# Two Horses

Author Unknown

*Just up the road from my home*
*is a field, with two horses in it.*
*From a distance, each horse*
*looks like any other horse.*
*But if you stop your car,*
*or are walking by, you will*
*notice something quite amazing....*

*Looking into the eyes of one horse*
*will disclose that he is blind.*
*His owner has chosen not to have*
*him put down, but has made*
*a good home for him.*

*This alone is amazing.*

*If you stand nearby and listen,*
*you will hear the sound of a bell.*
*Looking around for the source of*
*the sound, you will see that it comes*
*from the smaller horse in the field.*

*Attached to the horse's halter*
*is a small bell.*

*It lets the blind friend know where*
*the other horse is, so he can follow.*

*As you stand and watch*
*these two friends,*
*You'll see that the horse with the bell*
*is always checking on the blind horse,*
*and that the blind horse will listen*
*for the bell and then slowly walk*
*to where the other horse is,*
*trusting that he will*
*not be led astray.*

*When the horse with the bell returns*
*to the shelter of the barn each*
*evening, it stops occasionally and*
*looks back, making sure that the*
*blind friend isn't too far behind*
*to hear the bell.*

*Like the owners of these two horses,*
*God does not throw us away just*
*because we are not perfect or because*
*we have problems or challenges.*

*He watches over us and even brings*
*others into our lives*
*to help us when we are in need..*
*Sometimes we are the blind horse*
*being guided by the little ringing bell*
*of those who God places in our lives.*

*Other times we are the guide horse,*
*helping others to find their way.....*

*Good friends are like that...*
*you may not always see them,*
*but you know they are always there.*

*Please listen for my bell and I'll*
*listen for yours.*
*And remember...*

*Be kinder than necessary-*
*Everyone you meet is fighting*
*some kind of battle.*
*Live simply,*
*Love generously,*
*Care deeply,*
*Speak kindly.....*
*And leave the rest to God!*

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# Can you solve this riddle?

*Adam, God made out of dust,*
*But thought it best to make me first.*
*So I was made before man*
*to answer God's most holy plan.*
*A living being I became*
*And Adam gave to me my name.*
*I from his presence then withdrew,*
*And more of Adam never knew.*
*I did my Maker's law obey*
*Nor ever went from it astray.*
*Thousands of miles I go in fear,*
*But seldom on earth appear.*

*For purpose wise which God did see,*
*He put a living soul in me.*
*A soul from me God did claim,*
*And took from me the soul again.*
*So when from me the soul had fled,*
*I was the same as when first made.*
*And without hands, or feet, or soul,*
*I travel on from Pole to Pole.*
*I labor hard, by day, by night,*
*To fallen man, I give great light.*
*Thousands of people young and old,*
*Will by my death great light behold.*

*No right or wrong can I conceive,*
*The scripture I cannot believe.*
*Although my name therein is found,*
*They are to me an empty sound.*
*No fear of death doth trouble me.*
*Real happiness I'll never see.*
*To Heaven I shall never go,*
*Or to Hell below.*
*So when these lines you slowly read,*
*Go search your Bible with all speed.*

# Human Depravity

by Elder McKinley Wright
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"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:28-30). When this article was begun, the idea was to teach how men (and women also) are saved by looking at the outline given in Romans 8:28-30. The title of the article was going to be "God's Plan Of Salvation." Some people object to this expression, usually on the basis that the expression is not used anywhere in Scripture. This is true. However, the subject is a valid one because the concept is taught in the Bible.

If God did not have a plan for eternal salvation, the alternative would be that He saves people haphazardly. **He does not do this.** If you are not familiar with this Scripture (Romans 8:28-30), it is recommended that you study it so you can understand what is being taught in the article. As the author began writing, the subject became so large, and the article became so long, that the decision was made to make it into two articles.

When a person is saved, he/she is saved from one thing to another. Unless the lesson teaches both what we are saved from, and what we are saved to, the lesson is incomplete. This article deals with that **from** which we are saved. We are saved from the condition of being totally and completely depraved. The Lord willing, next month's article will deal with that to which we are saved, and how that salvation is accomplished.

God is a God of purpose. That is, He does things according to purpose. When He created the universe, He followed a logical sequence in the things that He did. He made a plan, and He followed it. If He had created the animals before He created the grass for them to eat, they would have gone hungry for a while. But He created the grass first. He created the light even before He created the grass. The light was needed so the grass could grow. Before He began the work of creation, God knew what He wanted the result to be, so He did those things that were needed to accomplish that result. So it was in the matter of the Eternal Salvation of men. God knew the result that He wanted to accomplish, so He did those things necessary to reach that end. He followed a plan. That plan is outlined in Romans 8:28-30.

Verse 28 shows two phrases to which we want to pay special attention. The first phrase is the expression "the called". We can tell from its use in the sentence that this expression is the name of something. The pronoun "them" shows that this something is human because it is a personal pronoun. It is plural, showing that there is more than one person involved. If we look downward into verse 30, we find the expression, "them He also called". From this, we learn that there is a group of people whom God has "called". This calling is such a distinguishing mark that Paul, by inspiration, refers in verse 28 to the group by the name of "the called". He refers to the same group in verse 27 by the name "the saints". He refers again to them in verse 33 by the name "God's elect". Beginning in verse 31, he refers to them by the pronoun "us". But whatever the name, the same group of people is intended.

The second expression in verse 28 to which we want to pay special attention are the words "His purpose". These words show that this was not something that God did on the spur of the moment. When mankind "fell" in Adam, God did not suddenly realize that He needed to develop some kind of plan to salvage something out of the human family that He had created. He knew when He created them that they were going to "fall". He could have prevented their doing so. But He didn't. Why? Because he did not choose to do so. That is the only answer we can give. If we try to explain why God does what He does, we are treading on dangerous ground. According to the Bible, His ways are as far above our ways as the heavens are higher than the earth. So we cannot explain His actions by comparing them to the way we think they should be.

God, knowing that mankind was going to "fall" in Adam, purposed to save some of them (how many we do not know) to the eternal heaven. He could have saved all of them if that had been according to His purpose. But it wasn't. He created the universe for His own glory. And He is glorified both in those who are saved and in those who are lost.

In verse 27, there is an expression that is parallel with the expression that we are looking at in verse 28. This parallel expression is "the will of God". In this verse, someone whom we are not defining is making intercession for the saints. This intercessor is not just pleading their cause in a general way. Neither does he look for anything in their lives that will qualify them for his intercession. His intercession is according to the will of God. Our lives are happiest when we reconcile ourselves to His purpose and become subject to His will.

Mankind "fell" in Adam. Some Bible scholars make much of Man's free will in making choices. But the result of Man's "fall" is such that he would not be able to make a wise choice. Any choice that he might make would be made according to his nature, and his nature is corrupt! "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). The heart in this passage (and many others in the Bible) is not referring to the pump in the body

that causes our blood to circulate. It is referring to the innermost part of our being. Jeremiah used two words to describe this "heart". Those two words are deceitful and wicked. These very words are ugly. Deceit is not something that a person does when he has nothing else to do. The deceitful person deliberately goes out of his way to practice deceitfulness. Lying is an integral part of deceitfulness. Jeremiah says that the heart of Man is not just deceitful but "deceitful above all things". This means that deceitfulness is the heart's biggest motivator. The other word that Jeremiah uses is "wicked". This word is not a synonym for mean or beastly. It speaks of extremeness in that behavior. But as extreme as the word is, Jeremiah added another word to make it even more extreme. That word is "desperately". When a person becomes desperate, he or she is in such a condition that there is an absolute necessity for something to take place. So, Jeremiah is describing the heart as being desperate to practice wickedness. If we need another text to prove the evil nature that is inherent in Man, we can find it is Psalm 58:3-5. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." The word "estranged", which the psalmist uses to describe mankind in his natural (not yet born again) condition, is another extreme word. When a husband and wife are estranged, their marriage is irretrievably broken. This means that the marriage cannot be put back together again. Because the wicked are estranged, the psalmist describes them as refusing to hear the charmers no matter how wisely the charmers present their message. But the message of the vast majority of Christianity tells those who are estranged that they must hearken to the charmer and respond favorably to his message in order to be saved. A New Testament word that is just as extreme as those we have cited in the Old Testament is the word "enmity". "Because the carnal mind is **enmity** against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7). Enmity does not describe a mild disagreement. It describes a condition between two people wherein there cannot be an agreement. When enmity exists between two people, if one of them makes a suggestion, the other is automatically against it. We note that God does not feel enmity toward Man. Only Man feels such enmity. This enmity means that the carnal mind (the mind of a person who has not been born again) is opposed to anything that God suggests. The Bible shows the results of this extreme behavior. Before He sent the flood upon the earth, God looked at mankind. This is what He saw. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every imagination** of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5). God did not see mankind as having a tendency toward sin. Sin was so much a part of his being that he could not do anything else. The expressions "every imagination" and "only evil" do not leave any room for anything at all that resembles "good". Until a person has been born again, that person **has no desire** toward the things that pertain to God.

Not only does the person who has not been born again have no desire toward the things of God, but even if he were to find such a desire, he would be incapable of acting upon it. He is dead, and one who is dead cannot act upon anything. Adam "fell" (and the entire human family fell in him) because he disobeyed the rule (law) that God had set for him. Speaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God told him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17). Adam did not die bodily in the day that he ate, but bodily death did begin working within him at the instant he disobeyed. He died in the sense of being separated from God, and in having no desire nor ability to move toward him. Listen to Paul in Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath He quickened who were **dead** in trespasses and sins;". Paul told the Ephesian brethren two things. They had been quickened (made alive) (born again). and they had been dead in trespasses and sins before they were quickened. This death goes back to Adam's death which is described in some detail above. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so **death passed upon all men,** for that all have sinned:". "For since by man came **death**..." (I Corinthians 15:11). "For as in Adam all **die**. .." (I Corinthians 15:22). These three passages of Scripture teach two things. 1.) Sin and death began with Adam. 2.) Every descendant of Adam died in him. There are no exceptions to this.

The word "dead" describes the helplessness of a person to recover himself from the condition in which he found himself after the "fall". When Jesus and His disciples (assuming that they were there) gathered with the family of Lazarus around his tomb (John 11), Lazarus was not aware of any of the activity around him. He was dead! He could not hear the expressions of grief coming from his sisters and others who loved him. If the disciples had begun to say to Lazarus, "Jesus is here; if you will ask him to do so he will bring you out of the tomb," Lazarus could not have asked. He could not hear them. If they had asked him to think the smallest thought (even one that was so little they seemingly could have gotten away with saying that it was not works ), he could not have done so. He could not hear them. The only thing that could bring Lazarus out of the tomb that day was the spoken words of the Son of God. And those words had to be spoken to him directly. If they had come through one of the disciples, Lazarus could not have heard. It is that way with those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The only thing that they can hear is the words of God (the Holy Spirit). They are so dead that they cannot even hear the preacher. God has to speak to them directly for them to hear. Jesus said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when **the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God:** and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25). Jesus called Lazarus and he came forth from the tomb. This calling was not Lazarus'

New Birth. Looking at his life, one would be compelled to say that he had been born again before this incident took place. This calling of Lazarus is a type (picture) of the calling (New Birth) not only of Lazarus, but of every one of God's children.

God calls every one of His children in the New Birth. There are no exceptions to this rule. That is why in Romans 8.28, God's children collectively are referred to as "the called". This calling must precede (go ahead of) any action that could identify a person as being a part of God's family. May we have grace to enable us to search the Scriptures to learn those characteristics that are placed within us when we are born again, and then to look into our lives seeking those evidences within ourselves. It is only as we do this that we find consolation to sustain us in the midst of the troubles of our lives. If we have such a consolation, next month's article on GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION will be most comforting to us. If we have no consolation, the article will mean nothing.

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# Grow in Knowledge

1. Which prophet wrote "woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter sweet, and sweet bitter!"?

2. Which prophet saw the vision of the valley of dry bones?

3. Who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams?

4. Which Old Testament writer wrote "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:...."?

5. Which prophet did God tell to go to Ninevah?

6. Which prophet tells us how we can rob God?

7. Which prophet tells us about a famine of hearing the word of God?

8. Which prophet is known as the "weeping prophet"?

9. Which prophet fled from Jezebel?

10. What prophet told Naaman to wash seven times in the Jordan River to be cured of leprosy?

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# The Holy Alphabet

*Although things are not perfect,*
*Because of trial or pain,*
*Continue in thanksgiving*
*Don't even think to blame.*
*Even when the times are hard,*
*Fierce winds are bound to blow,*
*God is forever able*
*Hold on to what you know.*
*Imagine life without His love,*
*Joy would cease to be,*
*Keep thanking Him for all the things*
*Love imparts thee to see.*
*Move out of ' Camp Complaining',*
*No weapon that is known*
*On earth can yield the power*
*Praise can do alone.*
*Quit worrying about the future,*
*Redeem the time at hand,*
*Start every day with prayer*
*To 'thank' is God's command.*
*Until we see Him coming,*
*Victorious in the sky,*
*We'll run the race with gratitude,*
*Xalting God most high.*
*Yes, there'll be good times and yes*
*some will be bad, but....*
*Zion waits in glory...*
*where none are ever sad!*

**The One who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything...**

# Silent Dogs

by Elder William M. Mullis
Waycross, Georgia

"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all **dumb dogs,** they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber." (Isaiah 56: 10).

The ministers of God are called many different things in the scriptures. One way the ministers of God are described is as "watchmen." Part of a minister's responsibility is to "watch" the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him **overseer**. (See Acts 20:28). An "overseer" is one who "see's over" the people of God. He watches for danger approaching in the form of Satan; he watches for the sword of God coming upon the land and is to cry warning; and he watches the sheep and is to sound the alarm when they begin to go astray! (Please carefully read Ezekiel 33:1-15 and Ezekiel 3:17-21.)

There are occasions when these ministers or watchmen might be compared to a "watchdog." The purpose of a watchdog is primarily to bark loudly to warn of danger. A lazy watchdog, or one that can be "petted" by a thief, will be of no value to the owner of the house.

Watchmen and watchdogs MUST have their senses attentive to their work. When a watchman or watchdog is busy looking for his own gain, he loses his effectiveness and usefulness! Would you hire a watchman who is blind? Would you want a watchdog that would not bark, but rather spent his time sleeping, lying down, and loving to slumber?

Listen again to the deplorable condition described in Isaiah 56:10. "**His watchmen are blind:** they are all ignorant, they are all **dumb dogs, they cannot bark;** sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber." As a result of the condition of the watchmen, the beasts of the field could easily come to devour! Thus we can understand the words of Isaiah 56:9. "All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest!"

Brethren, the condition which existed in the days of Isaiah are rampant today! "His **watchmen are blind:** they are all ignorant, they are all **dumb dogs, they cannot bark;** sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are **greedy dogs** which can never have enough, and they are **shepherds that cannot understand:** they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant!" (Isaiah 56:10-12). Silent dogs! Dumb dogs! Dogs that cannot bark! Blind watchmen! Shepherds that cannot understand! When immorality is tolerated in the community, it is a reflection on the Church! When immorality is found among the members of the Church, the world is coming into the local body. This is a reflection on the watchmen and the other members of the body! Why are there members of the Church of your membership who seldom attend services? Why are there members of the Church who are drunkards? Why are there members of the Church who are living in adultery? Why is divorce and remarriage accepted in the Church without any serious question or investigation? Why?! Because of **SILENT DOGS! BLIND WATCHMEN! SHEPHERDS THAT CANNOT UNDERSTAND!**

A watchman cannot be everybody's friend! A watchdog cannot be a friend to the enemy! When ministers are more concerned with offending those who are immoral and their families than they are with sounding the alarm, they will become SILENT DOGS. Why has the moral standard of our land crumbled?! Because moral standard in the Church has fallen! **WHY** has the standard of **God's** word ceased to be the standard for the Church? The dogs are becoming SILENT! THE DOGS ARE NOT BARKING!

False doctrines are being preached today, but few are willing to speak out against those who are preaching false doctrines. God's word says, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject!" (Titus 3:10). How long has it been since a heretic has been really rejected? Are we immune to heretics? Does the Bible teach that false prophets and false teachers will come? The Apostle Paul specifically warned the elders of the Church of Ephesus. "For know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, NOT SPARING THE FLOCK! Also, **of your own selves** shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. THEREFORE WATCH!" (Acts 20:29-31).

Why is nothing being done today about those who are preaching false doctrines? Why are we not rejecting the heretic? WHY?! Because of SILENT DOGS! BLIND WATCHMEN! SHEPHERDS THAT CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

Ask ministers why nothing is being done, and the excuses are endless. Some claim they want peace and harmony. But God's word says a house divided against itself cannot stand! Trying to hide the problem, overlooking the problem, will not work. We are rapidly declining because we have forsaken God's way! God's word says we are to "MARK" and "AVOID" those who preach false doctrines. But we continue to have fellowship with them. WHY?! Because of SILENT DOGS, BLIND WATCHMEN, and SHEPHERDS

THAT CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

"I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and **from the prophet even unto the priest** every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, **saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.** Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. THUS saith the Lord, **STAND** YE IN THE WAYS, AND **SEE**, and **ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS**, where is the good way, and WALK THEREIN, and ye shall find **rest for your souls**. BUT THEY SAID, WE WILL NOT WALK THEREIN. Also I set **watchmen** over you, saying, **Hearken to the sound of the trumpet**. But they said, WE WILL NOT HEARKEN!" (Jeremiah 6:12-17).

In the days of Jeremiah, the scripture says every one was given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely. Covetousness will make a watchman "look the other way." A covetous watchman is afraid of losing his position, his job, his income. Brethren, a true man of God knows that **God will provide!** If a people send a watchman on his way because he proclaims what he sees, the watchman has no need to fear! But a watchman who is afraid of the people, afraid of "losing his job," afraid of losing some friends, or afraid of **losing the praise of men** WILL BECOME A BLIND WATCHMAN, A SILENT DOG, and a SHEPHERD THAT CANNOT UNDERSTAND! Fear of man will destroy a watchman! Too many watchmen today will only act or stand, or cry out or bark, if it will help their standing in the eyes of other men. SILENT DOGS love the praise of men more than the praise of God. Repeatedly, men have been silent because they loved the praise of men! (See John 12:42,43).

Ministers (watchmen) have told me they knew something needed to be preached in the Church of their pastorate, but they could not preach it there. WHY NOT?! Because the people would not have it! Brethren, a preacher should always preach what GOD puts on his heart, even if it is the last sermon of his life! A watchman must cry out against sin! "**Cry aloud**, spare not, **lift up thy voice like a trumpet**, and SHEW MY PEOPLE THEIR TRANSGRESSION, and THE HOUSE OF JACOB THEIR SINS!" (Isaiah 58: 1). John the Baptist did exactly that with Herod! It cost him his life, but THAT IS BETTER THAN BEING A SILENT DOG! Stephen was a good barker! He told the people what was wrong with them. (See Acts 7:51-60.) "But they stoned him," you say. I respond that being stoned is better than to be a silent dog! And I believe a good watchman has many joys similar to that final one of Stephen as he was being stoned: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Even while the people gnashed on Stephen with their teeth, God blessed Stephen! He saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God! NO silent dog or blind watchman is able to do that!

"For Zion's sake will I **not hold my peace**, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." (Isaiah 62:1).

May God bless every minister to awake, stop being silent, and cry out warnings as faithful watchmen. We have all been silent too long!

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# WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING

Mom,

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator, and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you feed a stray cat, and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you make my favorite cake for me, and I learned that the little things can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking I heard you say a prayer, and I knew that there is a God I could always talk to, and I learned to trust in Him.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick, and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it, and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel good, and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw tears come from your eyes, and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw that you cared, and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking I looked at you and wanted to say, 'Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking'

Mom, you did all those things and more! I love you!

# The Rich Young Ruler

by Elder W. A. Mullis
(Deceased)

In Mark 10:17, we read these words: "And when he (Christ) was gone forth in the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The same record of this man coming to Christ is also recorded in Matthew 19:16-22 and Luke 18:18-23. We need to read these three passages of Scripture to get a full description of this man who came "running" to Christ. Please read Mark 10:17-22, Matthew 19:16-22 and Luke 18:18-23. Matthew 19:22 says: "But when the YOUNG MAN heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Then in Luke 18:18 and 23, the Scripture says: "And a certain RULER asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich."

We have quoted these three passages of Scripture to show some facts about this man's life who came running to Christ and asked Him: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" We know from the Scriptures we have quoted above that this man was a "young man." (Matthew 19:22). We also know that the young man was a "ruler"; that is, he was a man of power and authority. (Luke 18:18). The Scripture also says that this young man was "very rich" and had "great possessions." (Luke 18:23 and Mark 10:22).

This rich young ruler had everything in this life that most people think would make them very, very happy! But this man was so disturbed and miserable in his heart and soul that he came "running and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" This man was deeply concerned in his heart about having "eternal life". No person in this world, who does not have the Spirit of God in his heart, will ever be in the same condition as this young man. An unregenerate person does not know God, or anything about the things of God that are eternal. Those who are not born of the Spirit of God do not know anything about heaven or hell, eternally speaking, or anything else that is eternal. The things that are eternal belong to God, and the Scripture says in I Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The things that are eternal are "foolishness" to those who are not born of the Spirit of God. But this rich, young ruler was sincerely concerned about eternal life, to the extent that he came running to Christ and "kneeled to him". (Mark 10:17). I hope to prove by the Scriptures that this young man had eternal life, but did not know that he had it.

This rich, young ruler had put his treasures in the material things of the world. He had "set his affection" upon the great possessions that he had! Christ taught His disciples in Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO." This young man's heart was in his earthly treasures and not in the Spiritual things of God. Christ also warned in Luke 12:15: "Take HEED AND BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS," for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." The most precious things in the world cannot be bought with the material things of the world, for they are the gift of God. This is the reason Christ warned His people to "BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS," for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth! This rich, young ruler was learning the truth of God that is contained in these Scriptures. Remember that he had all that a natural man could desire, yet was still in misery! His soul was hungering for something better!

When this man came running to Christ and asked him, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life", Christ answered him: "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and thy mother". Then the young man answered Christ: "Master, ALL THESE HAVE I OBSERVED FROM MY YOUTH." This young man must have been deeply concerned about keeping the commandments of God from his youth. No person will be Spiritually concerned in his heart about keeping the commandments of God who does not have the Spirit of God in his heart. After the young man said to Christ: *"all these have I observed from my youth",* "Then Jesus beholding him LOVED HIM". (See Mark 10:21). The only people in this world that Christ has ever loved are those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world!! Primitive Baptists have never believed that Christ loved anyone but the redeemed family of God. No man who believes the Scripture can deny that Christ loved this man!

Then Christ said to the young man: "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou SHALT HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN: and come take up the cross and follow me." Again, we confirm that this man had eternal life

but did not know that he had it. In I John 5:13, the Scripture says: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know** THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE". The people of God can have eternal life and not know that they have it, or these words would not be in the Bible!! However, this verse also teaches that the people of God can have eternal life and know that they have it. When the people of God **know the truth** of God experientially within their hearts, they know they can have eternal life.

No child of God in the world can know that he has eternal life while putting the material things of the world FIRST in his life. This young man's treasures were in his possessions. But Christ told him to sell whatsoever he had and give to the poor, and "thou SHALT HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN". Christ told him the same thing as recorded in Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:21 and Luke 18:22. Christ did not tell him that he would have eternal life; but that he would "have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

This young man was a child of God, but he would never have any assurance in his heart that God was his Father and Christ was his Saviour until he did what Christ said for him to do. In John 8:31-32, we find these words: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE". These words were spoken by Christ to "those Jews which believed on him". This teaches that they were children of God because "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ IS BORN OF GOD", (I John 5:1). But no child of God can "know the truth" without continuing in the word of **God as a doer of His word.** This rich young ruler who came running to Christ could never be made free from the condition he was in and know the truth (that he had eternal life) without **continuing in the word** of God as a doer of it.

God is not going to comfort His people with an assurance in their hearts that they are born of the Spirit of God while they are walking in disobedience of His word. Romans 8:16 says: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God". The Spirit of God will not bear witness with the spirit of God's children while we are walking in disobedience of the word of God. Again we repeat that for this rich, young ruler to have the assurance and witness of the Spirit of God within his heart that he was a child of God, it was essential for him to do what Christ said: "One thing thou lackest go thy way; sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have TREASURE in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me". In doing this, he would be putting his treasures in the Spiritual things of God. Then the Spirit of God would BEAR WITNESS within his heart that he was a child of God.

There is no greater blessing this side of heaven than to have the assurance of the witness of the Spirit of God within our hearts that we are a children of God! "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!! Oh what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood". This truth of God spoken in these words of the song "Blessed Assurance" is worth far more than all the material things of this world! To feel the truth of those words in one's heart brings the peace of God that passeth all understanding. **All the material things of the world cannot buy that peace!**

Whether or not that rich, young ruler sold his possessions and did what Christ told him to do, no man can say, because the Scriptures do not tell. But this we know: Christ LOVED HIM! I thank God that **not one of those Christ loves will be eternally lost!** May God help us to forsake all so that we may lay hold on eternal life, thereby enjoying great peace and joy while we live here in this world.

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## *Answers to Grow In Knowledge*

1. Isaiah (Isaiah 5:20)
2. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 37)
3. Daniel (Daniel 2 & 4)
4. Hosea (Hosea 4:6a)
5. Jonah (Jonah 1:2)
6. Malachi (Malachi 3:8)
7. Amos (Amos 8:11)
8. Jeremiah
9. Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-3)
10. Elisha (II Kings 5:10)

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!

**If you are able to help with the expenses of spreading the truth of Salvation by Grace, it will be greatly appreciated. Also, please encourage the Church of your membership to support this work on a monthly basis. We urgently need regular contributors.**

# Feeling Like A Failure

by Elder Marty Smith
Roswell, Georgia

***Job 3:1-5*** *After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.*

***Job 16:11-13*** *God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.*

As Job spoke these words, he must have felt that he was a total failure, and that his life was in vain, and never should have been. If he thought his purpose in life was to serve God, then God had set him as a target for divine arrows, so he must have failed in that purpose. If he thought his purpose was to love his wife, then his breath had become strange to her and she was suggesting his death, so he must have failed there. If he thought his purpose was to guide his children, then they were dead. If he thought his purpose was to relieve the poor (which he often did), then his wealth was gone, and the poor despised him. If he thought his purpose was to enjoy nature, then his health was broken, he could not sleep, and he was disfigured and in discomfort. Holding on to integrity was the course he chose to take, but it must have gotten difficult to remember why he did it. Failure seemed to surround him, and failure seemed to be the end result of his life.

As he spoke with his three friends - Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar - Job suffered further in his attempts to deal with his own feelings and with the false teachings they expounded. Because of what had befallen him, Job labored under the impression that God was shooting at him, although he could not understand why. Because of what had befallen him, his friends labored under the error that God was punishing Job for wrongdoing, although they did not know what that wrongdoing could be. Their ideas were based on falsehoods, and provide lessons to God's children who later read their conversations in the Bible, so they may understand the misery brought about by fine-sounding but erroneous teachings and assumptions about God.

Was Job a failure? Even during the period of his life when he felt most to be a failure, the answer is a resounding "No". Consider these facts:

- The book of Job has 42 chapters, but by the end of chapter 2, Job has silenced the arguments of Satan. Job doesn't even realize the victory that his "habit" of integrity has won.
- Job spoke that which was right. ***[Job 42:7]*** "*And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.*"
- God held Job as an example to the Israelite captives among the Chaldeans. ***[Ezekiel 14:14]*** "*Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.*"
- God held Job as an example to the church. ***[James 5:11]*** "*Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*"
- Job had heard of God, but after suffering, became able to see His sovereign power. ***See Job 42:5.***

As I get older, the feeling of failure attacks more frequently and with greater intensity, and I must struggle to sort those feelings out - they can come from above or below. When His children truly fail by actually sinning against Him, God shows them where they fail, and shows them a way to repent unto true success. He is a perfect Father, and desires His children to understand the motivation behind real chastisement.

When, however, they have not sinned, but merely feel to be a failure because of the terrible challenges that surround them, and they do not understand why such misery has come to pass, it is time to hold on to the "habit" of blessing God. They may never realize what enemies are being defeated, and what friends are being upheld, in their hours of darkness. In the greatest hours of darkness, at the cross, our Lord Jesus won the greatest victory of all, and the destiny of God's children - to be like the only begotten Son – was obtained.

- ***[Galatians 6:9]*** *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*
- ***[Hebrews 10:36]*** *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*
- ***[Romans 8:18]*** *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

How many other scriptures can you think of which teach, “When you are trying to serve God the best you know how and still feel like a failure, hang in there”?

# Those Rude Galilaeans

by Elder Clarence Hicks
Sweetwater, Tennessee

We are living in a day when those that preach the gospel are evaluated in the light of educational credentials, proper mannerisms, and eloquence of speech. It seems there is much demand for ministers who meet this outward criteria that many feel is absolutely necessary to hold this office. These are men's standards for a preacher. Many emphasize and insist upon these outward qualifications that men have established for Elders/Ministers. Yet only a few have any regard whatever to the important qualification. The only valid standards for ministers are those which are written in God's Holy Word. (I Timothy 3:1-7).

"Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16) is the spiritual bedrock foundation of the true Church of Jesus Christ. We have attempted to remove Jesus from His authoritative Head of the Church with the sole right of sovereignty to delegate the laws, standards and judgements of His house. This certainly is true as it pertains to the qualifications of His ministers. This is another sign of the perilous times in which we live, as men esteem and value the opinions of society over those of our crucified Savior and Lord. When we reach such deplorable spiritual decay that we reject the Word of God for man's philosophy, we have in truth rejected, Jesus Christ that He should no longer reign over us!

As a minister of the gospel, I have much room for self-improvement. I find no pleasure in offending anyone due to rude speech, mispronouncing of words, or grammatical error. The high honor of the office and the public address of the Gospel compels a conscious awareness of self-improvement. Yet, this is not a qualification set forth by Jesus Christ for His ministers. Regardless of our feelings on this subject, the Word of God will shed much light upon it. God's ways are not our ways. Let us remember as we look into God's Word that He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

Moses was a great man of God, sanctified by grace and qualified to perform what God called him to do. Moses was called to lead all of Israel. In Exodus 4:10, we see God's call of Moses to go and to say unto Pharaoh particular things. Moses began to make excuses, saying, "Oh my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant." Evidently Moses could not speak clearly or pronounce words properly. He told God that he had never been able to speak skillfully, and still could not. God's call of Moses did not change his inability to speak eloquently. That simply was not a requirement of God. God called Moses to this task by His grace. He qualified him by His grace, and He sustained and upheld him by His grace. Brethren, I don't believe Moses, with all his unpolished and uncouth infirmities, would be welcome in the pulpits of many churches today. Instead of being fanatics about the outward appearance of men, we should be fanatics about true, God-called men.

In Matthew 7:15, Jesus gave us a solemn warning! "Beware of false prophets (teachers) which come to you in sheep's clothing (outward appearance), but inwardly are ravening wolves." "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And certainly not outward fruits or appearance, because they are outwardly disguised to deceive and **cannot be truly known in that way**. Remember these are teachers, and we know a true teacher of God by the fruit (doctrine) he teaches. **Every** good tree brings forth good fruit (the truth), but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit, or teachings that are contrary to God's Holy Word. By their fruit (teaching/doctrine) shall ye know God's true ministers. Not by their educational background and proper use of the English language. Nor by their fair, pleasing, easy to receive, and non-offending sermons. We know Moses, despite his embarrassing speech, was a good tree personally picked and sent by Jesus Christ! Another good tree, chosen by Jesus and sent to preach the Gospel, was John the Baptist. To those who are more concerned about eloquence and charming personalities, I would ask, "Would John the Baptist be welcome in your pulpit?" The mean appearance of John the Baptist would probably be an embarrassment to many, despite the great revelation of light he was preaching. If John was personally preaching today, would we receive him and feast upon his heavenly banquet of truth, despite his rude and bold personality? Would we evaluate him as a good tree by God's standards, or reject him by our own personal standards? John's message was offensive to many, and they looked upon him and his message with contempt. Herod had him cast into prison, which eventually led to his being decapitated. This happened because he told Herod the truth, **"It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." (Mark 6:18). Brethren, John was a good tree**, chosen and sent by Jesus Christ.

It is apparent in the Scriptures that Jesus chose the foolish things to confound the wise. The world would never have chosen the men that Jesus chose to preach and write the New Testament. The educated elite would be the choice of the religious world. Jesus selected some rude Galilaeans to be his disciples. The definition of the word rude is **"without culture, learning or refinement. Rough in manners, unpolished, uncouth, ignorant, primi-**

**tively simple or lacking eloquence."**

When Jesus called his disciples, he began to teach and train them to qualify them to that high and honorable position. The training Jesus instilled was not outward or cultural, but inward and spiritual which harmonized with the nature of His Kingdom. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." i.e.. not with outward show or appearance. (Luke 17:21). "The Kingdom of Heaven is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Romans 14:17). Jesus said in answer to Pilate, "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36).

Jesus also said, "To this end was I born **to bear witness unto the truth**. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37). Everyone that is of the truth rejoices in the truth that men preach, not in the outward and eloquent way they present it. Can you even imagine someone, blessed to hear and see the truth and miracles performed by Jesus, to rejoice in the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, then proceed to **constructively criticize** him for his mean mannerisms and improper speech? If you were hungering and thirsting, and someone gave you an abundance of the best food and drink, would you respond by criticizing their manner of speech? I believe we would be so thankful that his grammar would be totally irrelevant. When blessed with a spiritual feast of God's truth, the truly spiritual Child of God is filled with a spirit of meekness and thanksgiving. **The antagonistic and critical spirit would be profoundly incorrect!**

Jesus and his disciples were known as the Galilaeans. The phrase was used in a way of contempt toward Jesus and His followers as they were culturally different - ignorant and unlearned. "The Galileans" was a contemptible way of expression toward the disciples of Jesus. But there was a stronger expression toward Jesus himself. Only one time in the New Testament is Jesus referred to as Jesus of Galilee". (Matthew 26:69). The phrase **"Jesus of Nazareth"**, is recorded twenty-one times in the New Testament. Although Nazareth is in the region of Galilee, it expressed a greater degree of contempt or scorn toward Jesus. Nazareth was viewed as the worst of Galilee. It was considered a slum and the dregs of Jewish society. Nathaniel was perplexed when Philip told him that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. His reply was, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:45-46). This expressed his own view of the people of Nazareth. Jesus was an insignificant carpenter's son in Nazareth. It is natural for us to bear the dialect (speech) of the region from which we were reared. Southerners are noted for their particular speech. Someone reared in a northern state can immediately identify a Southerner by the way he/she talks. Both Jesus of Nazareth and his Galilaean disciples with their illiterate upbringing were recognized in the same way. This is how the people recognized Peter when he denied Jesus at his trial. "And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, this is one of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for **thou art a Galilaean**, and **thy speech agreeth thereto**." (Mark 14:69-70). Peter should have remained silent, for his speech betrayed him.

All the men we have examined so far fit the description of Jesus and those rude Galilaeans. We found Moses, an **insignificant** sheep herder, on the backside of the desert with his speech defect. There was John the Baptist living in the wilderness with his vile clothes and ill diet. Who would have even taken notice of such an insignificant figure? Next, are the disciples with their common trades as fishermen and with their illiterate speech. But the most insignificant of all was "Jesus of Nazareth". Would Jesus and his group of illiterates be welcome in our pulpits?

Isaiah writes of this **insignificant** "Jesus of Nazareth" and tells how he would be received by the majority. (Isaiah 53:2). "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, **there is no beauty that we should desire him**." Isaiah prophesied referring to Jesus as an **insignificant plant** springing up in a desert place. A plant with no worth or beauty. A wild plant or worthless sucker that no one esteemed. A plant that would never be of any value. Jesus of Nazareth was that seemingly worthless plant. Who would ever have thought that a babe born in a stable in Bethlehem would ascend into heaven to sit on the right hand of the Throne of God? To contemplate his birth, his poor and lowly parents, the area where he lived, and his common and illiterate followers -surely there was no beauty nor anything desirable about him. To see the true Jesus is to look upon the most beautiful and glorious things the heart can comprehend. God chose all these foolish things about Jesus, his birth in a stable, his poor parents, growing up in Nazareth, and his common trade (carpenter). Jesus was truly an insignificant plant and of no apparent value to those that considered themselves to be wise. We know when Jesus sent out the twelve disciples to preach, that their illiteracy and dialect had not changed. (Matthew 10:5-7). At the trial of Jesus, Peter's rude speech revealed him to be a Galilaean. Jesus emphasized the preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven, not the eloquent oration of preaching! Jesus also assured them that "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matthew 10:40). To reject the servant whom God has called is not only to reject him but also to reject Jesus and God the Father. Despite their lack of outward qualities, all those **Rude Galilaeans were good trees**.

The Apostle Paul was a good tree personally chosen and sent by Jesus Christ. Paul, unlike the rest of the apostles, was a very educated man in the Jewish religion. Paul, like the Lord Jesus, was concerned about men receiving the truth. The apostles were men that the common people could

understand. His desire was to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and to see men saved to the knowledge of the truth. He, therefore, chose to speak so that the average person could understand. Paul could have used enticing words of wisdom. He could have flaunted his superior vocabulary, diction and grammar. If he had done this, the average person would not have understood, and there would have been no edification to the majority of his hearers. Paul knew that both the educated and uneducated could be built up in the faith by the use of common language. "But though I be **rude** in speech, yet not in knowledge." (II Corinthians 11:6). Again, the word rude means without culture, learning or refinement. He was rude in the sense that he chose to use simple language and speak in a way people could understand.

This is one example of what Paul meant when he said," I am made all things to all men, that I might by **all** means save some." (I Corinthians 9:22). Save them to the knowledge and will of God by the preaching of the Gospel. I believe Paul teaches a good lesson to all that would preach the Gospel.

During the New Testament age God has chosen all classes of men, both educated and uneducated, to preach His Gospel. God's purpose in sending Apollos to the Corinthians after the Apostle Paul was to water what Paul had planted. Apollos was eloquent in speech and mighty in the Scriptures. If God sends to your church an "Apollos" or one who is rude in speech, both should be received as the ambassador of Christ. God has sent them for **His glory and your benefit!**

Brethren, if the masses of people ever receive the preaching and truth of the gospel, it **must** be received from those whom **God has called** and sent. These are the only true witnesses who have been taught of the Spirit of Truth to preach the true Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Power of the Holy Spirit is capable of transforming men in every area of their lives for the purpose of God's calling. (Acts 1:8). "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be **witnesses** unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Who were these witnesses to whom Jesus spoke? They were **those rude Galilaeans** whom Jesus had called to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. "Ye **men of Galilee**, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" (Acts 1:11).

It is my persuasion that all who preach the gospel should seek to purge from their personalities all things that are offensive. But we should remember that the pure gospel of Jesus Christ is in itself offensive to many and will create a division. We should not expect to gain the multitude among religion by a socially acceptable oration of preaching. The greater part of the religious world will continue to find the true gospel contemptible, regardless of the manner in which it is presented or those who preach it.

Jesus was/is not sociably acceptable. His ministers/disciples are not sociably acceptable, and His gospel is not sociably acceptable. The true Gospel is not acceptable to the majority of the Churches. They have rejected Jesus and His Gospel, and it is only natural that they reject His ministers as well. Many good trees will be labeled rude, ignorant, unrefined, unpolished, unloving, ill-mannered, and primitively simple and void of eloquence. But thanks be unto God, there is a remnant hungering and thirsting for the truth, who love both the true message and the true messenger.

# ~DEATH~

## *WHAT A WONDERFUL WAY TO EXPLAIN IT*

*A sick man turned to his doctor*
*as he was preparing to*
*Leave the examination room*
*and said, 'Doctor, I am afraid to die.*
*Tell me what lies on the other side.'*
*Very quietly, the doctor said,*
*'I don't know.'*
*'You don't know?*
*You're a Christian man*
*and don't know*
*what's on the other side?'*

*The doctor was holding*
*the handle of the door;*
*On the other side came a sound of*
*scratching and whining,*
*And as he opened the door,*
*a dog sprang into the room*
*And leaped on him*
*with an eager show of gladness.*
*Turning to the patient,*
*the doctor said,*
*'Did you notice my dog?*

*He's never been in this room before.*
*He didn't know what was inside.*
*He knew nothing except*
*that his master was here,*
*And when the door opened,*
*he sprang in without fear.*
*I know little of what*
*is on the other side of death,*
*But I do know one thing...*
*I know my Master is there*
*and that is enough.'*

# Different Drug Problem!

Submitted by concerned citizen.

*Editor's note:*

*The following letter has appeared on the internet and was viewed by many readers. Many felt it would be appropriate for the readers of The Trumpet of Truth Parish.*

The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a Methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse in the adjoining county and he asked me a rhetorical question, "Why didn't we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?"

I replied, I had a drug problem when I was young: I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter what the weather.

I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults. I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profanity. I was drug out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flower beds and cockleburs out of dad's fields. I was drug to the homes of family, friends, and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clothesline, or chop some firewood, and, if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, or think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin; and, if today's children had this kind of drug problem, America would be a better place.

God bless the parents who drugged

* * * *

# Is the God of Peace With You?

by Brother Steve Bacon
Blackshear, Georgia

*"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do:* ***and the God of peace shall be with you****" (Philippians 4:9).*

At the time Paul penned these words to the saints at Philippi, he was imprisoned (1:13-19). But Paul had learned how to be content in any circumstance in life. He knew how to be abased, and he knew how to abound! It was this contentment that helped him to proclaim, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again, I say, Rejoice!" (4:4). It takes a great deal of spiritual maturity and close fellowship with God to be content in all things!

What are the things we have "both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in" Paul that we must DO in order to have the peace of God and the God of peace with us even in the midst of great trials, afflictions, and tribulations? For one thing, Paul tells us, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:4). Spiritual maturity develops the more we look to help others, and consider their needs rather than our own. Thinking about, praying for, and helping others must be a major part of our lives if we are to have the God of peace with us.

Another way to live is "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (2:3).

Strife is usually a result of focusing on self rather than others. Are you involved in any strife? Vainglory? It is sometimes hard to esteem others better than ourselves. Our flesh always wants to be number one, or to get recognition and praise. Paul learned to put others before himself, and that was one way he knew "the God of peace" was with him.

Look carefully at Romans 16:17- "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." The doctrine from God is precious. Doctrines of men are to be rejected, as are those individuals who substitute the doctrines of men for the word of God! The God of peace will be with us when we "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11). Four simple admonitions are given here: be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace. When we DO that, we have the promise, "and the God of love and peace shall be with you!"

Look closely at I Thessalonians 5:12-22. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13: And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14: Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15: See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16: Rejoice evermore.

17: Pray without ceasing.

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

19: Quench not the Spirit.

20: Despise not prophesyings.

21: Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22: Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Do you know what the promise is if we DO those things? "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

May God help us to DO those things which we have "both learned, and received, and heard, and seen" in the word of God. THEN, the God of peace shall be with us!

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# Perseverance vs. Preservation

by Bro. Mark Strickland
Pembroke, Georgia

One of the basic tenets of many Baptists is the belief in "Once Saved, Always Saved". Many of God's children, however, do not have that comfort. Some teach that a person can gain eternal life and later lose it. Others teach that unless a person perseveres, they were really not an elect child of God to begin with, and never were saved. I want to examine the teaching of an Old Testament commandment on perseverance vs. preservation of the elect.

John 5:46 gives us a guideline for interpreting Old Testament teaching in the New Testament Age: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." That is, when we read the writings of Moses, we must look for Christ. I believe that God used the Old Testament as a physical illustration of spiritual truths. Romans chapter 9 provides an example of this. In this chapter, Paul states that the physical seed of Abraham was elected to show that there was a spiritually elect seed: chosen for no other reason than God's pleasure and purpose. The commandments and feasts given by Moses to the physical seed of Israel (e.g. Leviticus chapter 23) are also intended to show deeper spiritual truths to God's elect children everywhere: the spiritual seed.

The 25th chapter of Leviticus deals with the year of Jubilee. I will not deal with all aspects of this teaching, but want to focus on one area. Verse 8 says that they shall number seven Sabbath years (49 years) and on the tenth day of the seventh month of the fiftieth year, on the Day of Atonement, the trump will signal Jubilee throughout the Promised Land. At that moment, they were to return every man to his possession and his family. Let us focus on one of the cases discussed in this chapter. It deals with one of God's physical elect (an Israelite) who goes so deeply into trouble that he sells himself as a slave (verse 47). And he is not only a slave, but a slave to a stranger - a Gentile. The LORD says that if he is able, the man can redeem himself from slavery, or his family will have the right to redeem him (verse 48-53). If, however, neither he nor his family is able to redeem him, God says that he and his children will be freed at the trump of Jubilee (verse 54). God states his reason for this commandment in verse 55; "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God".

The physical elect of God (Israelite) that sold himself to a Gentile effectively sold himself to the World. In selling himself, he had become a servant or slave to a Gentile. God does not state that he or his family must redeem him in order to maintain his status as a physical seed of Abraham (elect). We should remember the reason the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, instead of having their firstborn destroyed, was the application of the blood of the Passover Lamb. God is saying that he will have every one that he bought with the shed blood of the Lamb to be finally free. Remember, the Trump of Jubilee sounds on the Day of Atonement, which, like Passover, is a strong picture of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Paul says in Romans 6:9 – 15 that we should not yield our bodies to sin. As Christ died but rose again, because death did not have dominion or control over him, sin shall not forever have dominion over us. As the Israelite in Leviticus, we can – and too often do - yield ourselves as servants or slaves to sin, but God will one day eternally deliver all those for whom the blood of the Lamb was shed.

I am not saying that perseverance is not commanded by God – it is, in Ephesians 6:18, where the scriptural use of the word "perseverance" is given. Christ taught often that we should do the will of God; that we were created in Christ Jesus unto good works and we should walk in them. A child of God will only enter the Kingdom of Heaven (peace, joy and righteousness in the Holy Spirit) in obedience. The Israelite mentioned above was miserable in slavery. It is very good news to me, however, to know that no matter how badly I fail in this life, even to the point of selling myself to sin, Christ will not lose a single one – free or enslaved - for whom He shed his blood!

The greatest knowledge is to know the will of God.
The greatest endeavor is to do it.

*He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

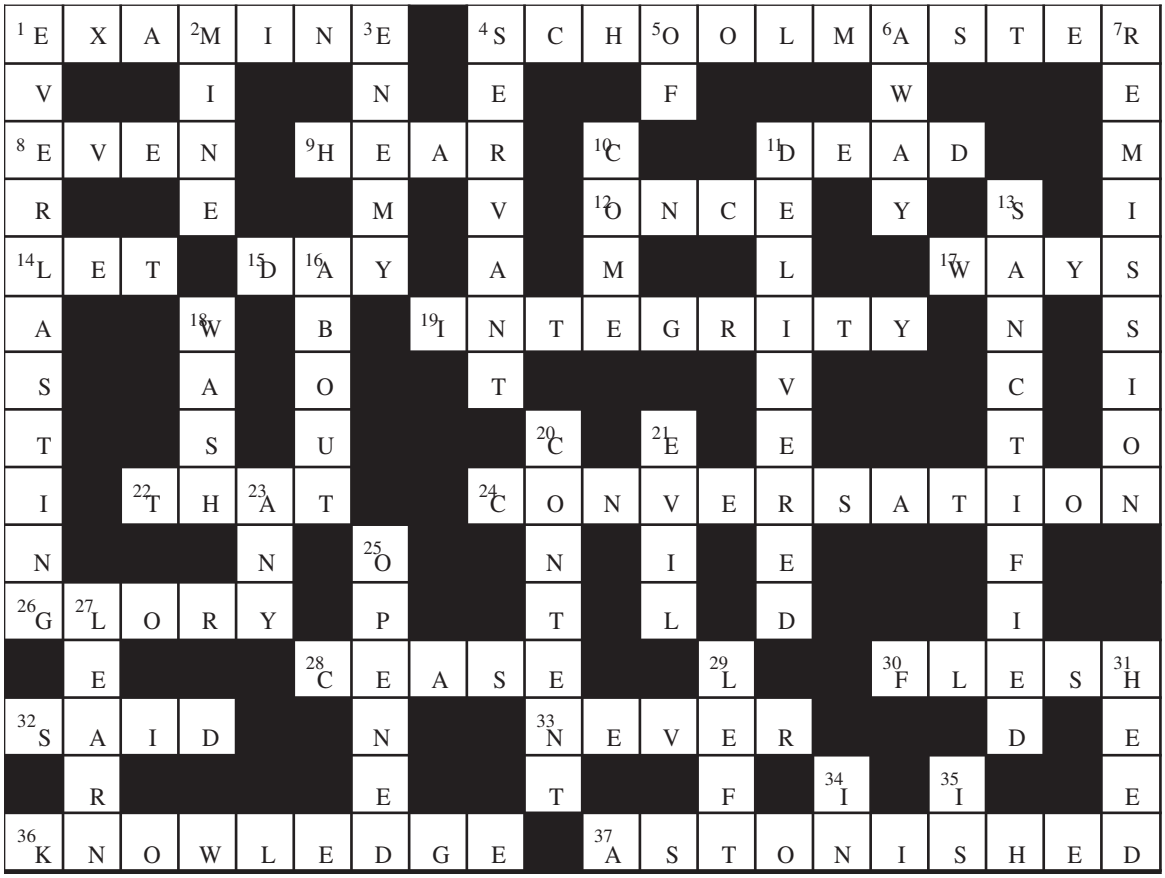
*I John 2:17*

# Bible Reading Calendar for April

| DATE | MORNING | EVENING |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Judges 3,4,5 | Luke 7:31-50 |
| 2 | Judges 6,7 | Luke 8:1-21 |
| 3 | Judges 8,9 | Luke 8:22-56 |
| 4 | Judges 10,11 | Luke 9:1-36 |
| 5 | Judges 12,13,14 | Luke 9:37-62 |
| 6 | Judges 15,16,17 | Luke 10:1-24 |
| 7 | Judges 18,19 | Luke 10:25-42 |
| 8 | Judges 20,21 | Luke 11:1-28 |
| 9 | Ruth 1,2,3,4 | Luke 11:29-54 |
| 10 | I Sam. 1,2,3 | Luke 12:1-34 |
| 11 | I Sam. 4,5,6 | Luke 12:35-59 |
| 12 | I Sam. 7,8,9 | Luke 13:1-21 |
| 13 | I Sam. 10,11,12 | Luke 13:22-35 |
| 14 | I Sam. 13,14 | Luke 14:1-24 |
| 15 | I Sam. 15,16 | Luke 14:25-35 |

| DATE | MORNING | EVENING |
|---|---|---|
| 16 | I Sam. 17,18 | Luke 15:1-10 |
| 17 | I Sam. 19,20,21 | Luke 15:11-32 |
| 18 | I Sam. 22,23,24 | Luke 16:1-18 |
| 19 | I Sam. 25,26 | Luke 16:19-31 |
| 20 | I Sam. 27,28,29 | Luke 17:1-19 |
| 21 | I Sam. 30,31 | Luke 17:20-37 |
| 22 | II Sam. 1,2,3 | Luke 18:1-17 |
| 23 | II Sam. 4,5,6 | Luke 18:18-43 |
| 24 | II Sam. 7,8,9 | Luke 19:1-28 |
| 25 | II Sam. 10,11,12 | Luke 19:29-48 |
| 26 | II Sam. 13,14 | Luke 20:1-26 |
| 27 | II Sam. 15,16 | Luke 20:27-47 |
| 28 | II Sam. 17,18 | Luke 21:1-19 |
| 29 | II Sam. 19,20 | Luke 21:20-38 |
| 30 | II Sam. 21,22 | Luke 22:1-30 |

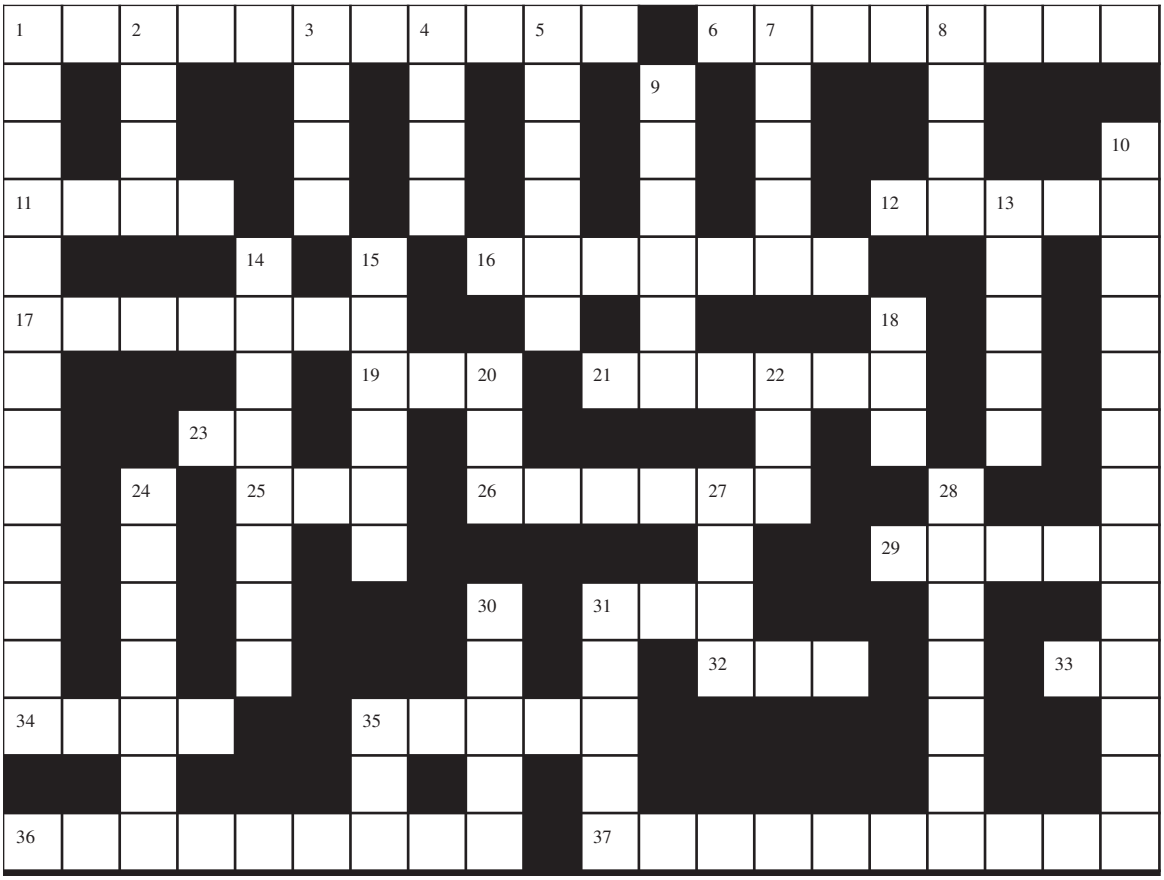
**ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE MARCH 2010**



# Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of _____.” 6. “And Simon Peter ____ and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” 11. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost _____ made you overseer,...” 12 “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves _____ in among you, not sparing the flock.” 16. “For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall _____ be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 17. “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an _____ of suffering affliction, and of patience.” 19. “...to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his _____ blood.” 21. “_____ of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” 23. “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. for if _____ do these things, ye shall never fall.” 25. “For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to ____ generations.” 26. “And Moses said I am slow of speech, and of a slow _____.” 29. “Also of your own selves shall men _____, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” 31. “..and ____ everyone that nameth the name of Christ.” 32. “And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is ____ of them.” 33. “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even ____ God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” 34. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth _____, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his...” 35. “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all _____ save some.” 36. “And beside this, giving all _____, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;” 37. “But I keep under my body, and bring it into _____: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”



## DOWN

1. “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the ____ thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.” 2. “For the kingdom of God is not ____ and drink; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” 3. “For as the ____ without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead.” 4. “They have healed ____ the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” 5. “Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ____ not to warn every one night and day with tears.” 7 “These were more _____ than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” 8. “____ so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” 9. “And he denied it again. And a _____ after, that they stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them. ...” 1 0. “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their _____, and the house of Jacob their sins.” 13. “...Everyone that is of the _____ and heareth my voice.” 14. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath ____ to all men,” 15. “For thou art an holy _____ unto the Lord thy God:...” 18. “...Philip saith unto him, come and _____.” 20. “For John had said unto Herod It is ____ lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” 22. “His watchman _____ blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark;...” 24. “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white _____;” 27 “And Nathanael said ____ him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?..” 28. “Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the _____, But they said, we will not hearken.” 30. “_____ and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” 31. “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly _____, we should live soberly. righteously, and Godly. in this present world;” 35. “He is despised and rejected of _____; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief....”

# VOID OF PRIDE!

We all know that Jesus lived an absolutely perfect life. He never sinned in any way; always resisting the devil's every temptation. Consider some of these ways that the word of God makes it clear that PRIDE was NEVER in the life of Jesus. Remember Jesus' words: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

### WE SEE *NO PRIDE* IN EACH OF THESE AREAS OF JESUS' LIFE!

1. **Birth and family**- "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" (Matthew 13:55).
2. **Wealth and Riches**- "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20).
3. **Respectability**- "He shall be called a Nazarene" Matthew 2:23). "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).
4. **Personal appearance**- "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:2).
5. **Reputation**- "The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners" (Matthew 11:19).
6. **Independence**- "…many others, which ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke 8:3).
7. **Education**- "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" John 7:15).
8. **Superiority**- "…the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

"I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:27). "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:7, 8).

9. **Success**- "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). "For neither did his brethren believe in him" (John 7:5).

"He is despised and rejected of men (Isaiah 53:3).

10. **Ability**- "I can of mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30).
11. **Self-will**- "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30). "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38).
12. **Intellect**- "…as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8:28).
13. **Resentment and revenge**- "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).
14. **Sanctity**- "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2).

### REMEMBER THESE SCRIPTURES REGARDING *PRIDE!*

Proverbs 11:2; 16:18; 28:25; Psalm 73:6; I John 2:16; John 13:5; Luke 18:9-14

**'I am too Blessed to be Stressed'**