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The Lord's Business

“Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands” (1 Thes. 4: 11).

THERE IS A QUIETNESS that comes from indolence or passivity, a “laid-back” attitude that refuses to be too personally involved in the general turmoil of life or the needs of others. There is another quietness that comes from confidence — a composure characteristic of those at peace with God, with themselves, and as far as possible with all the circumstances of life.

Maintaining a quiet composure in today's world is far from easy. We are assailed on all sides by noisy clamor, the demands of others on our time and energy, the pressures of doing our own business honestly in conditions dominated by selfishness and moral laxity. It is not surprising if on occasions — blessed though we are by a vision that sees beyond the present time of trouble — we speak angry words and weep angry tears of frustration at the injustice of it all.

We are a spectacle

Make no mistake. As confessed ambassadors for Christ we are on show, and the world is an unjust judge. They judge us by *our own standards*, not by theirs. When our composure breaks down and we are seen as weak, or even caught in a fault, the charge is: “You're not supposed to do that! Don't you people reckon to set a good example to us folk?” And perhaps they feel an element of satisfaction in seeing that we are, after all, far from perfect. We are toppled from the pedestal on which they put us.

Such mortifying experiences come to all of us who are set apart to God's service, and we are in good company. We are not looking for the world's approval, or even that of family and friends, desirable as that may be, but are seeking to please and honor the Lord.

His business is our business

“Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done” (Ezra 7: 23). It was the heathen ruler Artaxerxes that exhorted the Jews to attend to the business of their God, and the principle is fitting for God's present-day servants. Let our Christian work and witness be diligent.

There is no place for half-heartedness in the Lord's business, and He rejects the lukewarm attitude that leaves it all for somebody else to do.

Most Christian congregations have in their midst some who pay merely lip-service and avoid any real commitment. They persuade themselves that so long as they attend meetings, fellowship with Christians, give mental assent to the general teachings, and observe the basic ethical requirements, all is well. Their complacency as “passengers” only will not guarantee them a “Well done” in God's judgment.

The quiet satisfaction that comes from diligently doing the Lord's business is gained at the cost of much physical, mental, and nervous energy. We are His witnesses, and there is a world out there waiting for salvation, needing the Gospel message to show them the way. There is a famine for the Word of God, and He has employed us as workers to meet the needs of the hungry.

How shall we do that?

There was a time when the Lord said to Moses, “What is that in thine hand?” In other words, what can you offer? What are your natural abilities? These are immediately at hand and can be used to His glory. We may have time available; we may have influence, knowledge, money, training, experience, a hearing ear for the troubled, a capacity to comfort others — all qualities that can be used in the service of our Divine employer.

When Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” he responded: “Here am I, send me” (Isa. 6: 8), and there followed a lifetime of diligent labor for the Lord.

So it is incumbent upon us to work with whatever we have, in any department of the Divine service He sees fitting for us, in whatever place, at whatever cost, that we might share in the yet greater work of bringing blessings to all families of the earth in the age to come. What better reward could there be?

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All Scripture references are to the King James Version, unless otherwise stated.

“Lift up a standard for the people” — Isa. 62: 10 Contents — April 2004

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MAN OF SORROWS — KING EVER GLORIOUS

“HE IS DESPISED AND REJECTED of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him” (Isa. 53: 3). Surely these are among the bitterest of words describing the sufferings of the world’s Savior!

Sorrow! Grief! Wounded for *our* sins, punished for *our* wrong-doing, chastised that *we* might have peace, oppressed and afflicted, He took upon Himself our guilt, and made no complaint. His time had come. Jesus was well aware beforehand of the crushing demands of these last days. The disciples still had no real intimation of the dark events now impending, though He told them: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Even as He prayed His heart-cry to the Father: “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me” (Matt. 26: 38, 39).

Could it be the ordeal of bodily suffering that our Lord so greatly dreaded? Were the sensibilities of a perfect man so finely tuned that He would feel infinitely more keenly the physical abuse to be inflicted, than would one hardened by generations of inherited resilience? Or was it the appalling indignity of criminal accusation, the mockery, the grotesque charge of blasphemy, the shame of execution as a public spectacle?

For the joy set before Him

Our Lord was fully informed beforehand as to the nature of His death. He who had been active at the dawn of creation, before even the earth existed, who saw its foundations laid and rejoiced with all the heavenly host, had witnessed also the tragic fall into sin of earth’s inhabitants. It was as the Word (Greek *Logos*), acting for the Almighty, the Creator, that He would have conveyed the prophetic message to Isaiah which told of a “man of sorrows” who would die for the world. It was as the Word made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, that He knew Himself to be that Man.

Such breadth of vision, such enlightenment as to the Divine purpose, must have sustained Him through those dark hours. The Apostle Paul recognized this when he wrote:

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds” (Heb. 12: 2, 3).

It cannot be doubted that the peculiar death of shame and ignominy, the public scorn and contempt as a criminal, added greatly to the Lord’s anguish. But there was doubtless a further crucial concern — for those He left behind.

“I pray for them ... which thou has given me”

While He was with them, they had kept faith. They had gladly received the tidings of salvation and accepted their share of the world’s abuse and rejection. They had forsaken all to follow Him they believed to be Israel’s promised Messiah. But when the Shepherd was taken, would the flock be scattered?

In spite of the Lord’s plain speaking as that day drew ever nearer, it seemed they had not fully comprehended His words. As the solemn feast began, He had confided the depth of His own emotion on this last occasion: “With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22: 15). And at the close of the discourse that followed the meal, Jesus prayed earnestly and at great length for those dear ones given to Him by the Father, that they might be kept from evil, sanctified, and in due time glorified with Him (John 17).

Stirred in their souls they must have been in the confines of that upper room where historic events were in the making, and perhaps also subdued by a rare sense of coming doom, somewhat dispersed as they emerged into the night and made their way to the Mount of Olives.

“Tarry here and watch with me”

But so little alert were His companions to the real danger facing their Master that very night, that they could sleep soundly as He endured His Gethsemane agonies. A mild reproach to Peter was justified: “What, could ye not watch with me one hour?” (Matt. 26: 40). But their eyes were heavy, and when He returned He found them asleep again.

Would they prove to be men of courage and continue the work He had begun? How would they react to His arrest and humiliation, His death and the manner of it? Were they men of sufficient stamina and resolve to lay down life itself for the Gospel’s sake, that a perishing world might have knowledge of the way to life? Alas! Soon most would forsake him and flee for their lives. One would deny all knowledge of Him. He might have taken comfort during His dying moments from the presence of loving and loyal disciples to witness His sacrifice completed. But they were not there. The Scriptures record that only John and some of the women were present, and it seemed that the Father had poured for Him a cup of bitterness, and put Him to grief.

It pleased the Lord to bruise him

How could this be? Surely the Heavenly Father could not look upon the harrowing scenes of our Lord’s trial and crucifixion, and find it pleasing? The suffering Savior was His well-beloved Son — on earth in human form, even as in former time, before the foundations of the earth were laid. As the Scripture testified: “I was by him, . . . and I was daily



his delight” (Prov. 8: 30). There personified as wisdom, the Son of God was secure in the Father’s love.

But now on earth, abased in the eyes of men, viewed from the Divine standpoint the utter loyalty and selfless sacrifice of Jesus for the rescue of a dying world *rejoiced the Father’s heart!* To bruise Him, to allow Him a profound experience with pain and sorrow, was a preparation for the Savior’s great future work of reconciling the world to God (2 Cor. 5: 19). And touched as Jesus was with a feeling of fallen mankind’s infirmities, He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him (Heb. 7: 25).

Yes — it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief, *because the glorious outcome was in sight.*

THE DIVINE LOGIC

What was this glorious outcome? In the broadest sense, it was — and is — no less than life from the dead.

- Jesus Himself did not remain dead, but was raised to the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1: 3).
- His disciples — those faithful members of the Church which is His Body — have an inheritance reserved in heaven (Eph. 1: 22, 23; 1 Pet. 1: 4).
- The whole world of mankind are to be released from the sentence of death, to an opportunity of everlasting life on earth (1 Cor. 15: 21, 22).

We see the Divine Wisdom which devised a means whereby good might triumph over evil. We see the Almighty Power that set in motion the features of His Plan of Salvation. We see His sublime Love in parting for a while with the One who was daily His delight, His only begotten Son, to die for the sins of the world. Well might we sing: *“Happy the man who learns to trace the leadings of Jehovah’s grace!”*

But what happens to Justice?

In His anger at the disobedience of our first parents, did the Almighty too hastily pass on them the sentence of death, so that henceforth they and their offspring must never know life in its fullness? And did He later regret that early severity and concede that all earth’s millions in the prison-house of death were captives of an “unsafe conviction”?

Was our Lord Jesus therefore sent to preach deliverance to these captives, to heal, to uplift and to counsel a traumatized people? Could Divine Love in the face of Jesus Christ repair the breach between man and his Creator, and lift the human race out of degradation, into newness of life?

It could — *but not without the full satisfaction of justice.* God is too wise to err. His Justice is unblemished, His righteous judgment infallible. “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1: 13). God sees the smallest deflection in our hearts, and His character is so holy that He cannot view our sins with any degree of indulgence. To *pardon* Adam would have been to make Him untrue to His fundamental attribute of Justice.

How, then, can Justice be satisfied?

“There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.” How often Christians have sung these words, not fully comprehending the Divine logic that required such a payment to be credited to the account of Justice. Jesus paid that price, and now we sing:

*“Naught of merit or of price remains to justice due;
Jesus died and paid it all — yes, all that I did owe.”*

The Apostle Paul reminds us that we are bought with a price and exhorts us to glorify God by using our body and mind in His service (1 Cor. 6: 20). Peter also refers to this purchase when warning the church against false teachers who would arise, “denying the Lord that bought them” (2 Pet. 2: 1).

There is in this terminology the indication of a legally valid commercial transaction, conducted on a grand scale. The Gospel message inviting all to come to Jesus of their own free will, and offering a liberty that cannot be found anywhere else, does not make null and void the requirements of Divine Justice. *There is a price to be paid.*

The Transaction

The Scriptures use several terms that are in business or other common usage in our own day, to illustrate the practical application of this concept. Considered briefly, they are:

• **Bought** (Greek *agorazo*). The literal meaning is that of a purchase in the market place. Something is paid, something is received. An exchange is agreed and put into effect. In 1 Cor. 6: 20 Paul reminds the Corinthian brethren that they are *bought* and belong to Christ.

• **Purchased**. The Apostle in Eph. 1: 14 refers to the pledge or guarantee given to the Lord’s people who were “sealed with the holy Spirit of promise” until the redemption of “the purchased possession” — evidently a wider transaction entered into but not yet fully completed.

• **Sold**. Paul’s doctrinal discussion in his letter to the Roman brethren underlines the serious condition of those under the condemnation of the perfect Law of God. Referring to his own weakness, he speaks with great feeling for all of us who are “*sold under sin*,” subject to its demands, and receiving its inevitable wages (Rom. 7: 14; 6: 23).

• **Redeemed** (Greek *exagorazo*). To redeem means “to make up for, to restore the honor, worth, or reputation of; the recovery of something pawned or mortgaged, or the payment of an obligation” (*American Heritage Dictionary*). Another definition is “to recover possession or ownership by payment of a price; to reinstate; to restore to favor; to make amends for; to recover from captivity, especially by a money payment” (*Collins English Dictionary*). The

root meaning in the Greek again has the thought of a market-place transaction. Thus “God will redeem my soul (recover me) from the power of the grave” (Psalm 49: 15), and “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law” (Gal. 3: 13).

• **Ransom.** This is defined as “the release of ... a person in return for payment of a demanded price; the price demanded or paid for such release; redemption from sin” (*American Heritage Dictionary*). The original Greek (*antilutron*) has the thought of a corresponding price for something or someone released. Thus the Apostle states in 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6).

God’s Business Dealings

It is not irreverent to speak in such terms. Though indeed we can all echo the Apostle’s words in Rom. 11: 33: “How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” — yet we must, like Jesus in his youth, be about our Father’s business and play our particular part in His plan. In the temple at 12 years of age with the doctors of the law, Jesus was occupied in searching out answers to his questions, very likely at that time desiring information as to his own future course in life and seeking guidance as to the Heavenly Father’s will.

It is true that “the secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us . . . that we may do all the words of this law” (Deut. 29: 29). And again, we have the assurance that “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] him; and he will shew them his covenant” (Psa. 25: 14).

How gracious is our still unsearchable God, *to come down to our level* — to express the details of His business plans in terms that are familiar and understandable to the honest human mind! “Come, let us reason together — you ask how I could release a condemned human race from the captivity of the grave, those justly sentenced to death on account of sin, yet without violating that absolute justice which is the foundation of my throne? I will show you!”

Who was sentenced to death?

We are left in no doubt — it was father Adam. Created perfect and placed in an environment conducive to life, health, and eternal welfare, God required of him simple obedience to ensure his continuance in this happy condition. Sadly, Adam failed the test. The consequences of disobedience were clearly stated: “Thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2: 17). The emphatic warning is evident in the Hebrew: “*Dying* thou shalt die.”

God did not violate His impeccable justice by commuting the death sentence to life-imprisonment in some place

***I am God, and there is none like me,
declaring the end from the beginning,
and from ancient times the things
that are not yet done, saying, My
counsel shall stand, and I will do all
my pleasure.***

— Isaiah 46: 9, 10 —

of torment, but He kept His word. Adam *died* — not in that 24-hour day that he sinned, but *from that day he was dying*. Dying is a process that erodes the physical and mental vitality of its victims, until the full death state is reached. There is no separate “soul” that goes on living. The soul is the person, the organism in which is the breath of life, and when the life is withdrawn, consciousness is no more, and the grave is the resting place of all until God in His great mercy puts His redemptive plan into action.

THE REDEMPTIVE PLAN

We should not think that the Creator was taken by surprise when the perfect man and woman, formed in His own image, fell from grace. This would imply that God’s Plan of redemption was in the nature of an emergency measure, devised to meet some unforeseen circumstance. God is never taken unawares, but knows the end from the beginning.

In His great wisdom He saw that a centuries-long experience with evil, sin, and death, would ultimately prove to be for the human family the most powerful lesson we could learn. Alienated from God, oppressed and duped by the Adversary who had incited the first rebellion, mankind found themselves increasingly in bondage, slaves to evil influences, unable to buy their own freedom — or another’s, proving the truth of the Psalmist’s declaration that “None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him” (Psa. 49: 7).

That a *redeemer* was needed, one who could pay a *ransom* price, was dimly seen by godly men and women whose faith brought them some kind of standing with God, and who went to the grave in hope of a resurrection to everlasting life, when that price would have been paid, and justice satisfied.

The payment

In Roman times slaves could become freedmen or freedwomen, being granted manumission by their owners, often attested by a temple ceremony and the payment into the treasury of a sum of money. The slave was regarded thereafter as belonging to the temple god. In medieval England an act of manumission was legalized in a county court and granted for a money payment or as a reward for services rendered. Used also in connection with the freeing of slaves in America, the word manumission has the thought of sending from the hand (Latin *manu mittere*).

**Since by man came death, by man
came also the resurrection of the dead.
For as in Adam all die, even so in
Christ shall all be made alive.**

— 1 Corinthians 15: 21, 22 —

This idea would be familiar to those who heard the Apostle Paul's exhortation: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5: 1). Thus we see that those of the Jewish nation who became Christ's followers were the first to be redeemed — bought back, freed from sin's condemnation, and released also from the bondage of the Mosaic Law. Paul had need to guard the new liberty in Christ and challenge some who insisted that the observance of the Law was still necessary to salvation, even requiring that Gentiles accepting Christ must come under that Law. But the Apostle was clear that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10: 4).

Since the Gospel was first preached, millions of men and women have received their freedom in Christ, and being faithful have entered into their heavenly inheritance. Their taking up the cross and sharing His sufferings in order to share His glory is another feature of the Plan of Salvation, reserved for another study. But these were bought, redeemed, ransomed from the power of the grave (Hos. 13: 14).

At what price?

The heavenly choir in Revelation sings to the glorified Christ: "Thou has redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev. 5: 9), reminding us of Jesus' own words at the last supper: "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26: 28).

The world's redemption cost the Savior His own human life. He made His soul an offering for sin, He poured out His soul unto death (Isa. 53: 10, 12). He provided the *ransom price*.

Was it enough?

We are familiar with the concept of a ransom demand, made when a hostage is taken, often with a threat of dire consequences if payment is not forthcoming. The Bible ransom was not a "demand with menaces." While it was Divine Justice that condemned, it was Divine love that found a way to meet the needs of the human race, hostages to Satan, to sin, and to death by their own default. God so loved the world that He provided exactly what was necessary for their release.

And what was necessary? *One perfect human life* was the price that would free the captive world and make it possible to restore harmony between the Creator and His human

creatures. *One* — to die for *all*? Yes indeed! "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom. 5: 18). "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15: 22).

Put simply, when Adam fell from Divine favor he had an unborn race within him, all of whom inherited his *dying* life. Likewise, Jesus as a perfect man could have (theoretically) fathered a race of perfect beings, and was therefore an exact equivalent of Adam before his defection. What Jesus offered was an acceptable sacrifice of His own life, a ransom. And it was enough.

What this means for the world

It means *life!* — not the brief, suffering existence common to all since Paradise was lost, but life abundant! Notwithstanding the suppositions of evolutionists, the Bible is clear that we are all children of Adam — and we die. As children of Christ, "the everlasting Father" (Isa. 9: 6) — or the Father who gives everlasting life — the world in due time will see in themselves the evidence of the redemptive process. As Jesus Himself said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10: 10).

The implications of this visionary concept are enormous and varied. Questions naturally arise as to the practical outworking of such a plan, and while many of its details are as yet unrevealed, we do have abundant Scripture testimony as to its reality. The reading of Isaiah 35 paints a mental picture of the welcome back to perfection of a sad and oppressed human race — "the ransomed of the Lord" — a vision indeed of healing and gladness and everlasting joy.

So what did our Lord Jesus purchase?

What did He redeem, or buy back?

- We have seen that believers — the true Church — were the first to be redeemed, the first to benefit from Christ's sacrifice. They were fully aware that they were saved, and are now entered into everlasting life *in heaven*. But what of the rest of humanity?
- He redeemed *every one of us*. He tasted death for every man (Heb. 2: 9) and all are to be restored to the life that was lost in Adam, even those in the grave, the death state (John 5: 28, 29) — not to a further condemnation, but to a judgment process — a period of instruction and uplift during Christ's reign on earth, enabling them to compare the new *good* with the old *evil*, and learn to love the good. Speaking prophetically of the Kingdom of Christ, the Psalmist says: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [nations] for thine inheritance" (Psa. 2: 8).
- It is evident from what Isaiah 35 says that the blessing of earth itself, our planet, is also in

prospect, and perhaps the Apostle had this partly in mind when he spoke of the redemption of the “purchased possession” in Eph. 1: 14. We see the necessity of this feature of the transaction when we recall the words of the Lord God to Adam: “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life” (Gen. 3: 17).

- Christ also gained earthly *life-rights* for Adam and his posterity: a perfect environment, perfect food, all conditions conducive to health and vitality; dominion over the earth and its lower creatures; perfect security, and above all, restored fellowship with the Creator.

Love had its way, and Justice was satisfied.

MAN OF SORROWS

At this Passiontide season it seems that the thoughts of even the unconcerned world are drawn to the suffering of the Savior. He once prophesied that “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12: 32). True enough, many who do not enter the church from one year to another, feel an impulse to pay their respects on this occasion.

In some cases this may be a requirement for continued “membership,” or even considered by some as a kind of insurance policy against future disaster. Yet the events of that first “Good Friday” — even in this degraded, materialistic, and selfish world, still have the power to touch the hearts of men and women everywhere, and for a short hour or so, bring them to mourn the death of God’s dear Son who might somehow, *somehow*, bring life to a dying world.

Even the hardened and cynical can in some paradoxical fashion be touched with a feeling of *His* infirmities, knowing instinctively that He did not deserve such abuse. And it may be that the grievous bodily sufferings and mental anguish of the Lord Jesus on the cross will be a significant drawing influence in the age to come. Where the heart sympathies are aroused, the mind is the better prepared to listen and to learn.

The empty tomb

Accepting the reasonableness of the Divine redemption arrangement, and agreeing that father Adam and his progeny could only be released from death if another perfect man paid his debt and took his sentence, one might ask — how could Jesus Himself *live again*? Would that not be to take back the price He had paid, making null and void the whole transaction?

Not so! Though Christ is indeed risen from the dead, He is no longer a man. The perfect humanity that was paid as our ransom is sacrificed for ever. In His resurrection Christ is a partaker of the Divine nature — a spirit raised to the right hand of the Majesty on high, made higher than all the angels (1 Cor. 15: 45; Heb. 1: 3, 4).

We are not told what happened to the crucified body of the man Jesus. The Divine purpose was evidently to

remove it from the scene of His final suffering, and this fulfilled the prophetic words of David: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Psa. 16: 10). And it seems fitting that so precious a gift as the broken body of the Lord Jesus should be removed forever from all further abuse by evildoers.

KING EVER GLORIOUS

Now He is Christ the King! Even before His birth, He was destined for kingship: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1: 32).

At times during His earthly ministry the people wanted to make Jesus a king (John 6: 15; Luke 19: 38). But His real kingly role was still future and He eluded their premature fancies. Questioned by Pilate as to His supposed kingly status, Jesus did not directly refute the idea, but intimated that His Kingdom was not of the present order or arrangement (John 18: 33–37). For the time being, His crown was of thorns. But one of the thieves crucified that day recognized Jesus’ kingship and asked: “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom” (Luke 23: 42).

Earth’s coming reign of peace

Men seem to desire a king or other strong leader in whom to put their trust, whose authority is unquestioned and who is able to bind a people together for the security and welfare of human society. Few of earth’s kings have maintained peace and prosperity for more than a few short years, and the permitted experiment in self-rule has been a dismal failure. The lesson had to be learned. That is why the kingdoms of this world are to become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ. Though earth’s rulers may take counsel together — in reality against the Lord and his anointed, they are to be dashed to pieces, and we see their breakdown accelerating in this present time of trouble (Rev. 11: 15; Psa. 2: 2, 9; Matt. 24: 21).

“Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness” (Isa. 32: 1). “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: . . . Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God . . . hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Heb. 1: 8, 9).

*Beyond the Passion of the
Man of Sorrows,
the King of Glory
sees the travail
of His soul,
and is satisfied.*

The Desire of All Nations

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts”
— Haggai 2: 6, 7 —

HERE IS THE GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL — grace and comfort to the world, the granting of the heart’s desire of men and women everywhere.

Not that many actually *know* what it is they desire so much. Rather, like fretful children bored with their amusements, they try one diversion after another and find no real satisfaction in anything. Realizing the worthlessness of what they presently see on offer, some drown their sorrows in drink or drugs, some grow cynical, and quite a few grin and bear it. Often God is blamed. To many He is the absentee Father they hardly know, and are apt to resent.

But the great promise conveyed by Haggai is signed at both ends with the signature of the Sovereign of the universe, the Lord of hosts. *It cannot fail!*

Natural Israel’s Desire — the Glory of their Nation

With the other writings of God’s servants of Old Testament times, this prophecy was held as sacred and was reverently read — but was little understood. Not until the holy spirit was given as a comforter, a guide into all truth and a revealer of things to come, was the precious meaning of this promise made clear to the saints, the Gospel Church, through the ministry of the Apostles.

Israel may have seen in this declaration an intimation that their nation would in time be exalted, and all other nations would be subservient to them. But centuries rolled on; the Persian empire fell, and Israel’s glory still tarried. They merely passed from under the dominion of Persia to that of Greece, and then to that of Rome.

In due time one came to them, named in Mal. 3: 1 as “the messenger of the covenant”— in whom they *should have* delighted, His mission being to put in motion the processes which would eventually meet the undefined longings of all people, giving them, in truth, their heart’s desire.

But sadly, about 70 years after their national rejection of the Messenger sent by the Lord of hosts, the people of Israel were driven out of their land of promise, and were scattered world-wide.

What then? Has God’s Promise Failed?

No! The Apostle Paul, under the leading of the holy spirit, calls it to mind again and shows that the house to be filled with glory is not the earthly kingdom of Israel, but the spiritual house or kingdom of God — the Gospel church.

Natural Israel could have become that spiritual house, and to them the Messenger was sent. Many true Israelites did indeed recognize Him, and faithful Simeon saw even in Jesus the babe, “a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke 2: 32).

The Great Shaking is Upon Us

The shaking mentioned in this text presupposes an earlier shaking, which Paul shows to be the earthquake associated with the giving of the Law at Sinai, the inauguration of that Law Covenant which was to serve as a school-master to bring them to Christ (Gal. 3: 24).

But this last shaking is to be far greater than Israel ever experienced. “Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven” (Heb. 12: 26-28). The Apostle under the holy spirit’s enlightenment sees the shaken earth as symbolizing organized society, at present based on fear and mistrust, on selfishness, greed, error, and confusion, being overturned in a mighty cataclysm.

Who in our day can doubt that the great shaking is affecting not only the “powers that be,” but also each one of us? In this unprecedented world-wide time of trouble the convulsions are exposing and dislodging all that is unstable, transitory, and imperfect. The kingdoms of this world, losing their traditional stranglehold on the people, impose more and more controls and restrictions, intended to salvage what remains of their power, but to no avail. The forces of terror now at work are neither clearly defined nor easily defeated, but they are *active*, and by the Lord’s permission may well be a part of earth’s great cleansing process.

Can the Heavens be Shaken?

Yes indeed! — not God’s dwelling place, but the *symbolic* heavens, the powers of spiritual control in the world’s great ecclesiastical systems are being shaken to the core. Daily exposures of gross corruption and hypocrisy in high places have shocked and disturbed the fragile faith of many. Church leaders are seen to overrule the Word of God and dismiss Bible teaching as no longer relevant. In the shaking of the “heavens” their former positions of power and influence are eroded or lost, and shame is their reward.

A Fresh Start

The refuse swept away, the storm damage repaired, and the earnest expectation of all creation at last realized, God’s glory will be clearly revealed in Christ and the true Church — the *new heavens* where righteousness prevails. The new earth, human society restored, will reflect the light and perfection of the heavens, and all people, beginning with Israel, who first received the Divine promise, will at last achieve their heart’s desire. They will all *know* their Father and delight in the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8: 19-21; 11: 26-29; 2 Pet. 3: 13).

* * *

THE MAIL BOX

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

Just a short note about our *Bible Standards*. They have all been beautiful, but this January one is just precious. I've left it on our coffee table for a good while. I'm tempted to frame it and put it up.

Thank you for the beauty on all the papers and the wonderful messages.

Love, R. M., Oklahoma, U.S.A.

Dear Friends at *Bible Standard*:

I've enjoyed *The Bible Standard* for two whole years now, and I have to say, it gets better with each issue. It's very informative and resourceful for helping one grow in the Lord with the Word of God. February's issue is just

outstanding in the Q&A section, and "The Courage Of Conviction" column; they touched my heart and spirit as God was using you to talk to me concerning some areas in my life. Thank you so much for the work in the Lord you do for His children to be educated in the Word of God. God bless you and your staff.

In His Service,

R. B., Florida, U.S.A.

P.S. My friend, I've enjoyed equally the *Studies in the Scriptures* you've been sending me — I've just finished Number 5 and reading number 6 in Jesus' name! Amen. Thank you for everything!

* * *

APPOINTMENT OF NEW GENERAL EDITOR

On March 12 of this year Ralph M. Herzig was elected as Executive Trustee and Director of the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement, the publishers of *The Bible Standard*. With this position Bro. Herzig also assumes the office of General Editor of this magazine, our sister magazine, *The Present Truth*, and our publications in general. He succeeds Bernard W. Hedman, who died on January 30 of this year. Expanded coverage of Bro. Herzig's election will appear in the next issue of *The Present Truth*.

of interest . . .

In an attempt to reverse the decline in recent decades of their numbers and increase growth, America's traditional mainstream denominations have come up with some new ways in which to attract new parishioners. Millions of dollars are being spent on television advertisements with the hopes of appealing to the masses by presenting Christianity in a new more modern light. A technique once regarded as distasteful self-promotion has become necessary to save aging buildings, costly pension plans, and the increasingly rare work of missionaries. In March, for the first time commercials for the United Church of Christ (UCC) began airing in six areas from Sarasota, Florida, to Oklahoma City in an effort to attract worship attendance before Easter. Also, the Unitarian Universalist Association began a national campaign to buy broadcast time for their "Uncommon Denomination" advertisements, first tested in Kansas City last year. This summer the United Methodist Church will hear proposals for expanding what has been a four-year, \$18 million campaign to replenish dwindling congregations.

For church marketers, television promotions have been the missing link between congregations with much to offer and individuals in search of a place where they feel welcome. Yet for scholars of church trends, the dawn of mass marketing suggests that quest for church unity has given way to an ethic of survival of the fittest. The numbers paint a picture of 40 years wandering in the wilderness of empty pews. Membership in the UCC, for instance, has dropped every year since 1965, from 2.1 million then to 1.3 million today. Methodists, known for heartfelt discipleship and care for the needy, can barely field a team of missionaries, whose ranks have thinned from 2,000 before 1950 to just 93 in 2004. Unitarians have seen what they term "modest" membership growth at one percent per year for the past decade. Methodists report a 6 percent increase in worship attendance where ads have run during high seasons for newcomers: Lent, Advent, and back-to-school time. Some in the church harbor hopes for the "open hearts, open minds, open doors" message to steer viewers toward a better way of life.

Despite ever-slimming budgets, each of these three denominations hired professionals to market their denomination, through group research and slogan-writing to strike a chord with the public. The religious body would be sold to the masses just like any other product except in one regard: This product would have to overcome a bigger than usual "image" problem.

— *Christian Science Monitor*



“JUST” AND “UNJUST” RESURRECTED?

Q Acts 24: 15 reads: “And they have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” How should we understand that both the “just” and the “unjust” are to be resurrected?

A The literal rendering of the last clause of Acts 24: 15 reads: “There shall be a resurrection both of just and unjust ones.” The article *the* is lacking before the Greek words translated “just” and “unjust.”

The word *resurrection* is the translation of the Greek word *anastasis* which means a full, complete raising up out of death conditions into perfection of life conditions.

How do we harmonize our text with other Scriptures which declare that only the *justified* would attain perfection of life? Examples include John 3: 36: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Another one is Acts 3: 23: “And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”

We answer, the Apostle is not declaring that all the *just* and *unjust* ones will be made perfect. He is referring to the *just* and *unjust* ones at the present time. The *just* are those who are “justified by faith,” and if they prove faithful to the conditions of their call, will have part in the resurrection of the *just*. The *unjust* are the unbelievers, whom the Apostle explains believe not because the god (Satan) of this world has blinded their minds (2 Cor. 4: 4).

The Resurrection of the Just

Those who have pleased God by exercising faith and consecrating to Him, and who obey the leadings of His Word, spirit, and providences are approved by Him, whether they have lived during the Gospel Age or one of the earlier faith Ages. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, and others less prominent — some of whom are mentioned in Heb. 11 — died in faith. God declares that they shall receive “a better resurrection,” and that He was pleased with their faith (Heb. 11: 35, 39). Their resurrection will mean their being awakened as perfect human

beings, whereas the world will need many of the Millennial Age years to attain human perfection.

During the Gospel Age, God has been developing individuals of different faith classes, some of whom will come forth on the human plane, others on the spirit plane, and still others on the highest spirit plane — the Divine nature.

The Resurrection of the Unjust

The other general group, those whom God cannot approve at present, are the unjustified. Many of them have been respectable, moral people, but, lacking faith, are not worthy of the “resurrection of the just.” The death of Jesus will effect their release from the condemnation of Father Adam. They will be resuscitated from *hades*, the grave, the death state, but their awakening is only the beginning of their resurrection — their *re-standing* to perfect life. Some of them will be awakened only to die again later because of their failure to accept God’s terms of blessing.

The Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ and the Church is set aside for the resurrection of the world. The work of that Age will be to open the blind eyes, unstop the deaf ears, and spread the knowledge of the Lord over the whole earth (Isa. 35: 5; 11: 9). The resurrection process will span the Millennial Age, until *all* will be given an *opportunity* to gain everything that was lost by Adam. By its close, the resurrection of the obedient will be an accomplished fact. The only exceptions are those who by personal and wilful rejection of God and His merciful salvation through Christ refuse its gracious provisions. Those alone will be consigned to the Second Death, and will have only themselves to blame (Jer. 31: 29, 30). We expect this number to be a very small minority.

SAME BODIES IN THE RESURRECTION?

Q In the resurrection, will we have the same bodies in which we died?

A It is the *soul* that dies, and it is the *soul* that will come back in the resurrection awakening. God said to Adam in Eden, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2: 17). It was *Adam*, the *soul* or person and not merely his body that died (see

our booklet *What is the Soul?* — a copy free on request). “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18: 4, 20). See also Psa. 78: 50; Acts 3: 23; and James 5: 20. Jesus made “his soul an offering for sin” and “poured out his soul unto death” (Isa. 53: 10, 12). He laid down His human life as a ransom for Adam and his race (1 Tim. 2: 6).

In the resurrection, the dead *souls*, not the dead *bodies*, will be aroused from the sleep of death. “That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be . . . but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body” — the kind of body pertaining to his nature, whether spiritual or human; for there are “celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial” (1 Cor. 15: 37, 38, 40).

Spirit and Human Bodies

Celestial, or spirit bodies, are for the Church. Human bodies would be unsuitable for heavenly conditions (1 Cor. 15: 50). The rest of mankind, not having been begotten of God’s holy spirit nor having become New Creatures, will after the awakening receive human bodies that may eventually be made perfect and suited to their everlasting existence in the “new earth” (2 Pet. 3: 13; Rev. 21: 1).

1 Cor. 15: 35-37 reads, “But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.” These verses show that the bodies laid away in burial do not come back again. Paul uses as an illustration the fact that grains of wheat that are sown do not return, but rather, that new grains are produced. By analogy, the bodies which are buried do not come back in the resurrection.

“THY DEAD MEN” AND “MY DEAD BODY”

Q The first part of Isa. 26: 19 reads: “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.” Who are referred to in this verse by “Thy dead men” and “my dead body”?

A Isa. 26: 19 has been used to prove that the same bodies which are laid away in the grave will come forth in the resurrection. Upon closer examination, we discover several problems with this interpretation when based upon the *King James Version*. In an effort to clarify the meaning, translators at times added words into the text without any correspondency in the original text. They would then indicate the added words by *italics*. The added words “together with” in our text seem to lend credence to the false interpretation. Also, the Hebrew word translated as “body” has no plural form, but in other places, the same

The resurrection for the world has two parts:
(1) awakening the dead from
the death state, and
(2) lifting the awakened ones from their
Adamic imperfection, back to the perfection
which Adam enjoyed before his
disobedience.

Hebrew word is translated in the plural. An example is the word “carcasses” in Isa. 5: 25.

The American and English Revised versions, Moulton, Leeser, the Jewish Publication Society and others render the verse as follows: “Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise.”

Two Parts to Resurrection

The resurrection for the world has two parts: (1) awakening the dead from the death state, and (2) lifting the awakened ones from their Adamic imperfection, back to the perfection which Adam enjoyed before his disobedience. This process will require the entire Millennium to complete for mankind (see our publication *Life-Death-Hereafter*, pp. 171-183).

These same two things are taught in Isa. 26: 19:

- The first clause, “Thy dead shall live,” refers to the *awakening* of the dead.
- The second clause, “My dead bodies shall arise,” refers to the *re-standing from Adamic imperfection to perfection*.

The expression, “dead bodies,” does not refer to these as actually being in the death state, but as dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2: 1, 5), for God regards everyone out of Christ and short of perfection as *dead* (2 Cor. 5: 14). The reason for the use of the word, *my*, in the clause, “my dead bodies,” is that Christ — the speaker in this verse — by virtue of His ransoming and purchasing them will be their Owner and Lord, hence can properly claim them (Rom. 14: 9). Viewing this passage accordingly, we see that it does not refer to the identical bodies that were buried as being raised again but to the two parts of the resurrection process: (1) the awakening of the dead, and (2) their restoration to Adamic perfection.

* * *

Servants of God and Man

The fourth in a series of articles on godly men and women from around the world, whose lives have shaped the cultures in which we live.

John Greenleaf Whittier

(1807–1892)

*O Brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother!
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.*

SUCH SENTIMENTS AS THESE epitomize the life and example of this well-loved American poet, hymn writer, and political campaigner for the anti-slavery cause.

Born to a farming family at East Haverhill, Massachusetts, and raised in the Quaker faith, Whittier had only a basic education, but was an avid reader. Though not a robust lad, he was expected to take his share in the daily labors of a not-very-profitable farm. His familiarity with the sights and sounds of nature and his deep love for God's creation is revealed in the affectionate warmth of his ballads, poetry, and works of prose.

It was after being introduced at 14 years of age to the works of the Scottish poet Robert Burns that young John discovered in himself a "way with words." In later life he recalled his youthful leanings toward a literary career, and told how, in spite of the genuine misgivings of his father, he worked his way through two years' schooling at Haverhill Academy, supporting himself as a shoemaker and school-teacher. In 1826 his first poem, *The Exile's Departure*, appeared in the Newburyport *Free Press*, edited by the abolitionist W.L. Garrison, who became a lifelong friend. From that time, Whittier contributed many poems, sketches, and articles to various newspapers, and edited some important journals supporting the anti-slavery movement.

The Fiery Politician

Regarded by many as the gentle poet whose profound reflections on country life and whose vivid word-pictures of a now bygone age still have great appeal to the English-speaking world, the fiery politician within him is often forgotten.

Whittier declared himself an abolitionist in his 1833 pamphlet, *Justice and Expediency*, and attended the unpopular anti-slavery convention. In 1834 he served a term as a Whig in the Massachusetts Legislature, was mobbed and stoned the following year in Concord, New Hampshire, and was on other occasions threatened with personal violence. During his tenure as editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, a journal of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the paper's offices were burned to the ground during a mob attack, but Whittier continued there until his health failed and he returned to Massachusetts to live with his mother and sister, who settled at Amesbury since the death of John's father.

The Quaker Influence

Whittier's shrewd mind and resolute character might have carried him far as a politician, but his abolitionist stand ran counter to any such ambitions. The stern, stoical upbringing typical of the Quaker way of life endowed him with an unswerving constancy to good principles, and he became a lifelong defender of the oppressed. While deeply interested in questions that concerned the welfare and honor of the nation, Whittier generally declined invitations to public office, having no ambition for worldly acclaim.

Poor health afflicted him all his life. In an autobiographical letter to a friend he said he had inherited a nervous, sensitive temperament from both parents, and had suffered head pains from earliest childhood, which later limited his reading and writing to half an hour at a time. Yet he never neglected an opportunity to publish some fervent lyric to point out a wrong and rally support for redress.

Whittier's words were simple. He says his ballad poems were "written with no expectation that they would survive the occasions which called them forth; they were protests, alarm signals, trumpet-calls to action, words wrung from the writer's heart, forged at white heat, and of course lacking the finish which reflection and patient brooding over them might have given."

Whittier's hymns

The simple beauty of the words reveals the true genius of the man. They express for the worshipper the heart sentiments he could not himself frame, bestowing a sense of communion with the Creator, elusive to the less articulate.

*Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.
Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.*

Whittier said: "I have been a member of the Society of Friends by birthright and by a settled conviction of the truth of its principles and the importance of its testimonies, while, at the same time, I have a kind feeling towards all who are seeking, in different ways from mine, to serve God and benefit their fellow-men."

While hymns were not a feature of Quaker worship, John Greenleaf Whittier served God and blessed generations of Christians — by his words, as by his deeds.



The Way of Holiness

“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein”

— Isaiah 35: 8 —

THE PLANS ARE DRAWN, the route is planned, the way is being cleared. The construction of this amazing highway will be a more complex and ambitious undertaking than the world has ever seen, and its design has been entrusted to the only Company capable of handling such an enterprise — Sons of God, Inc.

Behind the scenes the preparations are well under way, though the details will remain under wraps until certain hindrances are dealt with and the earth-moving machinery can safely commence work on the foundations.

The Site — Planet Earth

Whereabouts? — someone asks. Oh, just about everywhere, apparently. *Everywhere?* How so? Well, by all accounts this highway will circle the earth and be capable of carrying all the traffic wanting to make the journey — no cabs or coaches, mind you, only foot passengers. Everybody has to *walk*? Yes, that’s right — the redeemed are to walk there according to a spokesman for the Company.

Isaiah announced the news of the project

The prophet’s word-picture of world events nearly 3,000 years ahead of his time is one of the finest gems of Bible literature. The language is visionary and the imagery striking, but there is nonetheless a convincing promise of the practical application of the prophecy in some future Golden Age, when all the afflictions suffered by human society will be done away. This theme recurs throughout Scripture. In fact Peter speaks of the “times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3: 21).

This can only be the time when the prayers of centuries are answered, and God’s Kingdom is established on the earth. Christians everywhere still pray: “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6: 10).

But how strange it is that so few appear to expect a literal answer to this petition. The message of our Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry was that the Kingdom of God was “at hand,” in the sense that He then began the gathering of the Company of saintly men and women who would be incorporated with Him to form the Administrative Body of that Kingdom. World events prove unmistakably that this is now accomplished.

Soon, they will start the great restoration work for the rest of humanity — and open the Highway to new life.

Traffic congestion problems

“You take your life in your hands on today’s roads,” people say. Transport authorities in the world’s vast metropolitan centers are at their wits’ end to cater safely for the ever-increasing “running to and fro” at this “time of the end” (Dan. 12: 4). And even in the suburbs, traffic calming measures are put in place to minimize the dangers.

Where are we going?

Viewing the chaos from a vantage point above, it must appear that everybody wants to be somewhere else. Society is restless, dissatisfied, seeking always some new diversion to support their “eat, drink, and be merry” lifestyle. But the happiness they seek is elusive.

Few pause to consider that what matters most is the *eternal destiny* of each one of us. Since we have free will, in a sense *our lives are in our own hands*. To go along with the crowd is to choose the “broad way” that leads to destruction (Matt. 7: 13). This is a slippery slope, and escape is not easy.

Jesus spoke also of a “narrow way,” a difficult way which only the few could find. It would lead to *life*. He referred of course to the sacrificial journey of those faithful disciples who followed in His footsteps, forsaking all earthly hopes and ambitions that they might share the heavenly inheritance with their Lord.

We may no longer choose the sacrificial path, but like the faithful stalwarts of old, we can shun the way to destruction and walk a narrow path of truth and integrity, reverencing our God (Psa. 26: 1, 3; 101: 6; 128: 1). He did not ask the impossible when he said to Abraham: “Walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17: 1). It is not so much the deeds of the fallen nature, but the *heart’s intentions* that God sees. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4: 23).

The issues of life

The new Way of Holiness will be a highway to perfect human life in a restored earthly Paradise. Earth’s millions — those then surviving at its inauguration and those to be released from the grave, will make their journey from sin, sickness, and sorrow, to purity, joy, and gladness.

Prophecy is not fantasy. The language may be strange to our ears today, but the positive and practical intention of our loving Creator shines through, and He extends a welcome to all the families of the earth:

“This is the way, walk ye in it” (Isa. 30: 21).



What if ... ?

What follows is not the real, but a supposed condition upon which, if it were factual, six conclusions could be based. Of course this condition is unthinkable for the Christian believer.

IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN

1. *Then is our preaching vain.* There is a lot of vain preaching in these latter days, much of it concerning a *dead* Christ. They hold Him up on a cross. They do not know Him as the Victor over death. They do not know the significance of the empty tomb. Those who preach a dead Christ who has not risen have a very poor message. There is no joy or hope in it. It is simply nominal Christianity. Their only satisfaction is in observing rituals and doing good, as they see it. They may have a system of morality. So do the pagans. Paul foresaw this trend toward ruin, when men would love the lie more than the truth (2 Thes. 2: 10–12). Many are religious today, but not really Christian.
2. *And your faith is also vain.* Faith in a *dead* Christ never saved anyone. There is no hope in that kind of faith. Being religious and having the praise of men may satisfy for the moment, but such things cannot abide. A fable might give a temporary peace of mind. But the terrors will return and the mind may finally become unbalanced.
3. *We are found false witnesses of God.* Any man who teaches that the Bible is merely myths and folklore is a false witness of God. There is no doubt about that. But here we are told that the very best, such as Paul and other Apostles with him, are false witnesses of God, if Christ be not raised from the dead. The Scriptures tell of a Strong One coming to undo all the works of the devil, that old serpent. The last

enemy, death (Satan had the power of death), will be abolished. A time is coming when men will die no more. That is the victory.

4. *Ye are yet in your sins.* The law of compensation, the laws of nature, and the very character of God demand that there be a penalty for sins. That penalty is *death*. By one man it came upon all men. So all men die. And that is the last of them, unless . . . But God, in His wisdom and prudence, gave us a substitute in Jesus, who bore our sins. That, and that only, gives us a hope of life. It is a gift which we can freely take, if we will. If Christ was not raised, then He must have had some sins of His own. But His resurrection is the proof that He satisfied every demand of righteousness.
5. *They which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.* Certainly! There is no hope for future life for them except through being raised from the dead. But if in Christ, then they died with Him and are raised with Him. All in Christ will be made alive.
6. *We are of all men most miserable.* Certainly this is true. No hope, no life. *Nothing!* That is the status of the beast of the field. God has said that men can see these things in creation and are without excuse. There is no evading of the responsibility of making a choice. And man hates taking any responsibility and making choices.

From the Archives

The Hymn and the History

WILLIAM NEWELL (1868-1956) born in Savannah, Ohio. Newell was an evangelist, Bible teacher, and served for a time as assistant superintendent of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois. One day while Newell was on his way to teach a class, he thought about what Christ had done for him on the cross. The words to "At Calvary" came to him and he quickly entered an empty classroom and penned them down on the only available paper he had, an old envelope. He gave the words to Daniel Towner, who was the director of music at the school. Within an hour, our hymn, "At Calvary" was born. In 1895 it was published and Christians around the world have sung this testimonial as their own.

Source: <http://schfrs.crosswinds.net/hymns/calvary.htm>

*Years I spent in vanity and pride,
Caring not my Lord was crucified,
Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary.
By God's Word at last my sin I learn,
Then I trembled at the law I'd spurned,
Till my guilty soul imploring turned to Calvary.
Now I've giv'n to Jesus everything;
Now I gladly own Him as my King;
Now my raptured soul can only sing of Calvary.
O, the love that drew salvation's plan!
O, the grace that brought it down to man!
O, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary!
Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty, At Calvary.*

PUBLICATIONS

A partial list of our publications appears below. Send for our free catalogue.

Prices are for U.S. addresses only; others add 25 percent toward postage.

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announcements

MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2004

Our Lord's Memorial is Friday, April 2, after 6:00 p.m.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2004

At-a-glance

France: (*All at Barlin*) April 11, 12; July 30-August 1; October 30, 31

Germany: *Velbert*, May 29-31; *Altleiningen*, October 1-3

Nigeria: *Umunkiri*, June 25-27; *Osusu Amukwa*, September 26; *Aba, Abia State*, November 26-28

Poland: *Poznan*, May 1-3; *Susiec*, July 9-11; *Rzeszow*, July 12-14; *Wroklow*, July 16-18; *Bydgoszcz*, July 19-21; *Katowice*, August 27-29

United Kingdom: *Hyde*, August 6-8; *Sheffield*, October 30, 31

United States: *Massachusetts*, April 16-18; *Michigan*, May 29-31; *Philadelphia Area*, July 3-5; *Ohio*, August 13-15; *Illinois*, October 1-3; *Oklahoma*, November 12-14.

Details

United States

Massachusetts, April 16-18 (Friday-Sunday)

Site: Holiday Inn, 245 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA 01040; telephone: (413) 534-3311 *Rates and Reservations:* \$82.28 (includes tax), for 1-2 people. Reservations must be made directly with the hotel: *mention you are attending the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement Convention to secure the special rate.* Noon meals will be provided: \$13.95 donation. Please inform us how many are expected to attend noon meals by March 31st; and if transportation from the airport is required. Contact Mr. and Mrs. G. Vanags, 982 E. St. North, Suffield, CT 06078.

Michigan, May 29-31 (Saturday-Monday)

Site: Comfort Inn Muskegon, U.S. Route 31 at Sherman Boulevard, Muskegon, MI 49444; tel.: (231) 739-9092 *Rates and Reservations:* For 1-2 people, \$59.95; 3 people, \$65.49; 4 people, \$71.04 (11% tax included); children 18 and under stay free with parents; Continental breakfast included (served in motel lobby). *Please make your reservations with the hotel by May 2. Request the discount rate for the LHMM, and for a confirmation number.* Each room must be individually guaranteed as early as possible by credit card or check; you may cancel with 48 hours notice. For further information contact Mrs. Carlla Olson: telephone: (231) 894-4131; e-mail: colsoncjo@juno.com

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

The General Editor, Ralph Herzig

Massachusetts Convention, April 16-18

Robert Herzig

Springfield, Massachusetts, April 4; Massachusetts Convention, April 16-18; Boston, Massachusetts, June 27

John Wojnar

Massachusetts Convention, April 16-18; New Haven, Connecticut, May 16; Pittsfield, Massachusetts, June 13

Leon Snyder

April: Marietta, Georgia, 2-4; Reidsville, North Carolina, 6, 7; Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, 8; Wilmington, North Carolina, 9; Manteo, North Carolina, 10; Norfolk, Virginia, 11; Lenox, Massachusetts, 14; Massachusetts Convention, 16-18; Springfield, Massachusetts, 21; Wrentham, Massachusetts, 23; West Haven, Connecticut, 25; Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, 26, 27; Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, 28; North Canton, Ohio, 29; Sand Ridge, West Virginia, 30; Nelsonville, Ohio, May 1, 2; Chicago, Illinois, June 12, 13;

Baron Duncan

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, April 11; Springfield, Massachusetts, June 6

Tom Cimbura

Chicago, Illinois, April 24, 25

Don Lewis

Jamaica Convention, April 9-12; Barbados, April 14, 15; Trinidad, April 16-18; Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, April 20, 21; Keystone Heights, Florida, April 23; Muskegon, Michigan, June 26, 27

James Shaw

Independence, Kansas, March 28

Evangelists' Services

Robert Branconnier, Keystone Heights, Florida, May 9;

Boston, Massachusetts, May 23; Norfolk, Virginia, June 13

Harry Hammer, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 1, 2

Jon Hanning, North Canton, April 2; Derry, Pennsylvania, April 3, 4; Cincinnati, Ohio, May 8, 9; North Canton, Ohio, June 13

David Lounsbury, New York City, June 20

Richard Piquene, Mustang, Oklahoma, May 2; Independence, Kansas, June 27

Robert Steenrod, Beechgrove, Tennessee, April 4; Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, June 13

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