OF HIS BURIAL. ELIJAH'S NOW FAMOUS CHARIOT RIDE WAS SECOND TO NONE INCLUDING BEN HUR! THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME MOSES HAD EVER SET FOOT IN PALESTINE. THESE MEN REPRESENTING THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE ALIVE TALKING WITH JESUS ABOUT A VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT. LUKE REVEALS THAT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT HIS "EXODUS" WHICH HE SHOULD ACCOMPLISH AT JERUSALEM. THINK WHAT THIS WORD MEANT TO MOSES! MOSES AND ELIJAH WERE TALKING WITH JESUS ABOUT THE CROSS. THINK OF THE IMPORTANT PEOPLE THEY HAD TALKED TO IN THE PAST BUT NOTHING LIKE THIS. MEN IN HEAVEN WERE INTERESTED IN THE CROSS WHILE MEN ON EARTH SLEPT! (THE CROSS IS THE TOPIC OF HEAVENLY PEOPLE BUT NOT SO

HERE ON EARTH. FOR EXAMPLE, ILLUSTRATE TALK SHOWS SUCH AS MEET THE PRESS, FACE THE NATION, NIGHTLINE AND OTHERS. LIST SOME OF THE GREAT SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION. THIS WEEK THEY MIGHT TALK ABOUT JIM AND TAMMY BUT NOT MUCH ABOUT JESUS AND THE CROSS! THESE MEN CAME ALL THE WAY FROM HEAVEN TO FIND OUT ABOUT CALVARY. THEY WENT THERE BY FAITH, "ON CREDIT" SO TO SPEAK AND THEY WERE CONCERNED THAT THE FULL PAYMENT OF THEIR SIN DEBT BE MADE. THERE ARE SOME OTHER INTERESTING INSIGHTS REGARDING THIS PASSAGE:

(1) PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE ALIVE AND CONSCIOUS. THEY HAVE THE CAPACITY TO CONVERSE.

(2) PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE INTERESTED IN THE ACTIVITIES ON EARTH.

(3) APPARENTLY WE WILL RECOGNIZE PEOPLE IN HEAVEN WHOM WE HAVE NOT MET BEFORE. (INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE)

(4) WE WILL HAVE BODIES IN HEAVEN.

#### IV. PETER - VERSE 4

WHEN THINGS WERE HAPPENING FOR GOOD OR BAD, PETER WAS NOT FAR AWAY AND USUALLY HAD SOMETHING TO SAY.

(1) "IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE" THIS IS NOT ONE OF PETER'S PROFOUND STATEMENTS. ANYONE COULD HAVE FIGURED THAT OUT! SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT PETER HAD A REAL GRASP OF THE OBVIOUS. ANYWHERE JESUS IS IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE, ANY PLACE WITHOUT HIM IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE AWAY FROM. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE GOOD PLACES AND THINGS

IN LIFE COME TO US BECAUSE OF HIM. OTHER PLACES MAY HOLD FASCINATION BUT WHERE HE IS IS ALWAYS GOOD FOR US. (I HAVE FELT THAT WAY ABOUT THE LOCAL CHURCHES OF WHICH I HAVE BEEN A MEMBER, IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO BE. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME PEOPLE ACROSS AMERICA ARE LEARNING WHY LOCAL CHURCHES ARE IMPORTANT.)

(2) "LET US MAKE THREE TABERNACLES" THE WORD FOR TABERNACLE IS SKIN, TENT OR BOOTH. SIMPLY STATED, PETER WAS REFERRING TO A RESTING PLACE, THAT IS, HE WANTED TO MAKE PROVISION TO STAY ON THE MOUNTAIN FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. IT WAS GREAT TO BE THERE SO WHY NOT ENJOY THE SERENITY OF THE MOUNTAIN TOP AND AVOID THE SERVICE OF THE VALLEY. PETER WAS IN ERROR FOR SEVERAL REASONS NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS MOSES AND ELIJAH HAD TO "CATCH A CLOUD" BACK TO GLORY! JESUS COULD NOT LINGER BECAUSE HE HAD AN APPOINTMENT WITH DUTY AND DESTINY. THE DISCIPLES COULD NOT PROLONG THEIR STAY BECAUSE THERE WAS WORK TO BE DONE. ALSO, PETER ERRED IN PUTTING MOSES AND ELIJAH ON THE SAME PLANE WITH JESUS. THEY ARE NOT THE SAME! THIS IS THE STUFF WITH WHICH HERESY IS MADE. PETER'S SUGGESTION THAT A BUILDING PROGRAM WAS IN ORDER WAS THE FAILURE MANY MAKE IN BELIEVING THAT A PROGRAM IS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PERSON.

(3) "NOT KNOWING WHAT HE SAID" LUKE REVEALS THAT PETER HAD BEEN SOUND ASLEEP AND WAS STARTLED AWAKE AND IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TALKING! LET ME SUGGEST A NEW CHRISTIAN CLUB, NOT 700, NOT PTL, BUT A "CLAM UP CLUB". THAT IS, A FRATERNITY

C.U.C.

OF CHRISTIANS WHO REFUSE TO ENGAGE THE  
MOUTH UNTIL THE MIND IS IN GEAR!

## V. GOD THE FATHER - VERSE 5

TODAY, AS IN THE DAYS OF CHRIST, THERE IS  
A BABBLE OF VOICES ALL CLAIMING TO SPEAK  
FOR GOD. IN THIS PASSAGE, GOD IDENTIFIED  
HIS SON. THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTION  
AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE PERSON BOWED  
IN PRAYER. IT WAS GOD'S ADDITION OF EVEN  
MORE CREDENTIALS REGARDING JESUS'  
MESSIAHSHIP. GOD WAS SATISFIED WITH HIS  
SON. GOD SPECIFIED OUR RESPONSIBILITY  
TO JESUS CHRIST AND IT IS SUMMED UP IN  
THESE WORDS "HEAR YE HIM." IN JOHN 10  
JESUS SAID HIS SHEEP HEAR HIM AND FOLLOW  
HIM. THE CALL OF OUR LORD IS NOT TO BE  
A HERMIT ON A MOUNTAIN BUT A HERALD IN  
THE VALLEY. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR THE  
SAKE OF ILLUSTRATION, PLUG IN A PHONE ON  
HEAVEN'S CIRCUITRY AND ASK GOD WHAT HE  
WOULD HAVE US DO, HIS MESSAGE WOULD BE  
SIMPLE, HEAR HIM. THE BEST OF MEN ARE  
ONLY MEN AT THE BEST WHETHER THEY BE <sup>PROPS</sup>  
PROPHETS, PATRIARCHS, PURITANS OR PREACHERS.  
ALL MEN ARE SINNERS AND NEED A SAVIOUR.  
FROM THE PULPIT TO THE PEOPLE IT IS CHRIST  
AND NOT MEN WHO GIVES US CLEAR DIRECTION.  
OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO POINT MEN TO  
CHRIST IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY HEAR HIM -  
NOT US.

## VI. US - YOU AND ME

THERE IS ROOM IN THIS PICTURE FOR US. THE  
BIBLE USES THE WORD TRANSFORMED IN TWO  
KEY PASSAGES, BOTH RELATING TO BELIEVERS,  
ROMANS 12:2 (PHILLIPS TRANSLATION) "DON'T

LET THE WORLD AROUND YOU SQUEEZE YOU INTO ITS OWN MOLD, BUT LET GOD REMOLD YOUR MIND FROM WITHIN. THAT IS PHILLIPS' RENDERING OF BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MINDS. GOD NEEDS TO DO A WORK OF GRACE IN OUR MINDS IF WE ARE GOING TO SERVE HIM INTELLIGENTLY. II CORINTHIANS 3:18 (PHILLIPS TRANSLATION) "ALL OF US WHO ARE CHRISTIANS HAVE NO VEILS ON OUR FACES, BUT REFLECT LIKE MIRRORS THE GLORY OF THE LORD. WE ARE TRANSFIGURED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IN EVER INCREASING SPLENDOR INTO HIS OWN IMAGE." SIMPLY STATED, WE ARE CHANGED TO LOOK LIKE THAT AT WHICH WE GAZE. IF YOU GAZE AT PORNOGRAPHY LONG ENOUGH YOU WILL SLOWLY BE CHANGED INTO A PERVERT. IT IS A LAW OF LIFE. WE TAKE ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE THINGS WE LOOK UPON OVER A PERIOD OF TIME. IF YOU WANT TO LOOK LIKE JESUS - LOOK AT HIM LONG AND OFTEN. (HEBREWS 12:1) HAWTHORNE'S STORY OF THE GREAT STONE FACE ILLUSTRATES THIS TRUTH. THERE WAS A BOY WHO LIVED IN A VILLAGE BELOW THE MOUNTAIN AND THERE ON THE FACE OF THE MOUNTAIN WAS THE IMAGE OF A GREAT STONE FACE LOOKING DOWN SOLEMNLY UPON THE PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE. THE LEGEND SAID THAT SOME DAY SOMEONE WAS COMING TO THE VILLAGE WHO WOULD LOOK LIKE THE GREAT STONE FACE AND HE WOULD DO WONDERFUL THINGS. THE STORY SO GRIPPED THE BOY THAT HE USED TO SLIP AWAY HOUR AFTER HOUR AND STAND LOOKING AT THE GREAT STONE FACE THINKING ABOUT THE STORY AND THE COMING MAN. YEARS PASSED AND THE PERSON DID NOT COME AND STILL THE YOUNG MAN DID WHAT HE HAD DONE AS A BOY, STOOD AND

CONTEMPLATED THE MAJESTY AND THE BEAUTY OF THE GREAT STONE FACE. BY AND BY THE YOUTH PASSED INTO MIDDLE-LIFE AND OLD AGE AND STILL THE MAN IN THE LEGEND DID NOT COME. ONE DAY AS THE LAD, NOW AN OLD MAN, WALKED THROUGH THE VILLAGE SOMEONE LOOKED AT HIM AND EXCLAIMED: "HE HAS COME, HE HAS COME, THE ONE WHO IS LIKE THE GREAT STONE FACE!" HE HAD BECOME LIKE THAT AT WHICH HE GAZED. IF YOU WANT TO BECOME CHRIST-LIKE, LOOK AT JESUS. DR. LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER WAS PRONE TO INTERRUPT THE SINGING OF A HYMN ENTITLED "TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY" AND CHANGED THE WORDS TO SAY, "TAKE TIME TO BEHOLD HIM." AS WE BEHOLD HIM IN ALL OF HIS GLORY, WE WILL BECOME HOLY.

## SOME MARKS OF A GREAT CHURCH

Great is an overused, abused word. We use it to describe food, fun and fellowship. "We have a great church and a great pastor, a great \_\_\_\_\_ you name it. St. Peter's Basilica in Rome is supposed to be the largest church in the world, but is it a great church because it is big? A week before Jesus died, His disciples were arguing over who would be the greatest, or #1 in His coming kingdom. (Luke 22:24) Jesus measured greatness by service not size. He weighed the actions of His servants. How does one measure greatness in a church? Is there an instrument called a "megometer" to determine greatness? Let us look at Scripture and see if we can get some ideas regarding the measure of greatness.

*mt. 1 see "Do the Great"*

### I. A GREAT CHURCH WORSHIPS AND SERVES A GREAT GOD. (Rev. 19:17 Acts 17:24ff)

There are other verses that remind us of God's greatness... Titus 2:13 Heb. 4:14 13:20 Pagan religions often measure greatness in terms of architecture. (Acts 19:27-35) The true and living God is great in what He can do but even more so in what He is--in attributes. Theology books categorize these attributes in 3 areas:

*Size or Spirit*

- (1) Personality: Living, Intelligent, Free, Self-Conscious
  - (2) Goodness: True, Holy, Love, Righteous, Faithful, Merciful
  - (3) Greatness: Eternal, Unchangeable, Infinite, 3 O's (Omniscience, Omnipresence, Omnipotence)
- Something in the picture!*

For example, our God is self-existent. He depends on nothing outside Himself. This can be said of no other being--anywhere. (Jn. 5:26) God is the supreme authority in the universe and in the church. There is none greater than God. Song: "How Great Thou Art"

- ① Heb 4:14 - Great High Priest  
② " 13:20 Great Shepherd  
③ Mt. 5:35 Great King

## Conclusion:

Any ministry that seeks to exalt man, in the long run will have no lasting effects on man.

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He rules all--we do not rule Him!

① Dr. Donald Barnhouse, in his Roman series tells the story of his return to Princeton Seminary to speak in chapel. One of his professors attended and listened carefully to the message. After the service, the professor approached Barnhouse with this explanation for his presence. When former students returned to speak, the professor came to hear them--once. He attempted to determine the kind of God they served--a big or little God. The purpose of ministry is to tell how great He is--not how great or gifted we are! (C. Everett Koop) Cr.

② A skeptic met a poor man walking down the street. When asked where he was going, the poor man replied: "I'm going to church." Why? Answer: "To worship God". Question: "Is God big or small?" An attempt to confuse and rattle the man. Answer: "He is so great that the heavens cannot contain Him. He is so small He can dwell in my heart."

## II. A GREAT CHURCH PROCLAIMS A GREAT MESSAGE

(Acts 2:14 / 4:33) 2:14

What do men hear from the pulpit of many churches today? The need to be positive, not negative--to be better people, help the homeless, the sick, the jobless--all genuine needs. The greatness of the Gospel message is its power to change people. (Hole illus.)

(Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 5:17) If the gospel is all we have to give, then give it all we've got! The gospel is not of human origin (Gal. 1:8-12) Our message - that it!

In 1870, A. J. Gordon became pastor of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church in Boston. It was a self-satisfied, inept church, cold and indifferent. It was so uncaring that a church secretary was rebuked by a deacon for putting up a sign that said, "Welcome Strangers". The choir was just a handful

of listless singers. It was called the "ice box" of the church. D.L. Moody came to Boston in 1877 and pitched a tent 300 feet from the church. Night after night people were saved and it changed the nature of the church. The message made the difference. (Comment re Jimmy's concern--"Preach the Bible, they won't know much about that!")

Some months ago I was doing some research work as to why people attend church--what attracts them most?

- (1) Large chancel choir-yes
- (2) Spacious parking/facilities-yes
- (3) Nursery near the sanctuary-yes
- (4) Friendly people/pastors-yes
- (5) Small groups-yes
- (6) But #1 attraction--THE PULPIT

MINISTRY!

Remember 1 Cor. 1:<sup>21</sup>~~3~~--preaching pleases God! (Methodist Bishop)

### III. A GREAT CHURCH GROWS ESPECIALLY IN TIME OF TRIAL (Acts 8:1)

It was during this time of great persecution that the "great persecutor" was converted. The word persecution means to pursue or follow hard after someone with the idea of hurting them. Theologically speaking, it is a systematic attempt to suppress and stop the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Smyrna Church- Rev. 2:8 The churches in the chapter refer to 7 local churches in what is now called modern Turkey. They also represent 7 periods of church history from the Apostolic to the Apostate! Smyrna represents the second of those periods or the Period of Persecution (100 AD to 300 AD) or Martyrdom. Smyrna was a city renowned for myrrah, a type of gum, extracted from thorn trees, bitter to

taste but when crushed gave forth its fragrance used in perfumes and embalming ingredients.

Text:

Rev. 2:9-10 - "I know" - God knows what is going on in His churches. He sees, hears, know. (JWM-Did it ever occur to you...)

"Tribulation" - A reference to piling stones on a person's chest until slowly crushed to death (pressure).

V.10 "Ten days" - It is generally believed that these 10 days refer to the 10 edicts or attempts of 10 different Roman rulers to exterminate Christianity, beginning with Nero (54 AD) to Diocletian (284 BC) 200+ years of persecution!

V.9 Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (155 AD) was killed because he refused to deny his faith. A contrast: Smyrna a poor church God called rich. Laodicea a rich church God called poor. From its beginning, the church has endured persecution. In Rome, believers fled to the catacombs--underground cemetery in the hillsides of the city. 2:17

Foxe's Book of Martyrs--a must read for the church today. A young Christian man, married just 3 weeks was separated from his wife. When arrested he was required to surrender his copy of the Scriptures. His copy burned and his eyes gouged out with hot irons--his books of no use to him if he could not see--they said. Gagged, hung by his feet. His wife urged him to deny Christ--he refused. (2 Tim. 3:12)

IV. A GREAT CHURCH WILL GROW BECAUSE IT IS A LIVING ENTITY (Acts 2:41-47)

Living things grow. The growth of the

I. Great God  
II " message  
III Great Trials  
IV " Growth

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(P. 1)

church must be in at least two directions at the same time--out and down. Numbers and nutrition go together. A tree with branches and fruit must also have a root system. The Great Commission says go and grow. Yet in American 1/2 of all Protestant churches are 75 or less in number. National average in the low 100's. 25% are under 35. 3/4 are less than 300.

Charles Handy is correct--organizations and churches need to be both large and small. (Explain) I must confess to liking big roads, big parking lots, big facilities, big choir, big nursery, big budgets, big mission programs. The only thing we don't need is a "Mister Big". With God there are no small churches and no big preachers! (By the way--never heard a person complain--"our church is too small!")

SPURGEON

Stewart

Living things grow--dead things decompose and rot! (P. Hill--1st Baptist S.A.) (Free-Post)

V. A GREAT CHURCH MOVES FORWARD ON ITS KNEES AS WELL AS ITS FEET (Acts 4:31 Acts 12:5,12)

The leadership of the church was in danger. Satan was picking off its leaders one at a time--Stephen, James, etc. The church had no political influence, no judicial recourse. It could not keep its leaders out of jail. They had no access to Caesar's throne--only the throne of God! (Heb. 4:16) When all doors on earth were closed, a door was open in heaven. A praying people will hear from heaven. Sometimes it takes a loss of leadership to bring a church to its knees. The Lord does not ask us to do the best we can for Him--He asks us to trust Him for direction and dynamics. (Comment re Tim Showen) Answers to prayer seem rare in church churches today. What about a Day of Prayer?  
GFC - all night P. meeting | Westfield -

*Time*  
THE TASTE OF TEARS

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I SAT IN THE VISITOR'S ROOM OF A PRISON. ACROSS THE TABLE FROM ME SAT A YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE WRONG KIND OF PEOPLE, IN THE WRONG PLACES AND NOW SHE FOUND HERSELF ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW. AS WE TALKED ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO HER ARREST AND SENTENCING SHE SAID ALMOST ABRUPTLY: "YOU MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS A TIME IN MY LIFE WHEN I WAS A FAITHFUL CHURCH MEMBER. I WENT FORWARD IN A REVIVAL MEETING DOWN SOUTH WHEN I WAS JUST A CHILD." AS SHE TALKED ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE, HER VOICE CHOKED OFF WITH EMOTION AND HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION BECAUSE OF THE FLOW OF TEARS. TEARS ARE A COMMON EXPERIENCE TO ALL. TEARS WERE PART OF THE LIFE OF OUR LORD. THERE ARE TWO RECORDED INSTANCES IN SCRIPTURE OF JESUS WEeping: (1) AT THE GRAVE OF A FRIEND - JOHN 11:35; (2) OVER THE CITY OF JERUSALEM - LUKE 19:41 (HEBREWS 5:7 REFERS TO OUR LORD'S TEARS BUT NOT ON A SPECIFIC OCCASION BUT RATHER WITH REFERENCE TO HIS INNERMOST SPIRITUAL LIFE.) THE "TEARFUL SIDE" OF LIFE IS EMBARRASSING TO SOME BUT ENJOYABLE TO OTHERS! TODAY, WE WILL EXAMINE SEVERAL PLACES IN THE WORD OF GOD WHICH HAS TO DO WITH TEARFUL EXPERIENCES.

I. A TEARFUL CRY FOR HELP - MARK 9:17-24

(A) A SICK SON AND A SAD FATHER - THE WORK DUMB IN THE TEXT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH I.Q. THIS BOY WAS SIMPLY UNABLE TO SPEAK. HE WAS GIVEN TO SEIZURES THAT CAUSED

*"unable to speak"*  
*ἀλάλως*

*Jack  
 Bessel  
 (4 hrs)*

*① Sorrow  
 Joy ②*

HIM TO FOAM AT THE MOUTH, GRIND HIS TEETH, WALLOW ON THE GROUND, FALLING INTO THE FIRE AND ALSO WATER - A LIFELONG EXPERIENCE IN WHICH HE GOT NO BETTER - IN SOME RESPECTS WORSE EACH YEAR. HIS CONDITION WAS A NAGGING CONCERN FOR HIS PARENTS AS THEY WATCHED HIM LITERALLY WASTING AWAY, DYING A DAY AT A TIME BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES. THE UTTER HELPLESSNESS AND HOPELESSNESS OF THE SITUATION MADE IT ALMOST UNBEARABLE FOR THIS BOY'S FATHER. REMEMBER THERE WERE NO DOCTORS, HOSPITALS, NOT MUCH MEDICINE OR COMMUNITY CONCERN FOR PEOPLE IN THIS CONDITION. JESUS WAS PROBABLY THEIR LAST RESORT, THEIR LAST STOP FOR THERE WAS NOBODY ELSE AND NO PLACE ELSE TO GO. AN AFFLICTED SON AND AN AFFLICTED FATHER. THE BOY'S DEMON POSSESSION SEEMED TO HAVE HIS DESTRUCTION AS A GOAL. (VERSE 22) THIS BOY'S FATHER WAS AT WITS END AND EVEN JESUS' DISCIPLES HAD TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO CAST OUT THE DEMONS BUT ONLY ADDING TO THEIR MISERY. (PARENTS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT SATAN IS OUT TO DESTROY YOUR KIDS AND MINE. DON'T LET HIM DO IT, GET THEM TO JESUS FAST! A WISE FATHER WILL BRING HIS CHILDREN SICK OR WELL TO JESUS CHRIST FOR HELP.)

(B) THE PROBLEM OF THE MISPLACED IF -  
VERSES 22-23

IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF JESUS' POWER TO HEAL BUT RATHER THE DIRECTION OF THE FATHER'S FAITH. HIS INITIAL ATTITUDE OF DOUBT AND UNBELIEF IS THE SAME TODAY. IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF JESUS' ABILITY OR WILLINGNESS TO HELP. CONSIDERATION: IF YOUR CHILDREN AND MINE HAD SOME TERRIBLE DISEASE, WE MIGHT BE EXERCISED TO TEARS BUT SOMETIMES PARENTS LACK A SPIRITUAL BURDEN FOR THE SALVATION

*Dem on possession = a violent scene!*

*It hurt the boy - repeatedly + cast out so violent - crawl through him dead!*

OF THEIR CHILDREN BECAUSE NOTHING SEEMS TO BE WRONG. HOWEVER, NOTHING IN LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT FOR OUR KIDS THAN TO GET THEM TO CHRIST. BEFORE THEY ARE BORN, LET US COVENANT WITH GOD THAT THE DEVIL WON'T GET A SINGLE ONE OF THEM. ACTS 16:31 AND THE INTERESTING PHRASE "AND THY HOUSE" SHOULD BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO ALL OF US WHO HAVE CHILDREN. (EXPLAIN) CHARLES SPURGEON SAID THAT HE REBELLED AGAINST GOD IN THE EARLY YEARS. IT WAS HIS MOTHER TO WHOM HE OWED THE FIRST AWAKENING OF SPIRITUAL NEED AND HER PRAYERS AND PERSONAL EXHORTATION AROUSED HIM TO DEEP CONCERN. SPURGEON'S FATHER TOLD THE STORY OF HOW HE CAME HOME ONE DAY AND AS HE ASCENDED THE STAIRS HE HEARD THE VOICE OF HIS WIFE IN PRAYER. QUIETLY HE OPENED THE DOOR AND SAW HIS WIFE IN THE BEDROOM ON HER KNEES PLEADING FOR HER CHILDREN AND THEIR SALVATION AND ESPECIALLY FOR HER STRONG-WILLED SON CHARLES. PARENTS WHO ARE DRIVEN TO THE POINT OF PRAYER WITH TEARS OVER WAYWARD CHILDREN MAY HAVE THE ASSURANCE THAT GOD NOT ONLY HEARS BUT HEEDS THAT KIND OF PRAYING.

## II. A TEARFUL TOUCH - Luke 7:38-39

*(The Sorrowful Tears of a Fallen Woman)*

THIS STORY CENTERS AROUND THREE KEY WORDS IN VERSE 38 (1) WEeping, (2) WASHing, (3) WIPing. THE WOMAN IN THIS STORY IS CALLED A SINNER - VERSE 37, 39. THE USAGE OF THIS TERM DOES NOT SUGGEST THAT SHE WAS A SINNER LIKE EVERYONE ELSE BUT RATHER IN A SPECIAL WAY AND IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT IT IS A REFERENCE TO IMMORAL PRACTICES, NAMELY, A WOMAN OF THE STREET, A HARLOT. THE FACT THAT JESUS LET HER COME NEAR HIM IN PUBLIC WAS A PROBLEM FOR THE PHARISEES WHO WERE

**v. 37 + 39!!**

(Y) BIG ON CEREMONIAL CLEANSING AND WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH PEOPLE LIKE THIS WOMAN! IF THIS STORY SAYS ANYTHING IT STATES CLEARLY THAT BIG SINNERS OFTEN MAKE THE BEST SAINTS! A PERSON WHO IS FORGIVEN MUCH ALSO HAS MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR. THE PHARISEES MANIFESTED LITTLE OR NO INTEREST IN JESUS WORK OR HIM PERSONALLY. EVEN THE DISCIPLES HAD BEEN NEGLIGENT IN THE REALM OF COMMON COURTESY AND GOOD MANNERS. SOME SCHOLARS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT WHEN A GUEST ENTERED A HOME IN BIBLE TIMES, THREE THINGS SHOULD BE DONE IN THE INTEREST OF ETIQUETTE AND COURTESY.

- (1) THE HOST PUT HIS HANDS ON THE SHOULDER OF A GUEST AND GAVE HIM A KISS OF PEACE. THIS WOULD COMPARE TO A HANDSHAKE IN OUR TIME.
- (2) A CONTAINER OF COOL WATER WAS POURED OVER HIS FEET TO CLEANSE THE DUST FROM THE ROAD AND TO PROVIDE COMFORT FOR HIS FEET. SOMETIMES A BIT OF FRAGRANT INCENSE WAS USED AS AN ACT OF HONOR AND HOSPITALITY.
- (3) THE GUEST WAS GIVEN THE PLACE OF RESPECT AT THE TABLE.

NOTICE THAT NONE OF THESE THINGS HAD BEEN DONE FOR JESUS. THE WOMAN IN QUESTION REMEMBERED THESE THINGS - PARADOXICAL THAT AN IMMORAL WOMAN WOULD BE SENSITIVE TO A BREACH OF ETHICS AND COURTESY. THIS WOMAN HUMBLLED HERSELF BEFORE JESUS. HER TEARS OF LOVE AND GRATITUDE CONSTITUTED AN ACT OF PUBLIC WORSHIP. OTHERS WERE CONTENT WITH RELIGIOUS RITUAL BUT NOT HER, NOTHING LESS THAN TOUCHING JESUS WOULD

*Principle*

BE ENOUGH FOR HER. SHE LOVED HIM MUCH BECAUSE SHE WAS FORGIVEN MUCH. LESSON:

IN OUR MIDDLE-CLASS AMERICAN CHURCHES WHERE PROFESSIONALS SOMETIMES SCRATCH EACH OTHER ON THE BACK, THERE IS A DANGER OF AT LEAST TWO AREAS OF NEGLECT:

(1) THE TENDENCY TO LOOK DOWN ON CERTAIN KINDS OF SINS EVEN AFTER GOD HAS FORGIVEN AND CLEANSED THEM.

(2) A DRY-EYED APPROACH TO THE LORD.

*Also Prostitution Homosexuals*

\* OUR CHURCHES LOST SOMETHING WHEN THE TEARS DRIED UP. TRUE, CHEAP, ARTIFICIAL, CROCODILE TEARS ARE VERY DISTASTEFUL BUT SURELY WEeping IN CHURCH CANNOT BE RESERVED TO PENTECOSTALS ALONE! SURELY WE NEED TO WEEP OVER OUR SINS AND OVER OUR SAVIOUR.

### III. A TEARFUL TRAGEDY - HEBREWS 12:15-17

*(The Crocodile Tears of a Man of Twisted Values)*  
THE STORY OF ESAU AND JACOB, ISAAC'S SONS, IS WELL KNOWN. THE CENTRAL POINT OF THIS STORY AS RECORDED IN GENESIS IS JACOB CHANGED WHEN HE CAME INTO VITAL CONTACT WITH GOD BUT ESAU NEVER DID. JACOB, THE SUPPLANTER OR CROOK, BECAME ISRAEL, A PRINCE WITH GOD AS A RESULT OF THAT WONDERFUL ENCOUNTER WITH GOD ON THAT MEMORABLE NIGHT AT BETHEL. (GENESIS 28:16-19) THE BIRTHRIGHT WAS A SACRED RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE GOD HELD BY THE FIRST-BORN IN THE FAMILY. ESAU'S MATERIALISTIC APPROACH TO LIFE MANIFESTED THE FACT THAT HIS INTEREST IN LIFE WAS SELF-GRATIFICATION, HE WAS A MAN OF TWISTED VALUES WHO TREATED SACRED THINGS IN A COMMON WAY. ILLUSTRATION:

*Marriage*

*Fornicators  
break thru -  
no regard for  
the sacred  
nature.*

(1) A GROUP OF TEENAGERS STOP AT A LOCAL STORE, BUY SEVERAL CANS OF BEER, SEVERAL BOTTLES OF WINE, GO TO A REMOTE SPOT WHERE THEY CONTINUE DRINKING FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. SOMEONE HAS BROUGHT DRUGS ALONG TOO. THEY ARE HAVING WHAT THEY BELIEVE TO BE "A GOOD TIME." THE CAR IS PACKED WITH KIDS AND THE BOY DRIVING IS DOING SO AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. SUDDENLY HE LOSES CONTROL OF THE AUTOMOBILE, STRIKES ANOTHER CAR, SEVERAL INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE KILLED. THE DRIVER OF THE CAR SURVIVED. IN THE HOSPITAL, DAYS LATER, HE LEARNS OF THE DEATH OF SEVERAL STRANGERS AND SOME OF HIS FRIENDS IN THE CAR AND HE BEGINS TO WEEP. HIS LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME BUT NO AMOUNT OF TEARS WILL BRING THE LIVING BACK FROM THE DEAD AND NO AMOUNT OF LAMENTATION CAN CORRECT THE HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE OF A SINGLE NIGHT OF IRRESPONSIBILITY AND DRUNKENNESS.

X (2) A YOUNG LADY REJECTS THE COUNSEL OF HER PARENTS AND MORE MATURE FRIENDS. SHE INSISTS ON KEEPING COMPANY WITH A FELLOW WHOSE MORALS ARE QUESTIONED BY ALL. IN A MOMENT OF MORAL WEAKNESS SHE SUBMITS TO AN ACT THAT WILL RUIN HER LIFE. SHE BECOMES PREGNANT, HER BOYFRIEND ABANDONS HER AND SHE IS LEFT WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF RAISING THE CHILD OF A MAN SHE SCARCELY KNEW. IN THE MIDST OF HER TEARS, SHE HOPES THAT THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE WAS SIMPLY A BAD DREAM FROM WHICH SHE WILL AWAKEN AND ALL WILL BE WELL. THROUGH HER TEARS SHE ASKS GOD TO FORGIVE HER BUT THE SCARS OF SIN REMAIN BUT NO AMOUNT OF WEEPING WILL CHANGE THE REALITY OF LIFE.

THE TEARS THAT ACCOMPANY THE TRAGEDIES OF LIFE. SURELY WE SHOULD BE WISER AND AVERT SUCH NEEDLESS EXPERIENCES. MANY YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF THE DEVIL. HE WHISPERS IN THE EAR WORDS LIKE SOMEDAY AND MAYBE BUT THEY ARE SIMPLY HIS WAY OF SPELLING NEVER. (EXPLAIN)

#### IV. A TIME WHEN TEARS SHALL BE NO MORE - REVELATION 21:3-4

THERE ARE TWO "MORE" FAMILIES IN THE BIBLE. THE ROMANS GROUP IS KNOWN AS THE "MUCH MORE". (ROMANS 5:9,10,15,17,20) THE REVELATION GROUP IS KNOWN AS THE "NO MORE". THIS PHRASE APPEARS AT LEAST TEN TIMES IN REVELATION. ONE OF THE "NO MORES" HAS TO DO WITH TEARS. THIS SCENE IS ONE OF ULTIMATE COMFORT AND CONSOLATION. IF A PERSON HAD NEVER WEPT, THIS PASSAGE WOULD HAVE LITTLE IMPACT. IF A PERSON HAD NEVER BEEN IN A HOSPITAL OR CEMETERY IT WOULD BE OF LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE. BUT BECAUSE TEARS ARE A PART OF LIFE IT IS HELPFUL TO KNOW THAT THE LAST CHAPTER OF THE LAST BOOK IN THE BIBLE SPEAKS NOT ONLY OF THE REALITY OF HEAVEN BUT ALSO THE REALIZATION THAT TEARS WILL BE GONE FOREVER. GOD HIMSELF IS THE ONE WHO WILL CORRECT THIS SITUATION. *LAST TEAR*

THE TELEPHONE RANG IN A PASTOR'S HOME IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS. THE TROUBLED VOICE OF A YOUNG FATHER ASKED IF THE PASTOR WOULD COME TO THE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY. UPON ARRIVAL HE FOUND HIMSELF IN THE COMPANY OF TWO DOCTORS, SEVERAL NURSES, A FRANTIC MOTHER AND A DISTRESSED FATHER. THE COUPLE'S BABY DIED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES.

WHEN THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR CAME HE WRAPPED THE BABY IN A WHITE SHAWL AND STARTED TO LEAVE THE HOSPITAL ROOM. AS HE DID THE MOTHER BEGAN TO CRY AND PLEADED THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE THE BABY WITH HER JUST ONE MORE NIGHT. THE YOUNG FATHER TURNED TO THE PASTOR AND SAID, "WHAT SHALL WE DO?" HE REPLIED, "LET HER HAVE THE BABY." SO THE LIFELESS INFANT WAS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF THE MOTHER AND AS PARENTS AND PASTOR SAT THROUGH THE REMAINING PART OF THE NIGHT THIS EXPERIENCE LEFT AN INDELIBLE IMPRESSION ON THE MIND AND SOUL OF THE LATE DR. ROBERT G. LEE, PASTOR OF THE BELLVUE BAPTIST CHURCH IN MEMPHIS, TENN. FROM THAT EXPERIENCE AND OTHERS HE WROTE ONE OF HIS MOST MEMORABLE BOOKS ENTITLED, FOR THE TIME OF TEARS.

Some weeping over wrong things — disappointed loved

self-pity

your sins

led to Him

! gail on  
Bofford!

"ASAPH'S ANXIETY"

## PSALM 73

WHO WAS ASAPH? THIS IS A NEW NAME TO MOST OF US. I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A LITTLE BOY NAMED ASAPH - AMOS OR ASA YES BUT ASAPH - NO. THE WORD MEANS COLLECTOR. (THIS MIGHT BE A SUITABLE NICKNAME FOR MANY OF US WHO NEVER THROW ANYTHING AWAY - "PACK - RATS") HE WAS ONE OF THE TEMPLE CHOIR LEADERS, A "JEWISH MINISTER OF MUSIC." HE FUNCTIONED IN THE TEMPLE DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF KING DAVID. HE ALSO WROTE AT LEAST A DOZEN PSALMS. HE HAD SONS WHO FOLLOWED HIS WORK IN THE TEMPLE BUT MRS. ASAPH IS NOT MENTIONED. AS A WRITER OF SACRED SCRIPTURE, WE ARE SURPRISED WHEN HE ADMITS THAT HE CAME NEAR TO BACKSLIDING!

CHRISTIAN WORKERS ARE NOT PERMITTED ~~THE~~ TO LUXURY OF BACKSLIDING! THE FIRST TWO VERSES WHICH ARE INTRODUCTORY TO THE SUBJECT HE CORRECTLY ASSERTS THAT: "GOD IS GOOD." BAD MEN DO NOT COME TO THAT CONCLUSION! HE ALSO KNEW TWO FACTS ABOUT THE HUMAN HEART CONDITION: (1) A CLEAN HEART - VERSE 1 (2) A CORRUPT HEART - VERSE 8. THE MORAL ISSUE THAT CAUSED ASAPH TO STUMBLE, AND COME VERY NEAR THE EDGE SPIRITUALLY ARE QUESTIONS SOME OF US HAVE CONSIDERED ALSO. "HOW CAN A GOOD GOD PERMIT THE UNGODLY TO PROSPER AND THE RIGHTEOUS TO SUFFER?" IN ASAPH'S DAY IT WAS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT PROSPERITY WAS A SIGN OF GOD'S BLESSING AND POVERTY WAS A SIGN OF HIS DISPLEASURE. ASAPH WANTED TO BELIEVE THAT GOD IS GOOD BUT COULD NOT RECONCILE THE APPARENT CONTRADICTION WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE AND THE WAY GOD IS. IT WAS TO THIS PROBLEM THAT ASAPH ADDRESSED THIS PSALM. BY THE WAY, ASAPH'S PRESUPPOSITION IS BUILT ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT SUFFERING IS BAD FOR US AND IS WRONG AND UNFAIR FOR GOD TO PERMIT IT. BECAUSE WE DO NOT LIKE TO SUFFER WE ASSUME THAT

A Family of Singers  
+  
A Music School

SUFFERING HAS NO VALUE. (THE STORY IS TOLD OF A MAN WHO WHILE WATCHING AN IMPRISONED MOTH TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM ITS CACCOON WATCHED UNTIL HE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER. WHEN HIS PATIENCE WAS EXHAUSTED, HE PICKED UP A PAIR OF SCISSORS TO SNIP AWAY THE REMAINING THREADS WHICH HELD THE MOTH FROM ITS EXIT. WHEN THE MATERIAL HAD BEEN SNIPPED AWAY OUT CRAWLED AN INSECT WITH SHRIVELED WINGS. IT HAD NEVER DEVELOPED, IT NEVER COULD FLY BECAUSE IT WAS MALFORMED. THE LESSON WAS SIMPLE: THE MAKING OF THE CREATURE WAS IN THE STRUGGLE! WHERE THERE IS NO STRUGGLE THERE IS NO BEAUTY. SO, SOMETIMES MEN THINK THEY KNOW MORE ABOUT LIFE THAN GOD.

# I. ASAPH WAS ENVIOUS OF THE UNGODLY LIFESTYLE

- VERSES 3-16

(So) ARE WE!?

BEFORE WE "BEAT UP" ON ASAPH, PERHAPS WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES IF WE HAVE EVER BEEN ENVIOUS OF THE VERY RICH? HAVE WE EVER WATCHED "LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS" AND LONGED TO HAVE EXPENSIVE CARS, YACHTS, HOUSES STRATEGICALLY PLACED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, DESIGNER CLOTHES AND CASH TO BUY ANYTHING ONES HEART COULD DESIRE? ASAPH DID - AND PROBABLY WE HAVE TOO SOMEWHERE ALONG LIFE'S WAY. ASAPH LISTS SOME OF THE AREAS HE CONSIDERED:

## (1) THEY SEEMED TO DIE A PAINLESS DEATH -

### VERSE 4

THE WICKED SEEMED TO HAVE EVERYTHING GOING FOR THEM - EVEN IN DEATH. THE IDEA THAT A QUIET DEATH INDICATES ASSURANCE IN THE AFTER LIFE IS NOT A SPIRITUALLY VALID CONCLUSION. MANY OF THE SAINTS WHO HAVE FELT THE NEARNESS OF THE LORD AT THE TIME OF DEATH STILL DID NOT

RELISH THE IDEA OF DYING. DEATH IS STILL AN ENEMY - OUR LAST ONE - BUT AN ENEMY STILL AND ONE WE TEND TO FIGHT. THE POINT IS, THE WICKED ARE SECURE IN THEIR SINS EVEN TO THE LAST BREATH. THEY ARE IGNORANT OF THE BIBLICAL INJUNCTIONS ABOUT ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD. AS ASAPH VISITED HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES HE'D SEEN THE WILD, WEALTHY AND RECKLESS DIE IN THEIR SLEEP EVEN WITH A PEACEFUL COUNTEenance. HE HAD HEARD THEM SPEAK OF NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCES WHERE THEY HAVE A WARM SENSE OF WELL BEING, PERHAPS SAW A LIGHT AND A FIGURE AT THE END OF A TUNNEL, AND ALL SEEMED TO BE OK. ASAPH GOES ON TO SAY "THEIR STRENGTH IS FIRM". THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THESE PEOPLE WHO SEEM TO BE BLESSED WITH GOOD HEALTH. THEY ARE TANNED, PLAY TENNIS AND TROUP AROUND THE WORLD IN GOOD SHAPE. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OF THE FINEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE CONFINED TO SICK BEDS FOR YEARS ON END. THE CALAMITIES OF LIFE, THE SORROWS, MISERIES AND BURDENS OF LIFE DO NOT PASS THEM BY BUT ALL SEEM TO STOP AT THEIR DOOR. THEIR HOUSE BURNS, THEIR CHILDREN DIE, THEY HAVE AUTOMOBILE WRECKS, THE DISASTERS OF NATURE COMPOUND AGAINST THEM. (RECITE OR RELATE STORY OF ARLIE ENNIS)

*V.4*  
*get*  
*Count*  
*Chap*  
*Next*  
*Sunday*  
*PH.11*

(2) THEY DO NOT HAVE THE PROBLEMS THAT PLAGUE OTHERS - VERSE 5

THE WORDS "NO PROBLEM" SEEM TO BE THE KEY WORDS OF THEIR LIFE. IT'S AS IF THEY LIVE A CHARMED LIFE. THEY ARE THE "BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE" THE ENVY OF OTHERS EVEN SOME CHRISTIANS!

(3) THEY LIVE A PAMPERED LIFE - 4B, VERSE 7

THE WORD FAT IS USED AS A SYMBOL OF SELF INDULGENCE. THEY ARE THE "FAT CATS" OF THIS WORLD. THEY HAVE MORE THAN THE HEART COULD

DESIRE. PLENTY OF EVERYTHING.

(4) IN THEM PRIDE IS ON PARADE (v.6)

THESE PEOPLE SPEAK LOFTILY AS IF THEY WERE THE FINAL AUTHORITY ON ANY SUBJECT AND THAT EVEN GOD SHOULD LISTEN TO THEM. THEY ARE THE KNOW IT ALLS WHO SPEAK FROM A SUPERIOR POSITION, IN A CONDESCENDING MANNER. THEY MOCK AT SIN. THEY LIVE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF VIOLENCE SO THAT PRIDE AND VIOLENCE SEEMS TO BE PART OF THEIR CLOTHING. THEY STRUT BEFORE GOD AND MEN WITH NO CONCERN ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO EITHER ONE. WHEN ASAPH LOOKED AT THEIR LIFESTYLE TO HIM THEY WERE LIVING THE KIND OF LIFE HE WOULD HAVE ENJOYED. THAT CONCLUSION BOTHERED HIM! AND WELL IT SHOULD! *I Envious*

II. ASAPH WAS ~~POUBTUS~~ ABOUT THE VALUE OF  
GODLY LIVING - VERSE 13-16

ASAPH CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS NO VALUE IN VIRTURE. THERE REALLY WAS NOT MUCH USE IN TRYING TO LIVE A GODLY LIFE IN AN UNGODLY WORLD. TO HIM, THE GODLY MAN SEEMS TO HAVE EVERYTHING GOING AGAINST HIM WHILE THE UNGODLY SEEMS TO HAVE EVERYTHING GOING FOR HIM! (IN THIS REGARD HE REMINDS ME OF A MAN I MET IN A JAIL SERVICE IN INDIANA MANY YEARS AGO. HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD BEEN A CHRISTIAN BUT HE HAD GIVEN IT UP BECAUSE THE LORD WASN'T GOOD TO HIM AND EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE AGAINST HIM. I ASK HIM HOW THE DEVIL WAS TREATING HIM NOW THAT HE WAS IN JAIL! I DON'T THINK HE SAW MY POINT OR AT LEAST HE HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT BEFORE.)

ASAPH ACTS LIKE A PHILOSOPHER LOOKING FOR EXPLANATIONS TO LIVES PROBLEMS WHEN IN REALITY HE IS A PILGRIM LIVING ON GOD'S PROMISES THAT WILL NOT FAIL. ASAPH DID NOT RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM ON AN INTELLECTUAL BASIS. THERE ARE

SIMPLY SOME PROBLEMS IN THIS WORLD THAT DO NOT HAVE A READY OR EASY ANSWER. SOME ARE READY TO DISCARD THEIR FAITH SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY DO NOT GET ANSWERS TO ALL OF THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROBLEMS. HOW FOOLISH. HOW IMMATURE. WE DO NOT STOP GOING TO DOCTORS SIMPLY BECAUSE MEDICINE HAS FAILED TO DEVELOP A FINAL CURE FOR CANCER. OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH IS MORE AN INTELLECTUAL GYMNASTICS. IT IS A WAY OF LIFE WHICH ENABLES MEN TO LIVE WITH THE REALITY OF LIFE. *I. Envious II. Doubting*

### III. ASAPH WAS JUDICIOUS IN HIS CONCLUSION

#### ABOUT THIS PROBLEM - VERSES 17-23

THE WORD JUDICIOUS MEANS SOUND OR WISE IN JUDGMENT. ASAPH WAS WISE ENOUGH TO GO TO CHURCH AND NOT STAY AWAY FROM CHURCH IN DEALING WITH THIS MATTER. A UNIVERSITY CLASS ROOM HAS ITS PLACE BUT IT MAY NOT BE THE PLACE WHERE ONES FAITH IS STRENGTHENED. BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR HAS A SERMON ENTITLED: "THE RECTIFYING INFLUENCE OF THE SANCTUARY." IT WAS IN THE HOUSE OF GOD THAT ASAPH FOUND THE ANTIDOTE WHICH NEUTRALIZED THE POISON OF BOTH TEMPTATION AND DOUBT BY WHICH HE HAD ALMOST BEEN WRECKED SPIRITUALLY. IT IS AMAZING HOW OFTEN GOD MEETS US IN WORSHIP TO GIVE TRUE PERSPECTIVE TO LIFE AND ITS PROBLEMS. IN THE MARKET PLACES OF LIFE, WE ARE PRONE TO BUY THE WORLD'S PHILOSOPHY AND CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MANKIND AND GOD. AS WE SIT IN THE HOUSE OF GOD IN HIS PRESENCE WE BEGIN TO SEE THINGS OF THIS PLANET FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE. THE ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM WAS IN THE TOTAL PICTURE. THE PHRASE "THEIR END" IS THE KEY. WILLIAM JAMES USED TO TELL THE STORY WHICH HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO BUDDAH CONCERNING SEVERAL BLIND MEN WHO WERE ASKED TO DESCRIBE AN ELEPHANT. ONE GRASP THE ELEPHANT BY THE LEG AND SAID AN ELEPHANT WAS LIKE A TREE. ANOTHER FELT ITS SIDE AND SAID IT WAS LIKE A WALL. ANOTHER GRASP ITS TAIL AND

V.17

SAID AN ELEPHANT WAS LIKE A ROPE. THE POINT OF THE STORY IS THAT WE DO NOT GET A COMPLETE PICTURE BY LOOKING AT ONE ASPECT OF ANYTHING. WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM OF THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED BY LOOKING AT THE PRESENT ALONE. ① THE FUTURE MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. ② THE RICH MAN DESCRIBED IN LUKE 16 MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE ENVY OF HIS NEIGHBORS WHILE BOTH HE AND LAZARUS LIVED. HOWEVER DEATH CHANGED THAT PICTURE AND NOT SURPRISINGLY MAN'S ATTITUDE. ③ THE OX GRAZING IN THE PASTURE MIGHT SEEM TO BE THE PICTURE OF CONTENTMENT UNTIL ONE REALIZES THAT THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE IS JUST OVER THE HILL. ④ DURING WORLD WAR II THE KAMIKAZAE PILOT WAS THE TOAST OF JAPAN. FOR A LIMITED TIME OF A FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS HE COULD HAVE ANYTHING HIS HEART DESIRED BUT PLEASE DO NOT FORGET THAT HE WOULD EVENTUALLY RIDE A HUMAN BOMB TO HIS DESTRUCTION. YOU SEE, GOD SEES THE BEGINNING AND END OF MAN'S LIFE. ACCORDING TO THIS PASSAGE, THE UNGODLY ARE CHARACTERIZED AS STANDING IN "SLIPPERY PLACES." THE UNGODLY MAY BE CUT OFF SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING AS "IN A MOMENT." ⑤ THEIR WHOLE EXISTENCE IS CHARACTERIZED AS A "DREAM". ⑥ MEN TEND TO THINK OF ETERNITY IN TERMS THAT ARE UNREAL, AS IF DEATH AND ETERNAL DAMNATION COULD NOT HAPPEN TO THEM. ASAPH'S CONCLUSION WAS THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY FOOLISH IN HIS APPRAISAL OF THE UNGODLY. ASAPH COMPARED HIMSELF TO A DUMB ANIMAL QUESTIONING THE SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE OF HIS CREATOR. ASAPH REMINDS HIS READERS THAT IN SOME RESPECTS IT IS LIKE READING A BOOK - TURN TO THE LAST CHAPTER OF HUMAN HISTORY AND SEE WHAT GOD HAS CONCLUDED IN THE LONG VIEW AND THAT IS GOOD WILL PREVAIL OVER EVIL BECAUSE GOD IS GOOD.

I. ENVYING  
II. DEBILITATING  
III. JUDGING

- 7 -

#### IV. ASAPH WAS VICTORIOUS OVER HIS SPIRITUAL DECLINE - VERSES 23-28

THE LORD PROVIDES GUIDANCE FOR TODAY AND GLORY FOR TOMORROW. THE PERPLEXING PROBLEMS OF LIFE ARE NOT SOLVED BY DOUBTING GOD, COMPLAINING ABOUT LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES OR WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS IN ONE'S MIND. ASAPH'S ANSWER WAS TO DRAW NEAR TO GOD WITH THOSE PROBLEMS THAT SEEMED TO DEFEY EASY SOLUTIONS AND REST OUR CASE WITH HIM. DRAW NEAR TO GOD - HE WILL NOT HURT US FOR DOING SO.

① RELATE CHERYL AND "HURT ME IF YOU WANT TO." MANY YEARS AGO, WHILE A STUDENT IN BIBLE INSTITUTE, MY WEEKEND ASSIGNMENT CARRIED ME TO HARLAND COUNTY, KENTUCKY WITH A FELLOW STUDENT WHO DROVE A PICKUP TRUCK. HE WAS A BACHELOR WHO'D WORKED MANY YEARS IN THE MOUNTAINS OF KENTUCKY. EVERY WEEKEND AS WE TRAVELLED BACK AND FORTH THE 50 OR 75 MILES TO OUR ASSIGNMENTS TO PASS THE TIME AWAY WE WOULD SING FAVORITE SONGS. ONE OF HIS FAVORITES WHICH I HAD NOT HEARD UNTIL THAT TIME WAS WRITTEN BY A PASTOR OF A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PASADENA, CAL. IN THE MIDDLE OF A BUILDING PROGRAM THE ECONOMY WAS HIT WITH A RECESSION THAT CAUSED MANY OF THE MEMBERS TO DEFAULT IN THEIR PLEDGES AND THE LOW FINANCIAL STATUS CREATED GREAT DISCOURAGEMENT IN THE CHURCH. WONDER OF WONDERS, THEY BLAMED THE PASTOR FOR LEADING THEM INTO A BUILDING PROGRAM IN DIFFICULT TIMES. ADDED TO THIS PROBLEM WAS THE FAILURE OF HIS WIFE'S HEALTH WHO PASSED AWAY AFTER A LENGTHY ILLNESS. HE PREACHED HIS WIFE'S FUNERAL AND AT THE END OF THE SERMON READ THIS POEM WHICH WAS LATER SET TO MUSIC. "SOMETIME WE'LL UNDERSTAND"

A.M.  
6/15/75THE UNGODLY WHO PROSPERASAPH'S  
Anxiety

## PSALMS 73

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHY THE UNGODLY SEEM TO GET ALONG IN THIS WORLD WITH EASE WHILE THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER? TO BE SURE, NOT ALL UNGODLY PEOPLE PROSPER AND NOT ALL GODLY PEOPLE SUFFER TO THE SAME EXTENT. THAT A PERSON SUCH AS JOB SUFFERED ~~BUT~~ IN A WORLD IN WHICH GOD IS INDEED SOVEREIGN THE QUESTION ARISES, "HOW CAN A GOOD GOD PERMIT THE UNGODLY TO PROSPER AND THE RIGHTEOUS TO SUFFER?" IT WAS GENERALLY BELIEVED IN BIBLE TIMES THAT PROSPERITY WAS THE SIGN OF GOD'S BLESSING AND POVERTY WAS A SIGN OF HIS DISAPPROVAL. HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT AN ACCURATE PRINCIPLE. SOME OF THE FINEST CHRISTIANS I HAVE EVER KNOWN WERE NOT FINANCIALLY WELL OFF BUT WERE INDEED RICH TOWARD GOD. ALSO, WE (MISTAKENLY) ASSUME THAT ALL SUFFERING IS WRONG AND BAD FOR US. BECAUSE WE DO NOT LIKE TO SUFFER ADVERSITY WE ASSUME THAT IT CANNOT BE A MUCH VALUE IN THE LIFE. THE STORY IS TOLD OF A MAN WHO WAS WATCHING AN IMPRISONED MOTH TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM ITS COCOON. HE WATCHED FOR A LONG TIME AND IT SEEMED AS IF THE MOTH WOULD NEVER GET BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT. FINALLY, THE MAN'S PATIENCE WAS EXHAUSTED AND HE PICKED UP A PAIR OF SCISSORS TO SNIP AWAY THE REMAINING THREADS WHICH HELD THE MOTH IN ORDER TO MAKE ITS EXIT EASIER. IMMEDIATELY OUT CRAWLED AN INSECT WITH LITTLE SHRIVELED WINGS. THAT INSECT NEVER DEVELOPED, NEVER DID FLY FOR IT WAS MALFORMED. THE LESSON WAS SIMPLE: THE MAKING OF THE CREATURE WAS IN THE STRUGGLE! WHERE THERE IS NO STRUGGLE THERE IS NO BEAUTY! SOMETIMES MEN THINK THEY KNOW MORE ABOUT LIFE THAN GOD. MEN COMPLAIN AGAINST THE LORD WHEN ALL THE TIME HE IS WORKING OUT IN US A PLAN WHICH WILL BE FOR OUR SPIRITUAL WELFARE AND GOD'S GLORY. THE PROBLEM OF THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED HAD CAUSED ASAPH TO COME NEAR TO SLIPPING SPIRITUALLY. HE WANTED TO BELIEVE THAT GOD IS GOOD, BUT COULD NOT RECONCILE THE APPARANT CONTRADICTIONS IN LIFE WITH THE FACTS CONCERNING GOD'S CHARACTER. IT IS TO THIS PROBLEM, NAMELY, THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED THAT ASAPH ADDRESSES HIMSELF IN THIS PARTICULAR PSALM.

V.2.

- Steven

# I. THE ANXIETY OF ASAPH OVER THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED - V. 1 - 16

IN THIS PSALM, WE ARE INTRODUCED TO A NEW WRITER NAMED ASAPH. SOME FOLK BELIEVE THAT DAVID WROTE MOST OF THE PSALMS BUT IN REALITY HE WROTE ABOUT HALF OF THEM. IT IS KNOWN THAT HE WROTE 73 BUT THERE ARE ABOUT 50 ANONYMOUS ONES AND THE SECOND MOST VOLUMINOUS WRITER WAS ASAPH WHO WROTE 12. ASAPH WAS ONE OF DAVID'S THREE CHIEF MUSICIANS. THE OTHER TWO WERE ETHAN AND HERMAN. (1 CHRON. 15:19) THE PROBLEM WHICH STAGGERED ASAPH'S MIND WAS, HOW COULD GOD BE SO CONSIDERATE OF THE UNGODLY WHO GO THROUGH LIFE APPARENTLY UNRESTRAINED IN THEIR WICKEDNESS AND YET PERMIT GODLY PEOPLE TO SUFFER. THIS PROBLEM WAS ALMOST TOO MUCH FOR HIM. (me k.)

## A. THE WICKED SEEM TO HAVE EVERYTHING GOING FOR THEM - V. 4 - 12

THE IDEA THAT A QUIET DEATH INDICATES ASSURANCE IN THE AFTERLIFE IS NOT NECESSARILY SCRIPTURALLY VALID. I AM SURE THAT MANY OF THE SAINTS WHO HAVE FELT THE NEARNESS OF THE LORD AT THE TIME OF DEATH HAVE STILL NOT RELISHED THE IDEA OF LEAVING LOVED ONES BEHIND. I HAVE SEEN VERY WICKED PEOPLE DIE IN APPARENT PEACE. THE POINT IS THAT MANY OF THE WICKED ARE SECURE IN THEIR SIN EVEN TO THE LAST BREATH! THEY WERE IGNORANT OF THE SCRIPTURAL TRUTH THAT MEN OUTSIDE OF CHRIST WILL SPEND ETERNITY APART FROM GOD. THESE SAME PEOPLE SEEM TO BE BLESSED WITH GOOD HEALTH - "THEIR STRENGTH IS FIRM." THINK OF THE MANY UNGODLY PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO REGARD FOR GOD AND YET HAVE VERY LITTLE SICKNESS EITHER PERSONALLY OR IN THEIR FAMILIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OF THE FINEST PEOPLE I'VE EVER KNOWN HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO A SICKBED FOR YEARS UPON END. THE ADVERSE CALAMITIES OF LIFE SEEM TO PASS THEM BY; THE SORROWS, MISERIES, AND BURDENS WHICH PLAGUE OTHERS SEEM TO PASS THEM. THE HOUSE THAT BURNS, THE AUTOMOBILE THAT WRECKS, THE DEATH OF CHILDREN DO NO SEEM TO BE THEIR LOT IN LIFE. IN VERSE 6 THE CHARACTER OF THE WICKED IS DESCRIBED IN VIVID TERMS. PRIDE IS PART OF HIS MAKE-UP; IT IS AS MUCH A PART OF HIM AS CLOTHING. THE UNGODLY IS PROUD OF HIS ACHIEVEMENTS AND ABILITIES WHICH HE BELIEVES TO HAVE BEEN DONE BY HIMSELF AND GOD IS NOT IN HIS THOUGHTS. VIOLENCE SEEMS TO BE

V. 7

self-indulgence, pampered  
with riches.

3

V. 8

PART OF HIS LIFE BUT IT NEVER SEEMS TO COME NEAR ENOUGH TO HURT; GENERALLY, THEY DO THE HURTING. PART OF THEIR BEING IS IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF VIOLENCE. THIS IS PART AND PARCEL OF THE MAN WHO KNOWS NO RESPECT FOR GOD. IN VERSE 8 THE WORD CORRUPT CARRIES THE IDEA OF THOSE WHO MOCK AT SIN. THEY SPEAK LOFTILY AS IF THEY WERE THE FINAL AUTHORITY ON ANY SUBJECT AND THAT GOD SHOULD LISTEN TO THEM. THEY ARE THE KNOW-IT-ALL'S WHO SPEAK FROM A SUPERIOR POSITION AND IN A CONDESCENDING MANNER. VERSES 9-11 SUGGEST THAT THEY PRAYED AND STRUT BEFORE GOD AND MEN. THEY BLASPHEMED GOD IN HEAVEN AND SLANDER MEN ON EARTH.

V. 9-11

V. 12 - Conclusion

B. THE GODLY MAN SEEMS TO HAVE EVERYTHING GOING AGAINST HIM V. 13-16

ASAPH COMES TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS REALLY NOT MUCH USE TRYING TO LIVE A GODLY LIFE IN THIS WORLD! HE REMINDS ME OF A MAN I MET IN A JAIL SERVICE IN INDIANA SOME YEARS AGO WHO SAID HE HAD BEEN A CHRISTIAN BUT HAD GIVEN IT UP. HE SAID THE LORD WASN'T GOOD TO HIM AND THAT EVERYTHING SEEMED TO GO AGAINST HIM. I ASKED HIM HOW THE DEVIL WAS TREATING HIM. HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT I MEANT. YOU'RE IN JAIL AREN'T YOU! HE'D NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE. LIFE IS FILLED WITH PERPLEXITIES THE ANSWER TO WHICH SOME CANNOT FIND. (RELATE CONCERNING THE TURNERS - WHO OUTWARDLY SEEMED TO BE DOING WELL BUT HAVE A DAUGHTER WHO KEPT ONE OF THEM UP EVERY NIGHT FOR MANY YEARS. SHE HAD CANCER. ONE PROBLEM AFTER ANOTHER. MRS. BRUNET MULTIPLE OPERATIONS; SICKNESS FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME. RELATE STORY IN BAPTIST BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY JIM BENEFIEL. ALSO, RELATE EXPERIENCE OF CAL BEUKEMA AND TWO YEARS OF SICKNESS.) ACCORDING TO VERSE 16 ASAPH COULD NOT RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM OF THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED ON AN INTELLECTUAL BASIS. THERE ARE SOME PROBLEMS IN THIS WORLD WHICH DO NOT HAVE AN EASY OR READY ANSWER! SOME YOUNG PEOPLE ARE READY TO DISCARD THEIR FAITH SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY DO NOT GET ALL THE ANSWERS TO THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROBLEMS. HOW FOOLISH. WE DO NOT STOP GOING TO DOCTORS SIMPLY BECAUSE MEDICINE HAS FAILED TO DEVELOP A FINAL CURE FOR CANCER. CHRISTIAN FAITH IS MORE THAN INTELLECTUAL

V. 16

GYMNASTICS IN A PHILOSOPHY CLASS, IT IS A WAY OF LIFE WHICH ENABLE MEN TO WRESTLE WITH THE REALITIES OF LIFE.

## II. THE ANSWER OF ASAPH TO THIS PERPLEXING PROBLEM - V. 17 - 22



THE PERPLEXING QUESTION OF THE UNGODLY WHO PROSPER CAME INTO PERSPECTIVE WHEN ASAPH MADE HIS WAY TO THE HOUSE OF GOD. THE UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM, THE LIBRARY IS NOT NECESSARILY THE PLACE WHERE ONE'S FAITH IS STRENGTHENED, THAT IS RESERVED FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD. PLEASE NOTICE THAT ASAPH HAD AN INTELLECTUAL PROBLEM; HE DID NOT FLEE FROM THE HOUSE OF GOD BUT CAME TO IT AS A SOURCE OF HELP. BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR HAS A SERMON ON THIS VERSE ENTITLED, "THE RECTIFYING INFLUENCE OF THE SANCTUARY." IT WAS IN THE HOUSE OF GOD THAT ASAPH FOUND THE ANTEDOTE WHICH NEUTRALIZED THE POISON OF THE INSIDIOUS TEMPTATION BY WHICH HE HAD BEEN ALMOST DESTROYED. TAYLOR, IT IS AMAZING HOW OFTEN GOD MEETS US IN WORSHIP TO GIVE TRUE PERSPECTIVE TO LIFE. IN THE MARKET PLACES OF LIFE WE ARE PRONE TO BUY THE WORLD'S PHILOSOPHY AND COME TO THEIR CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MANKIND AND GOD. IT IS ONLY AS WE SIT IN THE HOUSE OF GOD AND COME INTO HIS PRESENCE THAT WE BEGIN TO SEE FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE.

### A. THE ANSWER IS IN THE TOTAL PICTURE - V. 17



THE PHRASE "THEIR END". WILLIAM JAMES USED TO TELL A STORY WHICH HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO BUDDAH, CONCERNING SEVERAL BLIND MEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE AN ELEPHANT. ONE GRASPED THE ELEPHANT BY THE LEG AND SAID AN ELEPHANT IS LIKE A TREE. ANOTHER GRASPED THE ELEPHANT BY THE TAIL AND SAID AN ELEPHANT IS LIKE A ROPE. THE POINT OF THE STORY IS THAT WE DO NOT GET THE COMPLETE PICTURE BY LOOKING AT ONE ASPECT OF IT AND NEITHER WILL WE UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM OF THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED BY LOOKING AT THEIR PRESENT ALONE. THE FUTURE MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. THE RICH MAN IN LUKE 16 MIGHT HAVE BEEN ENVIED COMPARED TO LAZARUS AND HIS POVERTY. HOWEVER, AFTER DEATH THE PICTURE CHANGED. THE OX GRAZING IN THE PASTURE FIELD WOULD SEEM TO BE THE PICTURE OF CONTENTMENT AND YET THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE IS JUST

OVER THE HILL. DURING WORLD WAR II THE KAMI-<sup>3</sup>  
KAZE PILOT WAS THE TOAST OF JAPAN. IT WOULD BE  
EASY TO FORGET THAT IN A FEW MONTHS HE WOULD BE  
A HUMAN BOMB, GOD SEES THE BEGINNING AND THE  
END OF A MAN'S LIFE. WE NEED TO GET THAT VIEW-  
POINT.

## B. THE IMMINENT DANGER OF THE UNGODLY - V. 18

*home*  
*yard*  
*kick*  
*crack*

THE PHRASE "SLIPPERY PLACES" IS VERY SUGGESTIVE.  
(RELATE WALKING THROUGH THE ROAD IN THE CREEK.)  
THE UNGODLY MAY BE CUT OFF SUDDENLY AND WITHOUT  
WARNING AS "IN A MOMENT." ACCORDING TO VERSE  
20 THE WORD "DREAM" SUGGESTS THAT MEN THINK OF  
ETERNITY IN THE TERMS OF THE UNREAL, THAT IS IT  
COULDN'T HAPPEN TO ME. ASAPH'S CONCLUSION IN  
VERSE 22 IS THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY FOOLISH IN  
HIS REACTION AND APPRAISAL OF THE UNGODLY. THIS  
IS OFTEN THE CASE THAT OUR PROBLEMS INTELLECTUAL  
AND OTHERWISE ARE FOOLISH WHEN SUBJECTED TO THE  
SEARCHLIGHT OF GOD'S WORD. ASAPH THINKS OF HIM-  
SELF AS A DUMB ANIMAL QUESTIONING THE SUPERIOR  
INTELLEIGENCE OF HIS CREATOR. ASAPH, LIKE THE  
READER OF A NOVEL, TURNED TO THE LAST CHAPTER  
WHICH GOD HAS ALREADY WRITTEN IN HUMAN HISTORY.  
GOD AND HIS PEOPLE WILL BE VINDICATED IN THE  
LONG VIEW. MORALITY WILL PREVAIL.

## III. THE ASSURANCE OF ASAPH CONCERNING THE PROBLEM OF THE WICKED - V. 23 - 28

*Slap with the hand*

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR TODAY AND  
GLORY IN THE FUTURE. THE PERPLEXING PROBLEMS  
OF LIFE CANNOT BE SOLVED BY DOUBTING GOD OR  
COMPLAINING OR WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS IN OUR  
MIND. ASAPH'S ANSWER WAS SIMPLY TO DRAW NEARER  
TO GOD WITH THE PROBLEMS WHICH SEEM TO DEFY EASY  
SOLUTIONS. MANY YEARS AGO WHILE A STUDENT IN  
BIBLE INSTITUTE MY WEEKEND ASSIGNMENT CARRIED  
ME TO HARLAND COUNTY, KENTUCKY WITH A FELLOW  
STUDENT WHO DROVE A PICKUP TRUCK. HE WAS A  
BACHELOR THAT HAD WORKED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF  
KENTUCKY FOR MANY YEARS. ALMOST EVERY WEEKEND  
AS WE WOULD SING HYMNS TO PASS THE TIME OF TRAVEL  
HE WOULD SING HIS FAVORITE. YEARS LATER I DIS-  
COVERED THAT THE AUTHOR OF THE HYMN HAD BEEN  
A PASTOR OF A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PASADENA,  
CALIFORNIA. IN THE MIDDLE OF A BUILDING PROGRAM

*Draw near He won't hit you -*  
*chase Hunt me & you?*  
*want too*