

The Sword AND Staff

“Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2) • “Feed the Flock” (I Peter 5:2)

Why Did God Become Flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ?

● By **JAMES E. GIBBONS**—1535 W. Fairfield Drive
Mount Airy, NC 27030 USA

GOD is spirit (John 4:24), and he is called “the Father of spirits” (Hebrews 12:9). Jesus said that “spirit hath not flesh and bones” (Luke 24:39). Although “in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28); God has his being in a different dimension than man, who is spirit in a fleshly body. That being the case, no man has ever seen God the Spirit at any time (John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:16). But, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psalms 19:1). Consequently, the apostle Paul said, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead [Godhood]; so that they [men] are without excuse” (Romans 1:20). It was inexcusable for man to go into idolatry or be an unbeliever. Although we can’t see God, creation points to a Creator. We are overwhelmed by the awesome display of Almighty Power; not just erratic power, but power harnessed by Supreme Intelligence that holds everything together, making it work in clock-like precision. God, who is Spirit, is behind it all.

God Became Flesh

The message of Christianity is that God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. Although Gnostics had a hard time believing it (2 John, verse 7; 1 John 4:1-3), the prologue of John reads, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and

truth” (John 1:1-3,14). The child born of the virgin Mary would be called “Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23). While here, Jesus said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9; 12:45; 10:30). In a concise and summary statement, the apostle Paul later wrote, “For in him [in Christ] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead [of Deity] bodily [in a human body]” (Colossians 2:9). Then further contemplating these great truths, he said, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Timothy 3:16). How amazing!



Foretold in Prophecy

Although the Jews were slow to believe it, the Old Testament Scriptures had prophesied this taking place. The initial promise was expressed in terms of the seed of woman (Genesis 3:15), the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), and the seed of David

(Continued on Page 4)

THE SWORD AND STAFF
Post Office Box 147
Mt. Airy, NC 27030 USA

E-Mail Address:
jamesgibbons@embarqmail.com

Web Site Address:
<http://jgibbons.8m.com>

■ **INFORMATION:** We are totally dependent upon your financial backing in the publication of this religious paper. To get on the mailing list, send a contribution. Subsidizing gifts are definitely needed along for us to continue this unselfish labor of love for God and truth. No notices are sent. We leave it entirely up to you to send a contribution to sustain us in this work. Make your checks out to CHURCH IN MOUNT AIRY. The extent (and frequency) of publication is determined by incoming support. James E. Gibbons is editor. (Money received for printed material is all considered as an offering). We do not assume responsibility for material from other sources and writers beyond that which appears in this paper. □

—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

CHRISTIAN is as Christian does.

We need to love the truth (2 Thesalonians 2:10-12) and to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).

The best proof of Christianity is Christianity.

When the Word of God is preached, the Holy Spirit convicts us because he has first convinced us (John 16:7-11; Acts 2:36-41).

Our love for Christ is measured by our obedience to him (John 14:15).

Nothing works like work (coupled with prayer) in getting the Lord's work done.

Charity begins at home but it should never end there.

To continue in the love of Christ, we must love him and keep his commandments (John 15:9-10).

To live within your means, means to practice frugality.

Christian unity is more accurately defined as being united with Christ than by being in association with other religious people, which association automatically comes as a byproduct of being united with Christ.

Sow deeds of love and reap a bountiful harvest of good works.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



CALLED INTO AND BEING THE LORD'S ONE CHURCH

THERE is only one church found and taught in the New Testament Scriptures (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4-6). It's "membership" is made up of those who are saved, as salvation and being in the Lord's church in the true sense are one and the same thing. It is not a man-made, human denomination. In fact, no man has the God-given authority to start a denomination or the right to invite anyone to join one. The only authority that we have is to invite people to accept Christ and thereby become a part of the one church that has already been established in the first century. A person may join a human denomination, but in reality no one can join the church of Christ. To be acceptable to the Lord, we must be in that church and be that church today. Are we being presumptuous, pharisaical or self-righteous in making such a statement? No, not at all; this is simply the Word of God. Actually a person is being presumptuous in promoting and trying to defend denominationalism. Let us consider this matter.

Religiously, as far as the New Testament is concerned, we work under the authority of the Great Commission. After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, repeatedly we find this commission as given to his followers before he went back to heaven. What he had to say was prefixed with the declaration, "**All power** [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). "And he said unto them, Go ye **into all the world**, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16:15,16). Matthew's account reads, "Go ye therefore, and teach **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]. Amen" (Matthew 28:19, 20). Luke 24:47 narrows it down somewhat, saying that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, **beginning at Jerusalem.**"

There in Jerusalem on the first Jewish Pentecost after his resurrection (Acts 1:8 and chapter 2) the gospel was preached for the first time in all of its fullness. Men who were convicted of their sins were told to, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (Acts 2:38). "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were **added** unto them about three thousand souls"

(2:41). Jesus had distinctly said, “I will build **my church**” (Matthew 16:18), and now it was a reality. Consequently we read, “And the Lord **added** to the church daily such as should be saved [*Greek*: were being saved]” (2:47). In anticipation of this time, earlier in his ministry, Jesus had plainly said to Nicodemus that a man had to be “**born** of water and of the Spirit” to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

This church came into being as a result of preaching the gospel and carrying out the Great Commission. It was simply the Lord’s church, and that alone, and not a human denomination or man-made division. When people repented and were baptized (immersed) into Christ for the remission of their sins, the Lord “added” them to his church. When they did this, they were “born of water and of the Spirit.” They were “born” into the kingdom. One cannot “join” the church of the New Testament, the Lord **adds** you to it; you are **born** into it. Acts 20:28 speaks of “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Ephesians 5:23 tells us that Christ is “the saviour of the body,” the church. The same transaction that saves a person from his sins thereby puts him into the one church we read about in the Scriptures. Being saved and becoming a part of the one church are synonymous. Yes, we are all “called in one body” (Colossians 3:15), and we are “all baptized into one body” (I Corinthians 12:13), if we have accepted Christ in accordance to the Scriptures. If we are working under the authority of the Great Commission, we have no authority to invite anyone to join any denomination. In fact, the promise of, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]” is only for those fulfilling the terms of the Great Commission. Denominationalism and denominational doctrines are excluded, not being included in this promise.

It is so simple, becoming and being a part of the Lord’s one, undenominational church. One does not have to trace an unbroken lineage all the way back to the first century. To grow watermelons in North Carolina, one would not have to have a vine coming all the way from Georgia. No, we would simply plant watermelon seed in North Carolina. When the seed of the gospel is planted and men properly respond to it, the Lord adds them to the one church already started on the day of Pentecost. (However, the Lord did say, “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,” Matthew 15:13). Now being simply Christians, the Lord’s church (and that alone), we press on like those on the day of Pentecost who “continued

steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). We have divested ourselves of denominational names (Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:4), organizations and doctrines. The creed books and traditions of men have been discarded (Mark 7:7-9; Galatians 1:8; 2 John 9-11). This oneness and unity is practiced in the context of the local autonomous church, not in the framework of some denominational structure, as we “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). We are simply being and doing what the Lord wants us to be and do. There is nothing pharisaical about this. It is the Word of God. We dare not have the audacity to do otherwise. □



Making God Second Best

I’m always prompt to punch the clock;
I never miss a date.
But when I go to worship God,
I’m usually always late.

I wouldn’t think of leaving work
To visit brother Fred;
I just wait ‘til Sunday comes
And forsake the church instead.

I never miss a day at work;
Perfection is what I seek;
But I miss the worship of my God
Once or twice a week.

I talk with people daily
Of many subjects rife,
But never mention Jesus
Nor show him in my life.

I spend extra on my family
For things that I can’t afford;
But I don’t remember ever
Giving extra to the Lord.

When your life on earth is over
And they lay you down to rest,
How can he say to you, “Well done,”
If you made him second best.

—Submitted



**God made us for himself and we are not
right until we are right with him.**



Why Did God Become Flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ?

(Continued from Page 1)

(Psalms 89:3-4). The promised one would come through the fleshly lineage of these people. But as time went by, it became evident there was a more expansive dimension involved in this promise. Micah 5:2 reads, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler of Israel; *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*" (Micah 5:2). Isaiah 9:6 is even more explicit, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father**, The prince of Peace." Likewise Isaiah 7:14 is chosen by Matthew to illustrate this truth with the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:23). Daniel's writings also lend themselves to this line of thought (Daniel 7:22). God would be embodied in the coming one.



The Wonder of It All

When we look out at the vast expanse of the heavens some star-lit night and then think about God who is greater than all of this, it is utterly mind-boggling. And it is further mind-boggling as our brain is kicked into a befuddled turbo-mode when we try to grasp the incarnation, God emptying himself of himself to become one of his creatures on the smallest planet of our universe that is said to be on the outward fringe of the Milky Way (which is only a part of the greater expanse of the heavens). In the wonder of it all, we are made to ask: Why did God become flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? Why did he become one of us? We herewith call your attention to three or four reasons in the light of the Scriptures.

I. TO BECOME OUR SAVIOR

The Most Simple Truth

That which seems so complex is put in the most simple terms when we open the pages of the New Testament. The angel, in announcing the coming of the birth of Christ to Joseph, stated, "And she

shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). This is why "Emmanuel," God with us, became flesh. Years later in the midst of his earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus himself declared, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). John 3:16 lays it out very plainly before us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then the apostle Paul in that which is almost like a summary statement, says "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19), and he went on to add, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (5:21). What great and marvelous truths!

The Scheme of Redemption

God is holy. He is perfection. God's command to man, made in his image, is, "Be ye holy; for **I am holy**" (1 Peter 1:16). But, beginning with Adam and Eve, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). And the response of perfect holiness to sin is wrath. We stand condemned before him. Paradise has been lost, and we are a dying race. However, "**God is love**" (1 John 4:8,16). These two characteristics of God's essence, holiness and love, if they were detached and polarized, would almost seem to be antagonistic to one another and incompatible. But by being compounded together, God has come up with his scheme of redemption for mankind. We are saved from the wrath of God through the love of God, seen in grace (unmerited favor). This has all been brought about by God becoming flesh and blood in the person of Jesus Christ. While here on earth as a human being he lived a sinless life, which we could not do. Although sinless, in his body on the cross he bore our sins and the sins of the whole world. Now by his resurrection from the dead he has certified our salvation and assured our resurrection. In all of this, God's sense of justice and mercy has been satisfied. This has all been accomplished in him becoming flesh. Our personal restoration to God is accomplished and realized when we accept these truths and live them out in our lives.

II. TO BECOME OUR FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST

A Faithful High Priest

The book of Hebrews highlights this second great truth as to why God became flesh. Hebrews 2:17-18 reads, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in

things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." In the verses right before this, it tells us that Christ, like those of the Old Testament priesthood, was "partakers of flesh and blood," and that "he also himself likewise took part of the same." He was "made like unto his brethren." In other words, in becoming flesh and blood, he experienced life with its trials and temptations just like all other human beings. Surely God who is omniscient knew all about us in every way before, but now we know that he knows because he has been one of us. We know that from our viewpoint he is understanding, sympathetic and caring when we lift our prayers to heaven.

The Throne of Grace

That being the case, Hebrews 4:14-16 enjoins and encouragingly admonishes us, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need." And, coupling with this his unchanging priesthood and sinlessness, the Hebrews writer with full assurance goes on to say, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25; consider 7:21-28).

III. TO MORE FULLY REVEAL HIMSELF TO US So Much We Do Not Know

God being Spirit, there is so much about him that we do not and can not know, nor understand (Deuteronomy 29:29). But we have no problem believing in God. Everything points to him. In the universe and the world of nature all about us, design is glaringly evident. Where there is design, of necessity there has to be a designer. Then because nature is governed by systematic and consistent laws that can be identified, defined and verified, there can be such a thing as science. And where there are laws, even scientific laws, there must be a lawgiver. Science, considered aside from predisposed bias, implies an omniscient God (one who knows everything). The Old Testament tells us about God, but the information there is incomplete. If our impressions of God were entirely left up to nature alone, God comes through as a cold calculating scientist. And the Old Testament leaves us un-

fulfilled. Our hearts yearn and reach out to know more about the God who made us.

The Void Has Been Filled

The Lord Jesus Christ has filled that void. He has more fully revealed what God is like and has left us something more tangible to visualize, himself, when we think and talk about the invisible God. Jesus, being the embodiment of God in the flesh, came from the very heart of God. Read John 1:1-3 and 14 again. Then John 1:18 states, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." And in two corresponding and complementary statements, Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9); "And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (John 12:45). Two parallel verses in Colossians read, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell" (1:19), and, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (2:9). We see the very heart and essence of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you think about God the Father, think about the Son.

"In the Bosom of the Father"

Notice it said that the Son was "in the bosom of the Father." That is a very expressive statement. To get the full force of this mode of speech, i.e. "in the bosom of the Father," remember that Lazarus is spoken of as being in Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22-23) and that John is pictured as "leaning on Jesus' bosom" at the last supper (John 13:23). As they ate reclining on couches, to be in such a position close to another (and especially to one's master), projected a picture of honor and of intimate, personal closeness. And coming from such a close and favored position, without question Christ has disclosed many, great and wonderful things about the heavenly Father. Read the gospel accounts. God is much more personal and real.

IV. TO LEAVE US AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TO LIVE Christian, Being Christ-Like

Let us add one more thought as to why God became flesh and blood. It is not directly stated as a reason, but it consequently came about as a result of him becoming flesh. It is interwoven with the incarnation and our restoration to God. This truth keeps surfacing as we read the New Testament Scriptures. Since Christ lived above sin, in him we have a perfect example of how we ought to live. That is all acknowledged and implied in the very name that we wear, Christian (being Christ-like). In becoming a Christian, we "put on Christ" (Gala-

(Continued on Next Page)

Why Did God Become Flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ?

(Continued from Previous Page)

tians 3:27; Acts 2:38), being forgiven and now initially clothed in his imputed righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). Having been buried with him in baptism, we arise with him to “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). The apostle John wrote, “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). Now we personally take the initiative to put on the “new man” who is the image and likeness of Christ (Colossians 3:10-14, 17, 23; etc.). We are of Christ, and we have committed ourselves to be like him in all godliness, goodness and benevolence; yes, this commitment is in every way. Therefore, we unhesitatingly ask the question, “What would Jesus do?”

“As I Have Loved You”

Consider the subject of love as to how we ought to live. The apostle Paul admonished the Ephesian Christians, “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us...” (Ephesians 5:1-2). These verses echo words spoken by our Lord himself in John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” And it further amplifies what he said in the Sermon on the Mount, having reference to loving all men, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:43-48). In the Father, and reflected in the Son, we see perfect love (and perfection that is to be emulated by us). Therefore, fittingly Paul further admonishes, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). We are to love “as” Christ loved us.

“Leaving Us an Example”

Other Scriptures bear out the truth of the sinless Christ (Hebrews 4:15), and consequently becoming our perfect example. The apostle Peter plainly stated, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:21-22). Let us look “unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1-2) in every way. He is “the way [to go], the truth [to be believed], and the life [to be lived]” (John 14:6). He is our unerring and inspiring example. Let us follow him in every way. Amen.

Conclusion

We have pretty much summarized and concluded each point of this absorbing subject as we have gone along, but as we come to the end of this article we would like to leave the following Scripture with you. This will help fix the wonder, magnificence and magnitude of it all in our minds. The Scripture is Hebrews 1:1-4. It reads, “God who at sundry [various] times and in divers [diverse] manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...” And with the apostle Paul, in the light of all of these wonderful truths, we enjoin, “Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Timothy 1:17). □



*Personal
Communication
with God*

PRAYERS are not made so that God can find out what we need. Jesus said, “Your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Matthew 6:8). God wants us to express our trust in Him and it is a means whereby our trust is increased. We are to pray with faith in God, expressing our dependence on Him. God delights in being trusted by His creation. A trust relationship is always appropriate between Creator and creature. Humbling submitting to God indicates our genuine conviction that God is wise, loving, good and powerful enough to care for our every need. His excellent character and nature give mankind hope

and joy when praying to Him. The wholeness of our being is poured out to God. Our heart expresses our deep desires and our soul cries out for spiritual needs. The mind is shaped to accept His will. Thus, what we feel about God is expressed in prayer. Our spiritual being delights in activities which bring us before our God, giving emphasis to our relationship with Him as a son or daughter (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18).

Acknowledging God as Lord manifests that He is wise and rules from His heavenly throne (Revelation 4). Jesus compared our prayers with a son petitioning his father for food (Luke 11:7-13). If our earthly father knows how to give good gifts, even when they are considered evil, how much greater the gifts which come from the hand of our heavenly Father when we ask Him (Luke 11:13)? Children look to their father to provide for them. God expects us to see our relationship with Him in a similar light. Asking in faith is fundamental and necessary (Matthew 21:22; James 1:3-6; 5:12-15; Hebrews 11:6). Trust, love and fellowship are natural and they deepen with constant prayer.

God answers prayers. The act of answering prayers underscores the effect of our prayers. We do not receive because we do not ask (James 4:2). Failure to receive graciousness from God is traced to our own breakdown in honoring God. Jesus taught the disciples to ask, seek and knock before the door of blessing is opened fully (Luke 11:7-11). The connection between seeking and receiving is well established in the Scriptures. When we ask, God responds. Bible characters such as Moses were people of prayer and God answered Him in spectacular ways (Exodus 32:8-12). During Solomon's dedication of the temple God said, "...if my people, who are called my people, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins" (2 Chronicles 7:11-19). In humble repentance and humility the Israelites were forgiven and blessed. We who live in the New Testament dispensation have a better covenant, better hope and better promises and will be blessed as well (Hebrews 7:18; 8:3-6). If we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and iniquities (1 John 1:9). We must be convinced that our prayers have an effect upon our lives and the outcome of all matters vast and petite.

Because we sin and God is holy we cannot claim any right on our own to enter into a relationship with the Father. We need a Mediator to come between us and God (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus allows us to come into the presence of God, finding

favor in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16). God is omnipresent and hears all things about believers and unbelievers. God has not promised to respond to prayers of unbelievers. He has promised to respond to the prayers of the faithful. The only prayer He has promised to "hear" and respond to is that of a faithful child and undertakes to answer it according to His will. We are neither strangers nor visitors in God's court. We should have confidence to enter into His court with thanksgiving (Hebrews 10:19).

Praying in the name of Jesus Christ is of great consequence. Jesus told His disciples that they had not prayed in His name, but they were to petition and ask in His name following His resurrection (John 14:13,14; 16:23,24; Ephesians 5:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-5). There is no other name under heaven wherein there is found salvation (Acts 4:12). Clearly we are to add "in Jesus' name" after every prayer. This is not a magic formula that empowers the prayer. It demonstrates that the believer, on his own behalf, has no authority to address God the Father. Obedient believers have an advocate at the right hand of the Father who intercedes on their behalf (Romans 8:31-39). Prayers are offered in Jesus' name by His authority (1 John 5:13-15).

Prayers are addressed to the Father. Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and upon the earth (Matthew 28:18-20). However, Jesus remains subject to the Father and is at His right hand. Jesus rules the Kingdom, but one day will deliver it up to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:20-28). The clear pattern of prayer in the New Testament is that they are addressed to God the Father, not to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit nor individuals. The Holy Spirit, like Jesus, makes intercession on our behalf (Romans 8:26-30).

Prayers are according to the will of God. "And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him" (1 John 5:13,14). It is not a caveat, but we should have some inkling of what God's will is. Asking for things which the Father cannot grant because it is against His character often times causes individuals to claim God does not answer prayers. Such is a false assumption. God is trustworthy in all cases and will answer prayers according to His will. □

—Don Hatch



Signs of Success

TO LAUGH often and love much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the approbation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give one's self; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived—this is to have succeeded.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson* □



The Ford V-8 Engine

AUTOMOBILE genius Henry Ford once came up with a revolutionary plan for a new kind of engine which we know today as the V-8. Ford was eager to get his great new idea into production. He had some men draw up the plans, and presented them to the engineers. As the engineers studied the drawings, one by one they came to the same conclusion. Their visionary boss just didn't know much about the fundamental principles of engineering. He'd have to be told gently—his dream was impossible. Ford said, "Produce it anyway." They replied, "But it's impossible." "Go ahead," Ford commanded, "and stay on the job until you succeed, no matter how much time is required." For six months they struggled with drawing after drawing, design after design. Nothing. Another six months. Nothing. At the end of the year Ford checked with his engineers and they once again told him that what he wanted was impossible. Ford told them to keep going. They did. And they discovered how to build a V-8 engine.—*Selected* □



Who Wants a Dirty Rose?

A FATHER had six daughters, and had determined to teach the girls a lesson on morals. He knew the necessity of impressing Bible values upon the mind of each daughter as an individual.

One evening as he returned home from work, he stopped by a local flower shop and bought seven of the most beautiful roses in the shop. There would be one for each daughter, with one left over.

At home around the kitchen table, he picked the very prettiest rose out of the bunch, and passed it to the girls, letting each one of them smell it and handle it. Then he put the handled rose, somewhat misused, back into the vase. After fluffing the flowers with his hands, he passed the roses around and told each daughter to take the rose she wanted. When the vase had made the circle from girl to girl, the father called the girl's attention to the single rose remaining. It was the first rose passed around which all the girls had handled—the misused one was left.

The father made his point well. Good boys, like good girls, are not interested in exploited "roses" when they are looking for a mate for life. If his daughters intended to find a good man to be their husband, they need not expect a godly man to be interested in them if they allowed themselves to be handled and misused morally. When girls are promiscuous, immoral with the boys they date, in the end, the good and morally upright young man, the young man who will make the good husband, will not be interested in them as a wife.—*Selected* □

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. How old was Adam when he died?
2. What two men in the Old Testament went on to be with God without dying?
3. How old was Methuselah (the oldest man who ever lived) when he died?
4. Of what man in the Bible is it said that he didn't curse God, but that he cursed the day wherein he was born?
5. What was the name of the younger man who spoke after Job's "friends" had gotten through speaking?
6. Where is the only place that Job is mentioned by name in the New Testament?
7. Although Moses led the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, why didn't God allow him to go into the Promised Land?
8. When David confronted the giant Goliath, how many stones did he take for his sling (and how many did he use)?
9. What four things does the book of Proverbs say were little but exceedingly wise?
10. What two Old Testament prophets had a vision of God with the heavens opened much in the manner John did in the book of Revelation?
11. In the gospel accounts, which one starts with Adam in Christ's genealogy, which one starts with Abraham and which one in eternity?
12. What women are named or referred to in Matthew's genealogy of Christ?
13. Of the four gospel writers, which is the only one who tells about Christ washing his disciples' feet?
14. After the brutal treatment of Christ, who was compelled to carry his cross?
15. What makes us think that the family of the man who bore the cross became Christians?
16. The book of Luke and the book of Acts were written by whom?
17. What Old Testament Scripture was the Ethiopian eunuch reading that Philip explained unto him as he rode along in the chariot?
18. Where was Paul when he said, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at [overlooked]; but now commandeth all men every where to repent"?
19. Where was Paul when he wrote the epistle to the Romans?
20. Of the seven churches in Asia in the book of Revelation, which one was poor but said to be rich, and which one was rich and said to be poor?

(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)

READERS'

...Response

APOLOGY: Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. □

GEORGIA:

■ *"Your publication has been a blessing to me. Thank you very much. I want you to add...to your mailing list...Thank you very much."*

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ *"I am requesting copies of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I have read my friend's and I would like to have a collection [bound volumes] of my own..."*

TENNESSEE:

■ *"Please remove me from your mailing list. I am no longer brainwashed." (E-mail)*

Editor: In response to our questioning this e-mail correspondent as to what he exactly meant when he said that he was "no longer brainwashed," he said that he no longer believed in God, and that "Religion is just based in fear and a way to cope with death. I'm satisfied to know that when I die there is nothing." (!!!)

■ *"God bless the work being done. Oh, I can't remember the years I started receiving THE SWORD AND STAFF, but I truly have learned to appreciate and love it more for the simple truths found in this labor of love. Find support enclosed."*

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Please remove from all mailing lists."*

■ *"I am enclosing an offering to help with the publishing of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I enjoy reading it and thank God for the help it is to so many people. I am enclosing an order for some of the booklets or tracts. I would like to put some new names on your list to receive THE SWORD AND STAFF."*

■ *"I have a preacher friend who has let me read his copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF for the past several months. He must have a copy of every volume that you have written."*

"Please add me to your mailing list and send me all the past volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF..."

"It is a pleasure to me to read the information that you publish..."

"Thank you and may God bless you in this work."

VIRGINIA:

■ *"Thank you all and God bless you as you labor for the Lord. I really enjoy your paper."*

■ *"You do an impressive work for Christ. May God continue to bless your work. Enclosed is a small donation for the work..."*

■ *"Thanks for all of the bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAF (English and Spanish), booklets, tracts, etc..."*

"Thanks for the great work you are doing to spread the Word of God..."

"Thanks to you and your wife."

MARYLAND:

■ *"Just rec'd the volume 49, and the article on the subject THE CHURCH AND DENOMINATIONALISM was of your usual superior quality. I hope it makes wide distribution. A subject so badly needed for the world today."*

"I really enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF and may the good Lord give you many more years to keep it going..."

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ *"We appreciate all of your efforts. May God bless you and your wife as you faithfully serve Him."*

OHIO:

■ *"Please discontinue my subscription and take my name from your mailing list. Thank you..."*

KENTUCKY:

■ *"Please send me five copies [sets] of the bound volumes if you still have them. Thanks so much."*

INDIANA:

■ *"Please remove me from your mailing list. Thank you." (E-mail)*

■ *"May the Lord bless you for THE SWORD AND STAFF...I will continue to support you the best I can, and I'm looking forward to the next issue."*

■ *"...We have, and are enjoying, the bound copies and tracts you sent us. I want to thank you so much for all the good you are doing. Now days it is hard to find material that has not been watered down to suit the crowd."*

MISSOURI:

■ *"As I have told you on other occasions, I very much appreciate your writing/publishing ministry of THE*

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

SWORD AND STAFF. *Our Lord certainly uses and works through you and the publication to bless and help many, myself included. Enclosed please find a small amount of help with expenses...*

■ *"I want you to know that we appreciate your faithfulness to the Lord and the example you are through the strong and truthful teaching of God's Word through THE SWORD AND STAFF writings. I continue to read and use them for good reading and teaching from God's Word. Thank you for your hard work in faithfully writing and sending them out. We pray the Lord will bless you for all your faithfulness and hard work over the years ..."*

NEBRASKA:

■ *"Thank you so much for the godly teaching in THE SWORD AND STAFF. You are truly being used by our Lord to glorify Jesus..."*

■ *"Thank you for sending the copies of your paper. I gave seven copies away at church and they gladly received them...Thank you again."*

COLORADO:

■ *"Thanks for being so faithful in sending me your publication all these years even though I haven't supported you. I do appreciate it. Enclosed is a small gift."*

INDIA:

■ *"I would like to receive your SWORD AND STAFF. Please kindly send to me." (E-mail)* □



What is Prejudice?

WHAT IS prejudice? It is the lock on the door of the closed mind. It is the ignorance we usually mistake for reason. It is the first enemy of information and progress. It is intellectual astigmatism. It is a perfect combination of conceit and ignorance. Prejudice never saved a soul nor settled any question in the light of truth and justice. It is the defense of the devil, shell of a petrified mind, and ceiling on understanding.

Prejudice is the adjunct of a weak and wicked cause. It is that which prevents a person from investigating the teachings of the Word of God to see if what he has practiced in religion is in God's Book. Prejudice is that which causes one to attack the person doing the preaching when Scriptural arguments cannot be given in answer. In fact, when one manifests a prejudiced attitude he is admitting defeat in logical reasoning, but still refuses to pay heed to anything different from what he already holds.

It is that which will keep many persons from obedience to the gospel of Christ. We plead with you to lay aside all prejudice and study the Book of God

afresh. Then do Bible things in Bible ways; call Bible things by Bible names; and be content with a "thus saith the Lord." If we were all to use the Bible only as our standard of religion, division that results from not doing this would cease and unity prevail which is that which our Lord so fervently prayed for in John 17:20-21. Let us lay aside all of our prejudices and study the Word of God with an open mind. □

—Selected



"What Is Man that Thou Art



Mindful of Him, and the Son of Man, that Thou Visitest Him?"

• *By James E. Gibbons*

THE 8TH PSALM is identified as a "psalm of David." Here great truths begin and end with the same exclamatory words of praise (verse 1 and verse 9), "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" These words beautifully encase and frame the truths found in between. The first appearance of this exclamation in verse 1, spoken to God, has these extended words attached to it: "who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Then David, overwhelmed and absorbed with the greatness of God, further ponders this, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou are mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (8:4) He goes on to answer these questions,

saying that man had been made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor, and given dominion over God's creation on earth, including the animals and all living creatures. No doubt as a young man keeping watch of his father's flocks by night and looking up into the vastness of the star-filled heavens time and time again, he had pondered these things many times. Then his thoughts would come back to earth, to man and to the animals over which he was watching (and over which God had given man dominion).

Let us take the questions that David asked in this psalm and enlarge upon his answers from other Scriptures in the Bible. "What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

I. "WHAT IS MAN?..."

"A Little Lower Than the Angels"

David approaches the answer to this question of "what is man" in addressing God when he says, "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels" (8:5). Angels are created supernatural spirit beings that were in existence before man appeared on the scene. "They neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30). Man in his present state of being is sort of a hybrid, in contrast with the angels. Unlike angels, man is a spirit-being clothed with a material body. We read in Genesis 2:7, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground [body], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [spirit]; and man became a living soul." Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 are parallel to this Genesis statement in reference to the components of man, and even explanatory. "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." Here "spirit," "soul," and "body" are mentioned. The "soul" is the animated life that came into being as a result of the "breath of life" [the "spirit"] impacting the material body. The "spirit," now encased in the physical body, is the eternal essence of man. When man dies, his spirit goes back to God (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Acts 7:59). Thus, man in his dual personality, and assigned to earth, was made a little lower than the angels.

**Man Made in the
Image and Likeness of God**

Extending our thoughts further, let us notice Genesis 1:26. "And God said, Let us make man in our *image*, after our *likeness*..." (Likewise, notice John 1:1-3 in explaining the "us" part). The image of God is not clearly defined here, yet the reality

and distinctiveness of it stand out. After creating all of the other life forms, God now said, "Let us make man *in our image, after our likeness*." It is implied that man would be uniquely different from the rest of the creatures just made. Obviously, the image is not the physical body, for animals are so constituted. And "God is Spirit" (John 4:24), and he is said to be the "father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9). Offspring bear the image and likeness of their father. "Likeness" is a more generic term meaning resemblance and at the same time perhaps here implies that the image is not absolute (as man is not God and is lower than the angels; but Christ is called the "express image" of God, Hebrews 1:3, being part of the eternal "godhead"). Perhaps Colossians 3:10 in the New Testament is an additional clue as to what is involved. Christians are admonished to "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." And Ephesians, the parallel epistle to Colossians, reads, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (4:24). Man is an intelligent, moral spiritual being like unto God.

Man's Being Interwoven with God

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Later we read, "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD" (Genesis 4:1). Then much later in the Scriptures we read the words of Job: "Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). In the experience of death, Solomon in Ecclesiastes sums up what takes place. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). So, anyway that you look at it, man's being is interwoven with God. He was created in the image and likeness of God, in birth he comes from God and in death he goes back to God. Great dignity has been placed upon each person as a human being, and consequently, accepting the incurred responsibility, man should live accordingly. Therewith, consciously realizing this, this involves self-respect and mutually respecting one another. With many not believing this today, there is much cheap humanity around. James wrote, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after *the similitude* of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.

(Continued on Next Page)

“What Is Man that Thou Art Mindful of Him and the Son of Man that Thou Visitest Him?”

(Continued from Previous Page)

My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:9-10). And to round it off, Peter fittingly said, “Honour all men” (1 Peter 2:17).

II. “WHAT IS MAN THAT THOU ART MINDFUL OF HIM?...”

The Crown of Creation, the Garden Home and Given Dominion over God’s Creation

Upon repeatedly beholding the greatness and vastness of God’s creation, and thinking about God himself, man seemed small, insignificant and almost inconsequential to David. He felt compelled to cry out to the LORD, “What is man that thou art mindful of him?” But, upon second thought, David was quick to answer his own question. Man was very favored. “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas” (8:5-8). God made man and esteemed him to be the viceroy of his creation on earth (Genesis 1:26-28). Even from the very beginning, aside from man being made in God’s image, it is evident that God was especially mindful of man. Being created last, everything had been made and was ready for man when he arrived on the scene. Then man was placed in the beautiful garden home of Eden that had been especially prepared for him. (And the extent that God is aware and mindful of man is seen in the words of Christ when he said that “the very hairs of your head are all numbered” Matthew 10:30). Yes, God was and is indeed mindful of man.

The Dignity and Relationship Altered

However, we know the rest of the story involving Adam and Eve. In exercising their God-given prerogative as superior, independent and free moral agents, they made some very bad, and we say with remorse, sad choices. Thereby and consequently, that high and holy image and likeness in them became blurred and indistinct; it became degraded and downgraded. And at the same time that exalted and personal relationship to God and his creation over which man had been placed was altered and shattered. Instead of close communion with his Creator, of whose image he bore, man’s relationship to God was broken and became one of

fear (Genesis 3:10), and the relationship of the animals to man likewise soon became one of fear (Genesis 9:2). The earthly creation was now under the charge and oversight of an imperfect and faltering viceroy. We are made aware of the disarray that things were in when Paul later wrote, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). The exalted dignity of man in his standing with God was now greatly changed. Because of sin, man’s life on earth would end in death.

God Mindful of Fallen Man

But even in the fall of man, we still can see that God was not any less mindful of man. In prophetic language, the LORD said to the devil in the hearing of Adam and Eve, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her *seed*; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). Here is the beginning of a long series of promises involving the “seed,” and thereby showing that God was mindful of man and continually had his well-being in mind. Of the coming seed of woman, the power of the devil would be crushed and the dignity of man would be restored. In the call and promise to Abraham, the coming of the “seed” is highlighted (Genesis 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:8,9,16). Then, with Isaac and Jacob the mention of the “seed” is further brought into view (Genesis 26:4,5; 28:13,14). And to notice one more reference, the “seed” is likewise anticipated through the line of David (Psalms 89:3,4). All would finally find its fulfillment with the birth of Christ (Galatians 4:4). God was mindful and merciful.

God Mindful from Eternity

God, being mindful of man, goes beyond the promise and hope given to our sinful parents when they were expelled from the Garden of Eden. We are told in Acts 15:18, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God is omniscient. He knows all things. He knows the end from the beginning. That being the case, he knew that man, his special creation, would end up needing a Savior. Paul speaks of our “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, *promised before the world began*” (Titus 1:2). Peter tells us that we are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was *foreordained before the foundation of the world*, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:18-20). Likewise Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:9 that God “hath saved us, and called us

(Continued on Page 14)

Millions of Years to Make Our Mortal Bodies?

IF “in a moment, in the twinkling of the eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52), God can change us into eternal bodies that will never die, why do theistic evolutionists think that it took Him millions of years to make this present mortal body of man that is inferior and subject to death and decay? □



BARBS **...with a POINT**



WRONG living will take the life out of you.

If you don't practice what you preach, it would be better for you to listen than to try to teach.

To blame others for our shortcomings is to come short in overcoming them.

The church is not a melting pot; it is more like a forging furnace as we are made into the person that we ought to be.

All talk and no walk will get you no where (and especially with God).

Cheap grace only cheapens Christianity; although salvation is free, it cost Christ everything and we personally are to count the cost before entering into discipleship.

It creates a dangerous situation when a person is smart but is not wise.

When something is not right, it is wrong, and if it is wrong no amount of wishing, praying or rationalizing will make it otherwise.

It is hard for a covetous person to live a life of contentment.

Some religious movements are like a summer thunder storm; they come in with a bluster, then they are gone.

A loose tongue will get you into tight places.

If we think that we can't get the Lord's work done through the simple, local, autonomous organization of the church, and must have others, it may be that it is not the Lord's work that we are doing.

You really have to be different to make a difference.

If the one that you marry is based on sexual attraction alone, and not character, your mate may not look all that attractive after a while.

People with contradictions in their lives try to find contradictions in the Bible.

Going the course of least resistance is what makes men and rivers crooked.

More people are more concerned about “helping themselves” than in helping.

It is hard to look up to people who have let you down, but we are to “honor all men” (1 Peter 2:17).

The world will just pass you by if you don't conform (we say, good riddance!).

If birds of a feather flock together and water seeks its own level, what do your associates “say” about you?

If you break the laws of God, you will be the one that ends up broken.

The trouble with the modern “church” today is that it is wed to worldly wisdom, which in the long run is always defeating to the cause of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:21).

Patriotism and Christianity are not synonymous.

When the going gets rough, some people get going (in the other direction).

To get the most out of life, stay alive as long as you live.

Christianity “lite,” that is the kind of diet we get in most churches today (if that at all).

The status quo is usually not the way to go (Matthew 7:13-14).

“Women professing godliness” should be godly in the way they dress (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

Many books are wordy, but still don't say anything.

We all need to be on the same page, and the same page is the Word of God.

There is no right way to do a wrong thing.

If you have ever been closer to the Lord than you are right now, maybe you have backslidden. □



Things I've Learned

I'VE LEARNED that, no matter what happens, how bad it seems today, life goes on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that, regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

I've learned that making a “living” is not the same thing as making a “life.”

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you, but if you focus on God, your family, your friends, the needs of others, your work, and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn.

—Selected □

“What Is Man that Thou Art Mindful of Him and the Son of Man that Thou Visitest Him?”

(Continued from Page 12)

with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*.” So, from eternity, man has been in the eye of God. God indeed was and is mindful of man.

III. “WHAT IS MAN THAT THOU ART MINDFUL OF HIM? AND THE SON OF MAN THAT THOU VISITEST HIM?”

“And the Son of Man”

In the last part of this verse, as seen above, an extended part is added to the question, “and the son of man that thou visiteth him?” By adding “son of man,” David is not necessarily introducing new thought, having simply asked, “What is man?” in the first of this two-part question. As this is Hebrew poetry, this could well involve the rhyming couplet scheme of thought, the second part being synonymously repeated in a slightly modified form. And it may be for purposes of emphasis in getting across these marvelous thoughts.

“That Thou Visitest Him”

God being mindful of man is seen in “that thou visitest him.” We have already talked about God being mindful of man, but here we are taken a step further. Throughout the Scriptures it speaks of God visiting man, or the day of God’s visitation. This can mean one of two things. (1) It can mean visiting man in judgment, something bad happening (Jeremiah 5:9,29: 9:9; Isaiah 10:3; Hosea 9:7). (2) And it can mean something good is taking place, brought about by God (Ruth 1:6; Job 10:12; Luke 1:68,78). Whether the visitation is in a good sense or a bad sense, either way it indicates that God is mindful of man. Certainly he is mindful when man is blessed in connection with something good happening. This is likewise true in reference to something bad happening. If this was for punishment or chastisement, it indicates that God is very mindful, wanting man to be right with him. When the visitation is mentioned in Psalms 8, perhaps David is talking about good things happening. Here he is emphasizing the positive in connection with man.

The Greatest and Climaxing Visitation of God

The greatest and climaxing visitation of God is seen in deity becoming flesh to save man from his sin. The father of John the Baptist praises God, and among the many things he said was, “Blessed be

the Lord God of Israel; for he hath *visited* and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began” (Luke 1:68-70). That which had been in God’s mind from the beginning, that which was promised to our sinful parents, and that which was anticipated by the prophets now came to pass. The Word, “who is the image of the invisible God...” (John 1:1-3,12-14,18; Colossians 1:15), became flesh to save us from our sins and to restore us to himself, now as redeemed children of God. And in being restored to God Paul says that we “have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the *image of him* that created him” (Colossians 3:10). And the ultimate climax of this restoration is seen when Paul asserts that “as we have borne the image of the earthy [the first Adam on earth], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [Christ, the second Adam, and in heaven]” (1 Corinthians 15:49). Because Christ has visited us we will be with the LORD God, in whose image and likeness we are made, throughout all of eternity in heaven. Amen. □


A Famine in the Land

THE PROBLEM we are facing today is not a lack of the availability of Scripture but is the fact that the words of God to Israel through his prophet Amos have come to pass in our day: “Behold the days are coming, declares the LORD God, when I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or thirst for water, but rather for hearing the word of the Lord” (Amos 8:11). The evidence of this famine is seen today in the fact that in the modern church we have substituted programs and methodologies for the preaching of the Word of God. Contemporary Christians are no longer a people of the Word. A solid sense of the truth is sadly lacking in many of our pulpits today. We are attracted by movements that have replaced Biblical standards with a theology of therapeutic, charismatic and managerial emphasis. The neglect of the Word of God is the famine we are facing today. □


The Name “Christian”

Henry Ward Beecher (Congregationalist): “Let me speak in the language of heaven and call you Christians.”

Albert Barnes (Presbyterian commentator): “These divisions should be merged into the holy name Christian.”

Martin Luther (founder of the Lutheran church):
"I pray you leave my name alone. Do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians."

John Wesley (founder of the Methodist church):
"I wish the name Methodist might never be mentioned again, but lost in eternal oblivion."

Charles Spurgeon (famous Baptist preacher): "I say of the Baptist name, let it perish, but let Christ's name last forever. I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living."

The apostle Paul: "*Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*" (1 Corinthians 1:12-13)?

The Apostle Peter: "*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf*" (I Peter 4:16).

Luke, the writer of Acts: "*...and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*" (Acts 11:26).

Sick and Tired

I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired.
I'm sick and tired of feeling ill.
I'm sick and tired of the doctor's office.
I'm sick and tired of the doctor's pills.

I'm sick and tired of aches and pains.
I'm sick and tired of side-effects.
I'm sick and tired of the smell of hospitals.
I'm sick and tired of feeling like a wreck.

Oh, but I'm so glad that I'm covered,
I don't mean by health insurance, my friend.
I'm covered by the Blood of Jesus,
And I know all will be well in the end.

So, I count all of my blessings,
They are too many to enumerate.
I take the focus off my infirmities,
And spiritually speaking I feel great!

The Word of God transforms my attitude,
And helps me to take the focus off myself.
There are many others who are suffering
So why not try to help somebody else.

If you, my friend, are in dire straits,
And no light at the end of the tunnel you see,
Take your eyes off self and look to Jesus,
And He'll make the difference for all eternity.

By Rafael Moreno

A Wide Selection of Printed Materials Available!

WE have a wide selection of booklets and tracts now available for use in the Lord's work. They cover a wide spectrum. We have booklets helpful in winning people to Christ, endoculturating them in what the Bible teaches, and helping them in their growth as a new Christian. As well as being generally distributed, they are being used for class study. Those available are listed on the back page. Order a supply, or request a sample packet to peruse. What we said on the back about the bound volumes applies to this material also. **(There is no charge for the materials, just help with the expense of mailing).** Order a supply and put them to good use.—*Editor* □

A bit of humor...

"Where Is My Sunday Paper?!"

THE IRATE senior citizen calling the newspaper office loudly demanded to know where her Sunday edition was.

"Madam", said the newspaper employee, "today is Saturday. The Sunday paper is not delivered until tomorrow, on SUNDAY."

There was quite a long pause on the other end of the phone, followed by a ray of recognition as she was heard to mutter.

"Well, that explains why no one was at church either."—*Selected* □

BECAUSE Christ is our Paraclete on earth (one beside us) in the person of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-18), he is also our Paraclete in heaven (one beside God in behalf of us, 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:26-27).

→ E-MAIL ADDRESS:

jamesgibbons@embarqmail.com

→ Web Site: <http://jgibbons.8m.com>

Answers to: **BIBLE QUESTIONS**

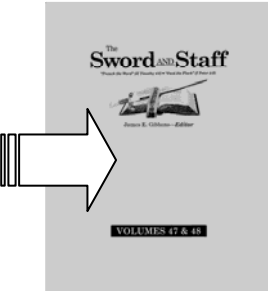
1. Genesis 5:5; 2. (1) Enoch (Genesis 5:24; (2) Elijah (2 Kings 2:11); 3. Genesis 5:27; 4. Job (Job 3:1-12); 5. Job chapter 32ff; 6. James 5:11; 7. Deuteronomy 32:48-52; 8. 1 Samuel 17:40; 9. Proverbs 30:24-28; 10. Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:1; 11. (1) With Adam (Luke 3:38); (2) With Abraham (Matthew 1:1); Eternity (John 1:1); 12. Matthew 1; 13. John 13:1-17; 14. Luke 23:26; 15. Mark 15:21—His children are mentioned by name, as if known by the early church; 16. Luke; 17. Acts 8:30 (Isaiah 53); 18. Athens (Acts 17:16,30); 19. In the house of Gaius at Corinth (Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:2,14); 20. Revelation 2:8-9; Revelation 3:14, 17-18). □

Order Bound Volumes of

THE SWORD AND STAFF in Spanish: LA ESPADA Y EL CAYADO

- 1995-1996 volumen encuadernado de "La Espada y El Cayado" (en español); □ 1997-1998; □ 1999-2000; □ 2001-2002; □ 2003-2004

THE LAST TWO YEARS OF THE SWORD
AND STAFF NOW READY IN
BOOK FORM! (2009-2010)—
Order Today!



No charge. Just send a small contribution to help with the mailing expense.

The pages of this book are profusely filled with good Scriptural material drawn from the Bible, as its teachings are expounded. Here you will find a good source of spiritual material that will encourage and inspire. Here you have a handy study and reference source in more of a permanent form. Indexed. Great to make it part of your personal or church library. If you have the other bound volumes of years before, you will want to add this one to your set while we have a good supply of them available.—Editor

Get Them While You Can...

ONE MORE ADDED TO BOUND VOLUMES
THAT ARE AVAILABLE—Order Now!

BOUND VOLUMES are available going back through 1993, eighteen years in all (including the new one above). Now would be a good time to get them with the new one (while we have a supply). There is no charge for these bound volumes, as such. All that we ask is that a small contribution be made to help with the expense of mailing. We are no commercial endeavor. Our primary concern is getting out the truth of God's Word (and keeping our bills paid as we do this). These are back issues of The Sword and Staff that have been put together in book form with an index. Herein you will find good solid Bible material that is timeless and timely; a source of inspiration, studies, sermons; and a great source for church bulletins. Many new subscribers take advantage of getting these back volumes to catch up with reading they had missed theretofore. Detailed information about ordering is seen elsewhere on this page, as well as other printed materials that are available. Let us hear from you.—Editor

(CLIP and MAIL or WRITE)

Gentlemen:

Enclosed find my contribution. Please put me on the mailing list of The Sword and Staff. ☐ New ☐ Renew

Name:

Address (with zip):

(Check for bound volumes of The Sword and Staff)

☐ 1993-1994 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 1995-1996 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 1997-1998 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 1999-2000 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 2001-2002 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 2003-2004 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 2005-2006 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 2007-2008 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ 2009-2010 bound volume of The Sword and Staff

☐ Poems of The Soul and Proverbs—J.E. Gibbons

Church in Mount Airy
c/o The SWORD and STAFF
Post Office Box 147
Mt. Airy, NC 27030 USA
Telephone: (336) 789-1044

Non-Profit Organ.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Sugar Creek, OH 44681
Permit No. 44

To Addressee or Current Resident



Check to Order Booklets, Tracts, Etc.

Title	Number Wanted
➔ Our Great and Glorious God	
➔ Baptism for the Remission of Sins	
➔ Objections to the Necessity of Baptism Answered	
➔ EXCUSES ANSWERED	
➔ The Moving Impetus of Faith & Grounds of Our Assurance	
➔ After Baptism, What?	
➔ "Advice I Would Give a New Christian"	
➔ What Is the Meaning of the Expression to "Call Upon the Name of the Lord"?	
➔ What is the Meaning of John 4:24?	
➔ "The More Excellent Way"	
➔ The Subject of the Holy Spirit Made Simple, A Study	
➔ "Be Filled With the Spirit"	
➔ YOU, Your Insecurities and GOD	
➔ "Meditations on the 23rd Psalm"	
➔ The Model Prayer Examined and Expounded	
➔ The Meaning of Suffering in the Life of a Christian	
➔ "Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?"	
➔ Problems in Distinguishing the Spiritual in Reference to the Kingdom	
➔ "Strange Doctrine"	
➔ A Study in the Sanctity of Human Sexuality	
➔ "Random Thoughts and Suggestions on LOVE and MARRIAGE"	
➔ Rock-n-Roll Revisited	
➔ Is It Wrong for a Christian to Use Tobacco?	
➔ Every Sunday?	
➔ "Easter" Every Sunday	
➔ Christianity Without Denominations	
➔ What Do We Mean by "Udenominational" New Testament Christianity?	
➔ Principles Governing the Public Assembly of the Church	
➔ "HIS CHURCH IS MARCHING ON" (song with glue on back to place in back of hymn books)	

☐ NOBODY LEFT BEHIND: INSIGHT INTO "END-TIME" PROPHECIES by David Vaughn Elliott.—\$15.00