

THE NEW CREATION

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“Prove ALL things and hold fast to what is good.” – 1 Thess. 5:21.

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Loosed the Pains of Death

“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” Act 2:24 KJV

“But God raised Him (Jesus) up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.” Act 2:24 NASB



These words refer to the resurrection of Jesus from his three days in the tomb, in the days of his flesh, to the exalted position of the high priest of the Melchizedek order (Heb. 5:7-10).

The word “pains” or “agony” in the Acts scripture literally refers to birth pains. A woman in travail of child-birth knows there is no way to hold back the birth of her child once the process starts (unless possibly by a medical intervention). So also, we find that there was no way to prevent Jesus from being resurrected on the 3rd day. It was impossible for the grave to have held him any longer. His Father started the travail (the loosing of the hold of death on him) and brought him to the spirit birth as the antitypical Melchizedek priest.

The following verses of Acts 2 (25-28) are a quote from Psalms 16:8-11, which must have encouraged Jesus in the days of his flesh that his soul would not be abandoned to Hades (the condition of death) nor allowed to undergo decay. His cries in the Garden of Gethsemane to the One able to save him from (or out of) death were heard.

How thankful we are for the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! A dead savior would not get us life eternal. Only by his death and resurrection do we have a continual standing of imputed righteousness before God, now by faith, and later in actual righteousness by the completion of the new mind with the new body in our resurrection change. *“Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1Cor. 15:57).

R. Whittaker

“It Is Finished”

John 19:30

These words, spoken by our Master at the end of a hard but successful mission, will resound and reverberate in the ears and minds of many Christians during this season as we specially remember His closing hours and death on the cross; a prerequisite to His gift of life.

Primarily, these words *“it is finished”* have one meaning, namely, the price for the redemption of the human family was there provided and offered; the demands of Justice had been met. Jesus had finished the work He had come to do as *“in the volume of the Book it is written of me.”* Thus, He made His soul an offering for sin.

We may also think of these words as having a prophetic significance; i.e., in the sacrifice of Jesus the completed work of redemption was considered an accomplished fact, even as Zacharias declared, *“The Lord hath visited and redeemed Israel,”* when as yet the Redeemer was unborn. Such are God's ways of expressing Himself. Knowing the end from the beginning, He speaks through His servants of *“things which are not as though they were”* (Rom. 4:17).

Nor would the above exhaust all that we might associate with these words, for His whole life was one of giving of Himself; of enduring the opposition of His own people; of suffering the contradiction of sinners. Indeed, His life was a paradox. *“You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich”* (2 Cor. 8:9). He who was with the Father, He of whom it is declared, *“Without Him was nothing made that was made,”* condescended and took upon Himself the form of a servant. Being born of the Virgin Mary amid lowly circumstances, He grew up in Nazareth, a city not noted for its nobles. He was simply known as the carpenter's son.

Nevertheless, Jesus, at the tender age of twelve knew something of the part He would play in the purposes of God. We recall His conference with the doctors of the law as He sat

in their midst *"both hearing them, and asking them questions"* (Luke 2:39-52). Wouldn't it have been a rich experience for us to have sat in and witnessed the wisdom of this young man as He astonished the doctors with His understanding and the answers He gave to their questions.

Jesus then returned with His parents to Nazareth and was subject unto them until He *"began to be about thirty years of age,"* when He presented Himself to John to be baptized. Henceforth, all the pressures of evil men would be His lot; He must be proven. Even Satan would seek to subject Him by fabulous offers and, failing in this, would continue to try to destroy Him. All these forces Jesus must resist at all cost in the pursuit of *"being about His Father's business."*

Let us look in detail at some of His experiences. Though He offered Himself to Israel as their Savior and King, most would not receive Him; they esteemed Him not; there was no beauty in Him to their eyes. The religious leaders immediately set about by conspiracy to find cause to destroy Him. He was constantly followed by spies, was threatened with stoning whenever He spoke of God as His Father, and was falsely accused of blasphemy, that they might have reason to put Him to death. (Lev. 24:16) This charge Jesus openly refuted, saying, *"You say of Him, whom the Father has sanctified, and sent into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God?'"* This infuriated them even more, and they sought to take Him then and there but He escaped their evil designs, knowing His time was *"not yet"* (John 10:36-39). In His compassion, He opened blind eyes, healed the sick, cast out devils, raised the dead. For all these acts of kindness He had hatred and malice heaped upon Him from the leaders who sat in Moses' seat. *"This fellow does not cast out devils, but by [the power of] Beelzebub, the prince of devils."* One wonders at their cruelty when His every act was motivated by love.

As if this were not enough, his very own disciples tried Him sorely. Peter denied Him; others slept while *"He sweat, as it were, drops of blood."* His sorrowful words, *"Tarry here, and watch with me"* fell on deaf ears. He who had done no wrong

was hunted as a criminal while Judas led His captors to Gethsemane, betraying Him. Being brought immediately before the High Priest, He was convicted in an illegal trial, and taken before Pilate for sentencing. Though Pilate declared, *"I find no fault in this man,"* He was ordered to die as a common criminal, a great miscarriage of justice! But thus it must be.

And what can we say of the scourging, the crown of thorns, the mocking, the shame, the terrible suffering of the cross, and loss of His friends? Yet, the loss of the Father's presence as indicated by His cry, *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* was the agony that finally broke His heart. Why must God forsake the sinless 'Son of His love?' The answer is found in the fact that Jesus, on Calvary's Cross, bore completely all *our sin*: *"Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"* (Isaiah 53:6). The prophet said, *"Thou (Jehovah) are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and can not look on iniquity"* (Habakkuk. 1:13) and Moses declared, *"He that hangs on a tree is accursed of God"* (Deut. 21:23). How completely, how triumphantly, did Jesus, by His death, meet every contingency!

All that it meant in laying down His life *"a ransom for all"* was now finished, and Jesus was glorified. Glorified in death? Yes, praise His name, glorified in death! In anticipation of this hour, He had declared only a few hours before, *"Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."* Had not Jesus indicated this when He said to His disciples, *"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit"*? Applied to Jesus, this axiom has tremendous value! He is the *only hope* of release for a sin-sick world!

To the minds of many, His persecutors had been victorious; the evil designs of these murderers had been accomplished. Now they could glory in their victory. But not so! Had not Jesus said, *"No man takes my life, I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again"* (John 10:18 Diaglott). All too soon they were to realize theirs was an empty victory. Though they remembered, belat-

edly, that Jesus had said while He was yet alive, *"After three days I will rise again,"* and sought to secure themselves against this possible defeat, yet their purposes were frustrated by God, as Peter so ably sets forth: *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged on a tree. Him has God exalted to HIS right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins"* (Acts 5:30, 31).

"It is finished!" With these words the power of Satan was broken. *"Now is the prince of this world cast out."* No longer need men be subject to his control. Here the love of God and His Christ are brought out in full view: *"God so loved the world that HE gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* In these few words we have our Heavenly Father's will revealed in all its simplicity. *Whosoever believes in Him need not perish!* Jesus had opened a *"new and living way,"* - a way of life by faith in Him, *"who for the joy set before Him [of redeeming a world lost in sin and death] endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God"* (Heb. 12:2).

Let us who have entered this way (of salvation and discipleship) daily look unto Him for strength and encouragement. He is the author and finisher of our faith; let us *"consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself lest we become wearied and faint in our minds."* We may think our trials severe, but have we resisted unto blood in our striving against sin, as Jesus did? Though God had allowed Him to be *"bruised"* and *"put to grief,"* yet in it all He was able to see the glorious outcome - *the pleasure of Jehovah prospering in His hand* - as He made his soul *an offering for sin* (Isaiah 53:10). Thus, Jesus' victory over the forces of evil was complete, *leaving nothing undone.* In His strength and by virtue of His victory alone, we too may be *"conquerors through Him who loved us"* - *and "gave Himself for us"* (Romans 8:37, Titus 2:14).

From The Kingdom Scribe, CMG

If You Only Knew

"Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

[John 4:10]

The Woman at the Well

If you only knew! Jesus was about to make sure that this Samaritan woman did know, and that it would change her life. And the life of many others in her village. She apparently knew something about "religion", since she spoke of "where" to worship, and about the Messiah, etc. But her empty life did not show any signs that she lived her "religion". But Jesus brought God's offer of life to her -- she began to know, and hopefully became a disciple.

He told the Samaritan woman exactly who he was; that was amazing and unexpected!

"The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When He comes, He will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.'"

[John 4:25-26]

Was this meeting something that Jesus had planned as he travelled along? Was this meeting a mere coincidence? Did Jesus know what was about to transpire?

Another time, Jesus, walking along met a funeral procession. Was that coincidence? Jesus had compassion on the living mother and raised the dead person to life.

Again, at various times, Jesus met a blind man, and some lepers. He healed them. Were these chance meetings? Mere coincidences?

It would seem that these meetings were not by chance, mere coincidences, but rather something God had planned and set them in Jesus' way. Jesus used these spontaneous occasions to heal, to teach his disciples, to reveal who he really was.

Jerusalem "... *If you only knew today what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it!*" [Luke 19:42, GNT]

If you only knew! Jesus was expressing His sorrow for Jerusalem because it had rejected Him and therefore missed its opportunity for peace, and the "*upward calling*". They had heard Jesus preaching and seen his miracles; many of the common people truly "heard" and believed in him, but most of the leaders did not truly apprehend or appreciate him. They killed the "*Prince of Life*" [Acts 3:15] -- if only they had known! There was a promise in their Scriptures --

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." [Exodus 19:5-6]

They could have been, as a nation, the special "*treasure*" that God intended. That was lost, but an individual opportunity to be of God's "church" remained open to Jews, and later to gentiles [who eventually predominated in the "church"].

Israel will know, in due time, what the true situation was. But what they lost! And the troubles that came upon that nation! But God has not forgotten them.

"With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you," says the Lord, your Redeemer." [Isaiah 54:8]

Their experiences will help them, and others, in the Kingdom. They have been scattered to nearly all lands; they lived with those people, knew their customs, language, and history. They can relate to them and have empathy for them.

The Flood

"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on

the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." [Luke 17:26-30]

If they only knew! Noah had preached to the people of his generation [2 Peter 2:5]; they heard his voice, but they did not listen, did not apprehend -- until the Flood came [their "*time of trouble*"] ending that age. Amazing that none of his extended family believed Noah, except the wives of his sons. Lot at Sodom also was a righteous man, but no one listened to him either, except his wife and two daughters. Truth is not always popular, but it is always right.

The time we live in -- indeed the entire age of the Church -- has been like the "*days of Noah*", when no one really listens to the message of salvation; they scoff and reject. When the great "*Time of Trouble*" comes [Daniel 12:1], it will be too late. Noah and his family were all safely in the ark; then God shut the door, and then the Flood came. Even so, it will be with the church, God's select ones -- safe in the "ark" of salvation.

Praise God that a full opportunity for eternal life on earth will be offered in the next age, not only for those humans who perished in the Flood, but all humanity.

Joseph and his brothers

"Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, 'Where do you come from?'" "And Joseph said to his brothers, 'Please come near to me.' So they came near. Then he said: 'I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.'" [Genesis 42:7; 45:4-5]

If they only knew! Would the brothers have rejected the young Joseph, and sold him into Egypt, if they had truly known; if they had believed the dreams that Joseph recounted to them? Their consciences bothered them for years [Genesis 42:21-22]. It was only in Egypt, face-to-face with Joseph, that all the

sordid details came out and reconciliation was made. This is a wonderful picture of how Jesus the Messiah will one day be reconciled to the Jewish people, "... *they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*" [Zechariah 12:10-14].

Joseph comforted and reassured his brothers, and Jesus the Messiah will also speak comfortably to the Jewish people.

The Garden; Adam and Eve

If you only knew! Of course, they "knew", since they were told by God. But they had no true understanding of the matter, nor of the massive consequences of their action. When resurrected and looking at the thousands of years of earth's history -- sin, evil, suffering, and death everywhere -- they will be grieved at heart, seeing what has transpired. But, also seeing the restoration processes, they will rejoice at God's loving-kindness.

One wonders what earth's history might have been like if only they had truly known and believed God when He said --

"Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" [Genesis 1:28]

Presumably, the garden paradise would be gradually expanded as the human race multiplied, until finally the entire earth would be a perfect paradise.

Even after Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and was doomed to die, Adam did not need to follow her and willfully sin. But he did! Adam should have obeyed God and trusted Him for a solution. Perhaps God would have created another perfect woman, an "Eve 2.0". Who knows? God has unlimited resources and abilities.

The Christians What about us, the Christian believers? Do we truly "know", understand and appreciate our privileged circumstances? Have we truly heard the "joyful sound" of salva-

tion through Jesus? Are we disciples, or merely believers? Each must decide for him/herself. Do not let your religion be like a rocking horse, with much motion but no progress.

"Don't look for shortcuts to God. The market is flooded with surefire, easygoing formulas for a successful life that can be practiced in your spare time. Don't fall for that stuff, even though crowds of people do. The way to life -- to God! -- is vigorous and requires total attention."
[Matthew 7:13-14, The Message]

In the future, do we want to hear the words "if you only knew"? How much better to hear the words "*Well done, good and faithful servant*"?

Eventually, the human race will appreciate the permission of evil and the restoration from that condition. What tears they have had [and there have been plenty] will be wiped away [Revelation 21:4] and, like Job, will have double restored to them. If there are future creations [and that seems likely] they too will rejoice with the deeper understanding of God and His character, revealed by the permission of evil and the restoration therefrom.

"Praise the Lord!

Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament!

Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp!

Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!

Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals!

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord!" [Psalm 150]

L. Schneider

Scripture quotations from NKJV unless otherwise stated

Making the Right Choices

This article in general has a focus on basic Truths found in God's Word which do not require a lot of interpretation.

"Making the Right Choices," is something each one of us aspires to do every day and is very much related to Psalms 119:105 that acknowledges "*Thy Word (God's Word) is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*" An appreciation of this scripture takes the understanding that God's Word should shape our thinking to guide us to the best conclusions. Let us remember how Jesus responded when He was tempted by the devil. In every attempt by Satan, Jesus responded with a "thus saith the Lord," being led and preserved by God's Word. This requires the understanding of Pro. 3:5-6, which says, *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* We acknowledge Him and demonstrate our love for Him when we do His will, walking with him, and following His instruction. For as we read in Amos 3:3, *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* Therefore, clearly we cannot walk with the Lord, unless we embrace His ways.

It seems today that evil is more pervasive, done now out in the open. For instance, today what the scriptures characterize as an "abomination to the Lord" seems to be justified and accepted. We also witness division, and hostility toward one another, a "nation divided." We witness the spread of outlandish lies and conspiracy theories that unfortunately are believed by those lacking the discernment provided by God's Word, being blinded to the truth. For instance, the man who set fire in a Buffalo grocery store killing 10, left behind a white supremacist document known as the "great replacement theory," that had inspired a lot of violence around the world. These current tragic events, not limited to gun violence, are centered on self, lust, and fear, that reflect a total lack of being led by God's Word. As frustrating as this evil is, it can strengthen our desire for the better way founded on God's Word.

Much of the worldly wisdom we witness today runs contrary to God's Word, things that emanate from the main stream

that have deceived millions. I use these examples to show why it is so important that we use God's Word as a lamp unto our feet. Without God's Word we are blind, and walk in the darkness of the world, easily falling prey to lies. I would like to begin with Philippians 2:14-16. "*Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life.*" Here Paul is telling us to be led by God's word of life, working out our own salvation, by obedience, being one of His. In this life it is important that we make the right discernments that properly lead us as just read, in a "crooked and perverse" world. It is important to let our light shine, not easily shaken or misled, "tossed to and fro" (Eph 4:14) which will happen without a sure foundation that can only be established by following God's Word.

Jesus clearly explains this in Mat 7:24-25, where He said, *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.* To accomplish this, we must value, and hold fast to God's Word, and use His Word as a guide in discerning the truth from a lie. Do we listen, when God's Word tells us we will know them by their fruits? We do not want to overlook this important instruction of observing behavior, and factoring it into our decision making. A boss I had many years ago, sending me away on a promotion, warned me, telling me that a "liar is a thief." I worked as a fund raiser to support community needs, and was very sensitive to the sanctity of that work, and the trust that must be established. I remembered what my former boss told me, and later when I caught an employee in a lie, I watched him closely, and sorrowfully, found that what my boss warned me was true. Then a very young man, I found myself in an extremely harrowing situation, that fortunately, with my eyes open, was able to overcome. We need to keep our eyes open, and learn

from the things that we witness, guided by God's word, for make no mistake, we were placed in this evil world to learn.

The scriptures warn us, in Mat. 26:41 *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* We certainly don't want to watch for His coming like mischievous children, trying to get away with something, but watch that we are not like the 5 foolish virgins who were not prepared at the Lord's return, only to hear that He did not know them. We want to be obedient, we want to be laying up our treasures in heaven, and be of His sheep whom he knows, because we are following Him in our walk, and are not asleep.

Concerning discernment, Proverbs 14:15 tells us *The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps....*In other words the prudent watch. Given the example of "the prudent" using God's Word to guide them, I would like to give another real-life example of a main stream statement, that runs so contrary to God's Word. A statement that is so pervasive, deceiving many. This statement is "America First." Should we sympathize with such a statement which runs so contrary to God's Word, but is sadly embraced by millions who follow the wisdom of this evil world. To support why this statement is wrong and can corrupt is simply explained by God's Word. We read in Acts 20:35, *I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* If there is such a thing, a better scripture to present in opposition to this deceiving slogan is the one in which all of God's perfect law is contained, found in Gal 5:14 which says, *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, **even in this**; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* This scripture clearly tells us not to put ourselves first, even if the flesh tells us to do so. We must walk in the spirit, and be led by God's Word, not by blind and evil slogans of men, lest we be deceived.

It is easy to fall prey to selfishness. It is certainly not what we want to be or what we want our country to be. We should remember the words of Jesus when he said, in Luke 6:38,

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. If we believe this, why would we want to put ourself or our nation first? We must believe that it is the Lord who rewards us, not our selfishness.

Another accompanying and deceitful slogan is, "Make America Great Again." But what is great? Who was greater, the priest who had recognition, prestige, and power, who walked away from helping a neighbor in need (Lu 10:31), or the Good Samaritan, who gave of himself to help a stranger? If we know God's Word, and use it to guide our thinking, we will not be tossed to and fro by idle and evil rhetoric that work to strengthen the flesh. Knowing the Holy Scriptures, we should clearly know what accounts for greatness, with its accompanying blessings from God. Greatness in the eyes of God is far different than that of fallen man. We read in Pro 16:32 *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.* Greatness has nothing to do with power and authority, for If you are as weak as I am, and I hope you are not, you will be able to appreciate the truth of Pro 16:32, This is not a verse to gloss over, for it requires a great transformation into a New Creature in Christ, just as serving others in all humility is being a servant of the Most High. Think about it, can we even imagine the privilege, honor and significance of being a servant of the Most High?

Albert Einstein, familiar to almost everybody, is best known for his genius, and scientific and mathematical discoveries. Yet, I was surprised to read that he wrote, *Only a life lived for others, is a life worthwhile.* Does it take genius to understand these simple words? It takes more than genius, it takes God's Word, that gives us discernment that leads us. Einstein also wrote the quip for one who has discernment, saying, *"We all know that light moves faster than sound, that's why certain people appear to be bright until you hear them speak."* We need discernment, to weigh both the behavior we witness and the words we hear, and measure them against God's Word.

But of course, we must first prepare our hearts to seek God's Word, before He will open it up to us (see Mat 7:7). We must prepare our hearts to do his will as expressed in 2Ch 20:33 which says, *Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.*

The scriptures tell us that fruits of the spirit are *love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith*, which run so contrary to putting one's self first or being vengeful. As Jesus taught James and John and His disciples, and yes, us, that a true leader, whether an individual or nation is one that serves...that gives, and gives, and gives..... This is a life worthwhile, as Einstein wrote, understanding God's will, and also understanding that all we have is from God over which we are called to be good stewards.

To stress the importance of this point, the Lord also gave us the parable of the rich fool found in Luk 12:16-21. The truth is, for those not led by God's Word, is there ever enough? Look at Russia, a country with the largest land mass by far, a country the Lord filled with great natural resources, but was that enough? Do those of this world understand 1Ti 6:5, which says, *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. It is a very sad day....today....when we see so many drawn like flies to dung, drawn by lust, believing that gain is winning. Through God's spirit, we must recognize the moral instructions and grace implied in Eph 4:28 which state, *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, (and then it tells us why) that he may have to give to him that needeth.* Here the Lord is telling us to aspire to be a true leader, by doing that which is right, and then serving. The encouraging grace of God implied in Eph 4:28 is literally spelled out for us in Eze 18:21-22 which reads, *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath**

done he shall live. What a gracious and loving God we have, who loved us while yet sinners. We read in Rom 5:8, "*But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*". How important is this verse to our walk? Does this example give us understanding on how to develop positions in life? Does it provide light to direct our path?

We have another real-life example of The Dreamers, appropriately named, for they dream to be like you and me, and not castaways in a nation they grew up in and love. As the young offspring of those who came to this country illegally, they dream of becoming citizens. Yet to date they are refused citizenship by those that say laws were broken, and one must not encourage or reward law breaking. How does this position square with Romans 5:8 which says, *But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* This behavior does not square with our instruction to be merciful, but does square with how Jesus described the Scribes and Pharisees in Mat 23:24 where Jesus said, *Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.* He calls them blind leaders and hypocrites, not being led in their walk by God's Word. Sorrowfully, the Scribes and Pharisees like many of our "leaders" today do not realize that they themselves are sinners and lawbreakers that need lots of mercy.

Jesus did not hold to the belief that mercy would promote law breaking when he told those around him in Joh 8:7, "*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*" [early manuscripts omit Joh 7:53 to 8:11 – Ed.] How does the current position toward The Dreamers square with Paul's letter to Philemon and his plea for Onesimus, Philemon's run-a-way slave? Paul was asking Philemon to not only take him back, but to take him back as a brother. That can be hard to understand unless we each see ourselves as sinners, in need of forgiveness and mercy.

When we love our neighbor as ourselves, we naturally have compassion for another's wellbeing as a "Good Samaritan," who was portrayed by Jesus as a "good neighbor"....one who took to heart God's Word, and treated a stranger as he

would have wanted to be treated.....not putting "himself first" (Lu.10:33) as did the priest and Levite who walked on the other side. Listen to what Job, a man loved by God, incredibly expressed in Job 29:15-16. Job said, *I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.* Job was a servant to those around him, and thus a servant to God. Job as Einstein expressed, "lived a life worthwhile."

God has given us free moral agency, to make the choices that seem best to us, and has placed us in a world whose head is Satan, for the purpose of teaching us the sinfulness of sin, and ultimately the better and only way to everlasting life. The world, and the permission of evil should provide each of us with a deeper appreciation that doing the will of God in every situation is the best and only sensible course of action, whether it be in a personal or business relationship. Things from the beginning have never been rosy, but when I look at the evil, outright lying, deceptions, and the self-serving of leadership who put themselves above their duty to righteously serve, I come away strengthened, knowing that the only cure will be the intervention of our loving God, in His due time. But until that day, we should not strive and fight as some do, but display the fruits of the spirit which are, *love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith*, thereby working out our own salvation, being led by and magnifying God's Word, bringing it to light, thereby honoring and glorifying God's most Holy name.

J. DiCesare

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit." Gal 5:22-25 ESV

Forgetting and Remembering

*“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, **forgetting** those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:13-14*

*“Therefore, **remember** that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:11-13*

Are there things that we need to forget about our past? Are there things that we need to remember about our past? The answer to these questions depends on the perspective motivating the questions.

If our perspective is negative, then remembering them will be a hindrance to our Christian walk. Doing this can be an anchor to keep us from progressing in our walk. This is the kind of thinking that our very subtle adversary, Satan, encourages. Our focus should be on what the Lord has done and is doing in our lives. Perhaps, this is what the Apostle meant to convey to our minds in Philippians 3:13-14 above.

But if our perspective is positive, then looking into our past can be very beneficial and make us grateful as we consider what the Lord has done for us to bring us to where we are today. It can be an energizing force to spur us on to greater appreciation for God’s loving patience with us in our daily following in the footsteps of Jesus. The old hymn that told us to “count our blessings, name them one by one, and see what the Lord has done” captures this thought perfectly. I can only imagine, if it were possible for us to truly remember every one of our blessings, the amount of time it would take us and the flood of gratitude that would fill our hearts, even to a bursting

point. Let us never forget that Jesus made it possible to be where we are now in Christ because He laid down His life, shedding His blood for each of us on Calvary's cross. The Apostle Paul reminds us of this in Ephesians 2:11-13 above. What greater cause for our gratitude can there be!

It has been suggested that keeping a *gratitude journal* would be of great value. Take 5 minutes every night to think about anything you are thankful for that day and write it down in your gratitude journal. At the end of the week review what you have written, and you will be surprised at all the positive ways God has worked in your life.

Some thoughts on Gratitude

"This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

It is never too soon to express your gratitude because you never know when it will be...too late.

Gratitude is first an in-taking and then an outward expression of what it was that blessed us.

If you can't find something to be grateful for, then you are probably the most miserable person on earth.

Look at the beauties of nature all around you, recognize their masterful Maker, and then try to hold back your gratitude if you can!

A grateful heart has little room for disappointment.

Gratitude is a divine emotion that derives its source from Above.

A grateful heart is content with what they have.

"More than enough" is an expression of gratitude.

One who has a grateful heart has a radiant countenance.

Don't forget to express your gratitude to the Giver of all that is good.

E. Weeks

The Two Engravers

Are you aware that there are two parties who desire to write a message on your heart every moment of the day? They write their specific thoughts on the tablet of your heart *in accordance with your will*. Your heart then becomes the foundation for one's thoughts, ideals, and principles. The two parties that we speak of are God and Satan.

We derive this idea of the engraving of our hearts from Hebrews 10:16 where God says, *"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them."*

We see this same concept repeated throughout the Bible. Prov. 3:3: *"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of your heart."* Prov. 7:2-3: *"Keep My commandments...Bind them upon your fingers, write them upon the table of your heart."* Jer. 31:33 adds: *"this shall be the covenant...I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts..."*

There is no question about it! God wants His Word to be in our hearts and have top priority. As we read, study, and meditate on Scripture, *God wills to write them upon the tablet of our hearts.*

His Word is to be stored up in our hearts; our thoughts being constantly and decisively guided by its principles. Our minds are to always be kept under its influence and impression. It is to be a definite and commanding principle in all of our decisions. We are to not only know its verses but *apply them to every area of our lives* as well. Just as someone dear to us would be said to be *"written on the tables of our hearts,"* even so is God's Word to be esteemed, treasured, prized, and received.

Deut. 6:6 - *"And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart..."*

Psalms 37:31 - *"The law of his God is in his heart..."*

Psalm 40:8 - *"I delight to do Thy will... Thy law is within my heart."*

Psalm 119:11 - *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart...."*

Psalm 119:98 - *"Thy commandments...are ever with me."*

Colossians 3:16 - *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...."*

But we need not go any further to realize that there is someone else who is even now writing on the *tablet* of men's hearts. That one is Satan ~ "the god of this world" (1 Corinthians 4:4)!

Jer. 17:1 Nowhere is this concept more clearly illustrated than by Jeremiah: *"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond - it is graven upon the table of their hearts..."*

Here we see the deep-seated effect of sin on a person's heart. Whenever we yield to Satan in temptation, he is said to inscribe on our hearts with a *"pen of iron"* and the very sharp *"point of a diamond"* (our own sin). In the case of Judah, their sin was *idolatry*.

The only way to remove this lasting imprint is through *repentance* and a complete turning away from and forsaking of the sin, which calls for the Blood of Jesus for its removal.

So we see then that our hearts are the battle-ground for the Holy Spirit or for Satan as victors. Either the tablets of our hearts are filled with the directives from God or Satan, depending on whom we yield to throughout the day.

The Scriptures abound with example after example of those who opened their hearts for God's inscriptions or for Satan's.

Ezra 7:27: God wrote a directive *on the heart* of King Artaxerxes to remodel the *house of the LORD* - *"Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, Who has put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem."*

Nehemiah 2:12 - God wrote on Nehemiah's heart the call to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall - *"And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither did I tell any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem...."*

2 Corinthians 8:16 - God put in the heart of Titus to rally the Corinthians to collect an offering for poor saints - *"But thanks be to God, Who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you."*

But we also see other Scriptures depicting how Satan wrote wicked, evil ideas, impressions, and inklings on the hearts of many.

John 13:2: Satan wrote the evil idea on the tablet of Judas' heart to betray Jesus - *"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,"* becoming the instrument of treachery against the very Son of God.

Acts 5:3: Ananias yielded to the devil's power by lying to the Holy Spirit. *"Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and keep back part of the price of the land?'"*

Other Scriptural examples of Satan's insidious engravings on mankind's hearts can be seen in such verses as **Gen. 3:13** and **1 Chronicles 21:1**.

There was only One on whose heart the devil was never able to inscribe his wicked schemes ~ our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When Satan came to the Master, waving his *"pen of iron"* with the *"point of a diamond,"* Jesus refuted him with *"It is written..."*

By His example, the Scriptures are seen as the most effective weapon against Satan's *"pen of iron."* Fill your heart with the Word of God, and this adversary will never be able to write his words upon your heart. **Proverbs 4:23:** *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."*

C. Giordano

Promises Made -- Promises Kept

About every four years here in America, we start hearing the mantra “**Promises Made -- Promises Kept**” by politicians and their surrogates of all stripes, colors, and teams. Typically, they make thousands of promises and claims and after four years they find the 4 or 5 that came to fruition. And whether they were instrumental in them happening or not, they shout from the roof tops “**Promises Made -- Promises Kept.**” If they shout loud and often enough with their paid advertising, maybe, about five of the promises are kept, then the country will forget the other thousands of promises that never happened. This works because there is no expectation and certainly no accountability for the promises made. In fact, it is hard to see how one might even be considered for major office if they do not make outrageous promises first.

This speaks volumes to the state of “truth” in America and how little it is valued and practiced. The intent of the claims is that since one kept five of their promises then you know that they will surely keep the thousands of promises that they are making today.

Rejoice, and again I say rejoice. For unto you has been given “the truth.” “The Truth” does not change. Not a half or one-sided truth.

(Ps119:160) “*The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.*”

We read this of The One who has inspired the writings of the sacred scripture:

“*Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise, (this includes us), the immutability of His counsel,...*” (God does not change, He is the same yesterday, today and forever.” If you are waiting for the Word of God to change, to come up to date, forget it. It is already beyond “to date,” it is truth, righteous and forever),

“... confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, **in which it is impossible for God to lie**, we might have strong consolation, (that is to say that we might be mighty, unwaver-

ing in our comfort from the fears and turmoil of all the tragedies and upheavals upon the earth caused by sin), “*we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.*” (Heb 6:17-19).

(John 16:33) “*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*”

We take hold of the hope, faith and assurance of the salvation and inheritance promised and held for us in heaven awaiting the arrival of the groom. We wait confidently and expectantly under the safe and sure wings of God our refuge.

We can spend hours and hours reading and listening to others and be left wondering if that is true or how much of that is true or if any of that is true. “*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the (accurate) knowledge of the truth.*” (1Tim 2:3,4). God does not direct us to the NY times, CNN or Fox for the accurate knowledge of the truth which is able to save you and me. He has addressed His own love letter to you and I personally, the Bible, and has sent His own Son to deliver it, sealed with His Son’s own blood. And they have left us God’s holy spirit to explain, interpret and lead us into all truth. How much time do we spend listening to and seeking out guidance and advice from people that once we have listened, we walk away and wonder if they are right?

Compare that amount of time with the time we spend reading and listening to the One who is always right, who cannot lie, who gave His only begotten Son so we can be reconciled back to Him. Because of His spirit within us, we are able to hear and comprehend. It drives us to live with and for Him and enables us to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth.

Rejoice and again I say rejoice. You have mail, a love letter from your Heavenly Father. Have you read it today? Do not put it too far from you.

Our mantra with God and his Holy Word needs to be: “**All Promises Made -- All Promises Kept.**”

The probability that a single person would fulfill eight of the prophecies of the Messiah is conservatively estimated at 1 in 10^{17} power! That is 1 chance in the number 10 followed by 17 zeros. The match probabilities for DNA profiles today typically are in order of 1 in a billion. (or 1 in 10^9 power). Again, the 1 in 10^{17} power is only for fulfilling eight prophecies, and with Jesus we are speaking of fulfilling over three hundred and counting.

If you are looking for the Messiah, just let me say, "we have got your man." He is Jesus Christ of Nazareth. If you are seeking truth and promises that cannot fail, open your love letter for it is full of prophecies about countries, kings, prophets, those known and unknown at the time foretold, and all came to fruition, some hundreds of years later.

All Promises Made -- All Promises Kept. The promises that God made 4,000 years ago to Abraham and yet to be completely fulfilled, are surely on the way and are as real and sure to today as it would be if He made them an hour ago. Read your Bible daily and let God write it in your heart.

B. Blake

*"His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us **His precious and magnificent promises**, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." 2Pe 1:3,4 NASB*

*"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; **So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**" Isa 55:10,11 NASB*

Dead Men Live Again

An inconspicuous little man made his way up the steps to the Court of the Areopagites. The place: Athens, the pride of ancient Greece. The time: about the year AD 51, just before Nero became Emperor of the Roman Empire and the British king Caractacus was defending South Wales against the invading legions of Rome.

The philosophers stirred in the sunshine. At a loss for a subject of debate, they watched with the languor of boredom as the stranger approached, perceiving by his actions that he intended to make use of the time-honored privilege of addressing the learned and wise in their own sanctuary. Indifference changed to interest, and interest to close attention, as Paul, the Cilician, expounded, in the best style of Greek oratory, the thesis of his choice -- *"Jesus Christ and the Resurrection."* While he philosophized upon the nature of God *"in whom we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said"* (Acts 17:28), they retained their interest; but when he began to speak of the resurrection of the dead, the wise shrugged their shoulders. The world was already way past such a childish notion!

The 17th chapter of Acts records the pitiable story with a distinctness and sharpness of outline that stamps it as truth. The philosophers are dust and ashes these many years, but the words spoken on that memorable occasion live on into eternity. *"God has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead"* (Acts 17:31).

Both the teaching of Jesus and the theology of Paul concur in declaring that the resurrection of all men is to take place in that day when Christ reigns over the earth. Very soon after the new administration is set up, the fulfillment of Christ's words may be expected. *"All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth"* (John 5:28). Assurance is given in the Scriptures...that this re-awakening is to be universal and to affect all who have ever lived. Thus the men of Nineveh, Sodom and Gomorrah, cities which were notorious for their in-

iquity, are to return (Matt. 12:41, 42; Luke 11:31, 32; Ezek. 16: 55), and Caiaphas, the leading figure in the greatest crime of human history, is to see the coming of that Kingdom against which he blindly fought (Mt. 26: 64). The innocents of Israel (Jer. 31: 15-17), Job, the proverbial symbol of patience (Job 14:13-15), Israel, the people of God (Dan.12:2), and many more will come back from death in one continuous stream of awakened humanity, questioning and wondering at this strange thing which has happened to them.

“How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” asked the imaginary critic of Paul’s reasoning (1 Corinthians 15). Truly a question that needs an answer; for if men and women who have been dead and forgotten for centuries and whose physical bodies have long since turned to dust, are to re-appear upon earth again as human beings—well, with what body do they come?

The story of the Garden of Eden has often suffered at the hands of its best friends, but the more the Bible is studied in the light of 20th century knowledge, the more it becomes evident that in some wonderful manner the first human beings did in very truth receive their physical bodies as a direct creation of God. There is something in man that the brute creation does not nor ever can possess, something that makes all the difference between the highest and most intelligent of animals and the lowest, most degraded of men. God formed man of the dust of the ground (the physical elements of the earth), breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life, and man **became** a living soul, an intelligent, sentient being. It was the spirit of life, the mental processes of thought, reasoning, memory, and anticipation, operating through a suitable physical organism that made man what he was and enabled him to know himself for what he is.

If then this thing did happen once at the dawn of human history, clearly that same Divine power is able to repeat the process when the time comes for *“all who are in their graves to come forth.”* A newly created physical frame, impressed with the character, memory, and disposition of a being who once lived, died, now awakens to consciousness and sentient existence again! The **identity** being thus the same, the period

spent in death will be nothing more or less than a sleep so far as that individual is concerned; and the moment of awakening will be as the moment after that unconsciousness which was death, taking place perhaps four or five thousand years before.

From that point, the thread of existence will be taken up, and the individual commence to live with the same mentality and disposition which he had at the moment of death. And here the stern law of Divine retribution comes into full effect; for *“whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap”* (Gal. 6: 7). The one who went down into death degraded, brutalized, vicious, will come back with the same characteristics. The one who sought to live a life of uprightness, rectitude, and benevolence will come back an upright and noble man. In consequence, and because righteousness will be dominant in that day, and the practice of evil restrained, and because truth will be paramount and doubt and deceit no longer possible, the noble and upright of heart will already be much farther advanced toward the Divine standard which is then to be attained by all, than those who misused their human powers and opportunities in their previous life.

It is suggested by some, with good reason, that this stupendous awakening of earth’s millions from the sleep of death will continue progressively, in the reverse order to that of their death, until the earliest of the most ancient nations will be restored to their place.

Men will without doubt organize the earth’s resources to meet the needs of this returning multitude. As each generation comes back so there will be those among them who, lovers of God or benefactors of men in their own lifetime, will quickly grasp the significance of this amazing thing, which has happened to them, and turn with enthusiasm and zeal to the work of instructing their fellows. Thus will be brought to pass the saying of Isaiah, *“Thy dead shall live . . . awake and sing, you that dwell in dust...the earth shall **cast out the dead.**”* (Isa. 26:19). *“Thou shall call, and I will answer you,”* says Job (14: 15). *“You will have a desire to the work of your hands.”* Every man and woman entering upon a social order, which has a use for each one, will find an obligation devolving upon them

to take their own place in its administration and service. By means of an all-powerful and absolutely righteous system of government, the opportunity to come to a true and correct knowledge of the principles which shall govern all human life to all eternity—those laws of Nature which are also the laws of God will be made plain.

The scientist and the statistician may and does oppose such a prospect with the cold logic of *alleged* facts, questioning the capacity of this planet to support life in perpetuity and talking about an ultimate “*running-down*” of the Universe. Such talk sounds convincing at first, but the scientists of past ages argued just as convincingly that the earth was flat, that men could never fly in the air lest they got too near the sun and were consequently burned up—and even as recently as a century ago stated with perfect assurance that human endurance could never survive a travel speed of more than 60 MPH!

The integrity of the Bible stands involved in this whole question. Long years ago it was stated that God created not the earth in vain—to be a ruin— but to be inhabited (Isa. 45:18). The Divine promise is that this planet is to be filled with the glory of God, to be the home of a happy race of undying beings who, having at long last learned by bitter experience the “*exceeding sinfulness of sin,*” will live to all eternity amid a glorious and perfect environment, in complete accord and amity with each other and in absolute harmony with God.

Before this desirable condition of things can be brought about, it must be that “*Death and Hades deliver up the dead which are in them*” (Revelation 20:13), that all men may have this wonderful opportunity to accept the grace of God in Christ.

The Divine intention to fill the earth, having been achieved, the increase of the race will naturally cease, and all humanity rejoicing in full maturity and the zenith of health and strength will in the knowledge of undying vigor occupy their places in this new eternal world.

The ideal companionship ordained to all eternity by One Who first said, “*It is not good for man to be alone*” (Gen. 2:18), will come into its heritage as a greater and more glorious fulfillment of the first eloquent picture in the Bible. That first human pair, again together in the garden, will have no shadow of

sin to mar their joy.

This is our hope! This is the prospect seen in vision by seers of Old Testament days, depicted in miniature by the miracles of Jesus Christ, deepened and clarified by the theology and the teaching of the twelve apostles. For two thousand years have Christian people prayed, "...*Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" Here is the fulfillment. Here is that for which holy men of old endured fire and water, imprisonment and persecution, holding on in certainty "*as seeing Him Who is invisible.*" In that glorious day when mankind at last understands why God has permitted this dark day of evil, one rapturous strain will ascend to the heaven of heavens and roll in resounding crescendo through the everlasting years,

*"Even so, Lord God Almighty.
True and righteous are Your judgments."*

A.O. Hudson

Thy Kingdom come! Give ear, O King of Ages!
This earnest prayer is knocking at Thy door;
The Church of God with one accord engages
In hopeful pleading till the night is o'er.

Thy Kingdom come! We wait the promised glory
That, like the sea, embraces every shore.
We wait the time proclaimed in psalm and story.
When strife shall cease and nations war no more.

Thy Kingdom come, and bring its feast of gladness
To groaning creatures wasted by despair;
To dry all faces with the breath of gladness,
And soothe our sorrows with Thy love and care.

Thy Kingdom come! O haste the Bride's appearing.
Let every soul her wand of healing feel,
While all the ransomed of the Lord, revering,
Adore His Name ~ and in homage kneel.

Author unknown

A Portrait of Jesus: Crucified and Resurrected

“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.’” Matthew 28:5-6



The most important events in the history of Christianity are surely the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Jesus three days later. The crucified Jesus is where the sins of the world were placed. Romans 5:8, tells us that Jesus' death on the cross was part of God's plan to demonstrate how much he loved us, *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us, our sins were forgiven.”* Jesus' death on the cross was the only way to save mankind. Although this day may have appeared to be the darkest day in history, without the cross there would be no resurrection, and with Jesus' resurrection there would be no hope for mankind.

Jesus' believers had heard his words that he must die, but they just did not get it. His death on the cross broke their hearts and crushed their dreams. The women who came to the tomb, came with heavy hearts, expecting to find his broken body and to minister to their dead Master with spices. Their arrival to find the tomb empty was unexpected. Their love brought them to the tomb, but God's love gave them what they did not expect...joy and hope for their future.

His followers believed He had come to change the world, but they really did not understand what that meant. They believed he was the Messiah, but their expectations of what that meant were totally different from the reality. Jesus' resurrection changed everything for these women and all his followers.

Jesus' resurrection means that we can pray to a risen king and have the power of Jesus infused into us. When we approach Jesus in prayer, we can receive strength, guidance,

comfort and healing. We can live in forgiveness...all our sins have been forgiven.

All of Christianity revolves around the resurrection of Jesus. It is the pin that holds everything together...it is what gives us hope for our future; it means we will also be raised to life and that the grave is not the end for us. The resurrection of the dead means that eternity awaits us: a life where there will be no more death, crying, mourning or pain. Revelation 21:4. I am so thankful that these women found an empty tomb! I am thankful for Jesus' death on the cross, but also for His resurrection, that is full of life for all who believe.

D. Mathewson

Christ Within

A LIVING Christ, of wondrous birth,
Who trod the dreary paths of earth,
Shedding abroad His holy light
Through the deep gloom of sin's dark night.

A **dying Christ**, whose precious blood
Seals the poor sinner's peace with God;
And fills the soul with fullest love,
Like to the joy prepared above.

A **Christ ascended**--all is done,
A world redeemed, a victory won.
With angel hosts, a glorious throng,
We'll sing with joy salvation's song.

A **living Christ** our spirits need,
A **loving Christ** our souls to feed;
A **dying Christ**, our ransom He,
A **risen Christ** to set us free.

This, too, our need--a **Christ within**,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.

Poems of Dawn

Prayer List

“Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.” (1 Samuel 12:23)



Let us be Prayer Warriors for our Brethren!

Adkisson, Grace – TX	Howes, Paul & Carla - UK
Boswell, Arlene – IL	Karavas Family – CA (d)
Buxton, Jean & Family - UK	Leavitt, Denise & Richard – ME
Cannon, Melissa (Bews) – TX (d)	Lepitre Family - IL
Casell, Agnes & Family –VT (d)	Mazzotta, Eva – VA
Cooper, Carmela – NJ	Miller, Alain – Canada
Csutor, Judith – CT	Moore, Maryellen – CA (d)
Day, Ronald – PA	Ostwald, Dick - WI
Dalesandro, Jim and family - IL (d)	Parker, Geraldine – CA
Dickson, Roberta Jo – CA	Parrinello, Sue MI (d)
Dunn, Kim - IL	Penton, Jim – Canada
Feliciano, Carmen - NY	Phillips, Stella – OK
Fischer, Mike & Liz – WI	Rowe, Bryan - UK
Foster, Jean – IL	Schwartz, Ruth – TX
Hauslein, Karen – MD	Seminoff, Brenda – CA
Hawk, Barbara – PA	Spano Family – IL (d)
Hildebrandt, Lois - FL	Tuscia, Priscilla – FL
Hoffner, Steve – NH	White, Joan - NY (d)
Hogrebe, Joan – MO	Wolfenberger Family (d)

(d) = death in the family

Entered into rest:

Anna Karavas, CA, January 2024

Important: If you know anyone in the names listed above whom no longer needs special prayers, please advise us so we may remove their names. Also, if any of the information is incorrect, please let the editor know. Thank you.

People do not care what you think until you care what they feel.

*“Rejoice evermore. **Pray without ceasing.** In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1Th 5:16-18 KJV*

Bible Correspondence Course New Graduates & Websites



Congratulations to the following students who have completed their course and have been awarded a Certificate.

Ransom Course Graduates:
Joanna Dzepovski of New Jersey
Emmanuel Gubika, of Uganda

Basic Course Graduate:
Monday Udo, Nigeria

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You are invited to view the following websites:  
(copy and paste the address into your browser)

<http://www.cdmi.org> (Christian Discipling Ministries International)  
(Current/past NC magazine issues are available on our website)

<https://www.christianbelieversconference.com/>

<http://www.cbchurch.com> (Christian Believers Fellowship in NH)

<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk> (Bible Fellowship in UK)

<http://www.bbschurch.org> (Lombard, IL)

<https://sites.google.com/site/quietwatersdevotions>

<http://www.cartyorkshire.co.uk> (CART)

<http://www.campblessing.com> (Camp Blessing)

<http://www.newcovenantfellowship.org.au> (New Covenant News, Australia)

<https://e-biblia.org/> (Os Estudantes da Bíblia, The Bible Students, Brazil - Portuguese/Span) email: [contact@e-biblia.org](mailto:contact@e-biblia.org)

## Encouraging Letter from the United Kingdom

Mr Bruce Blake  
CDMI Printing and Distribution Centre manager.  
Saturday 30th December

Dear Bruce,  
Christian greetings from a very wet Swansea, about 190 miles west of London. Perhaps you may remember me - my previous email May 2020!

I wish to thank you for the magazines that I have so regularly received. However, I am now becoming more reliant on the internet and have found myself reading and sometimes printing many of the interesting articles from my computer. As a result can I request that I no longer need the printed copy. Thank you.

I am also pleased to let you know I have successfully completed the online Bible Course, and I thank Mr. Allan Crawford for giving me such encouragement.

I also continue to download/print many of the CDMI's online articles. I am presently reading articles "Important New Covenant considerations, parts 1 and 2. I thank God for my blessings, and give further thanks for the CDMI.

I wonder if you are able to let me know if the Christian Believers Conference is able to be viewed on You Tube? I was able to view it some time ago, but unfortunately I have failed recently. I remember seeing both yourself and Mr. Webb in attendance.

I also thank yourself for all the work you undertake in the Ministry, and wish you and your family best wishes for 2024.

With blessings from David (Owen)

## Conferences & Conventions

### **New Covenant Fellowship**

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
Foothills Conference Centre in Mooroolbark,  
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

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### **Bible Students Fellowship Conference**

High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, England  
14-18 August 2024 DV

**Note:** If you would like to have your Convention, Conference, Camp, or Seminar published in The New Creation Magazine, send information or a program *at least three months in advance* of the issue month of the magazine to the editor, Bob Whittaker.

**The annual celebration of the Memorial of our Lord's sacrifice is this April 21, 2024 after sundown.**

**Notice:** If you know of Christian friends who would benefit from receiving the bimonthly New Creation Magazine via mail, send their names and addresses to the CDMI main office, care of Bruce Blake. The address is inside the front cover.

### **Donations**

Many people around the world appreciate the New Creation magazine. For many, it is their only source of Christian communication. Also, for many, they only have it through the generous contributions of others. If you feel moved to help them in continuing to get the New Creation, please consider a donation to CDMI.

### **Article Contributions**

Please send articles for possible publication to Dennis Gorham,  
4 Alicia Street Somersworth, NH 03878  
email: [dennisgorham@comcast.net](mailto:dennisgorham@comcast.net)

*Any information published in this magazine that you know is incorrect should be brought to the attention of the editor at his email address: [bobwhittaker64@gmail.com](mailto:bobwhittaker64@gmail.com). We strive for accuracy but do not have full knowledge.*