

BATTLEFIELD

FOR THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE ARE NOT CARNAL
BUT MIGHTY THROUGH GOD TO THE PULLING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS



**FIGHTING
THE GOOD FIGHT**



**Enduring Hardness
as a good soldier**



**BEARING ONE
ANOTHER'S
BURDENS**



**Looking
unto Jesus**

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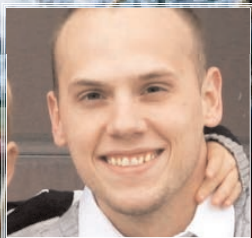
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Take Unto You the Whole Armor of GOD

By: Brother Matthew Cobb

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

We have written from many varied perspectives in this publication of the opposition that is against us in this good fight of Faith. It is true that there is a great and powerful host of those who would deceive and destroy us in this world. It is also true, however, that the Lord has provided for us spiritual provisions for protection against them all. In this chapter of Ephesians, the apostle likens these things unto a suit of armor. He calls it the whole armor of God. That is to say, there is no point at which this armor is not completely adequate for the purpose for which it was given. And implied in this as well, is that the suit works as a whole. You cannot put on the peices that you choose - it works as a whole.

First, he exhorts the brethren to stand having their "loins girt about with truth" (Eph 6:14) This exhortation parallels another one which



Peter delivered to the brethren he wrote to in Peter 1:13: "*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*" To "gird up" ones loins involves freeing ones self from anything that would hinder movement. In the time in which the apostles wrote, the clothing which was worn, was a long flowing robe type of garment, which had to potential to get in the way of quick movement. In this word from the apostle Paul, to have ones loins girt about with truth – is similar to the action of putting on a belt to avoid ones clothing from sagging and hindering the wearer.

Secondly, He exhorts them concerning this breastplate.

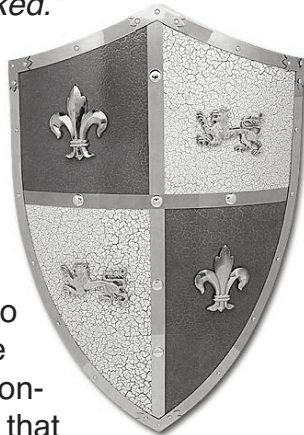
“..and having on the breastplate of righteousness.” (Eph 6:14) This breastplate is one that protects the believer from any piercing influence of deception which would seek to cause injury. As followers of Christ who have entered into this good fight of faith, in our reconciliation and justification, we were granted to be partakers of the very righteousness of God. This experiential righteousness (the power to choose the good and refuse the evil, to foster affections for heaven and the world to come), protects us from all manner of injuries. The one who is constantly failing and falling for the temptation of the wicked one does so at a price. Iniquity has a damaging effect upon the spirit of the one involved in it. It causes wounds that are not easily healed. We praise God that if any man does sin we have an advocate with the father. We have a merciful Savior who is there to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. However, we are more thankful that we have a God who is able to keep us from falling, that we can walk in the spirit, that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.



In addition to this, he speaks to them concerning this shield: *“above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”*

(Eph 6:16) This shield that the apostle speaks of is a primary means of defense in this battle in which we find ourselves. There is a reason why he chose to tell the brethren that this ought to be used *“above all.”* The kingdom of God is an economy of Faith. Everything that we obtain is obtained *“by faith.”*

We are the children of God in Christ Jesus *“by*



faith”, we are kept by the power of God *“through faith”*, we resist *“stedfast in the faith.”* The weapon of our enemy is one which is based upon subtlety and deception. His attacks are aimed at this – to have one of these thoughts planted in just the right way, to appeal to a temptation at just the right time. It is for this reason that this shield is so important. The soldier who is not diligent to hold up this shield against the enemy assault will find himself stuck with a dart. These darts are, as it were, poisonous. They are *“fiery”* - in other words, there is no chance they will not do damage if they hit their target. Also, once these darts find their mark they may not even be immediately discovered until the poison within finds itself into the heart and mind. Thank the Lord brethren, that this is something that we do not have to fall prey to! We have a shield!

And lastly, he tells them *“... And take the helmet of salvation” (Eph 6:17)*



The knowledge that we have been given concerning the purpose of God, His determination to call out of the world a people for Himself, His intention to build up a spiritual household in Christ, a holy habitation for Himself, This is the main

source of confidence for the

believer. As we see clearly the work that was done on our behalf in Christ Jesus, and believe it, it will be unto us a strong protection from doubt. Also, concerning the things which the Lord is now working out that will culminate in this grand work in the world to come: These great and precious promises that we have been given are unto us a protection against doubt and despair.

So, in agreement with the apostle concerning this matter, I exhort you to put on whole armor of God! You have been given a means by which you might abound in hope, and strength to overcome. Take advantage of it!



OUR CURRENT CONFLICT

**Brother
Gene Hutchcraft**

God is the One who initiated this conflict about which we write and in which we as believers engage. This He did in making the world as a place of faith, where people make decisions that hinge upon what God has revealed of Himself. The Lord allowed His arch enemy, Satan, to enter His good earth, a very good environment, and disrupt that which God put in motion by its creation with its contents. Satan deceived Eve and engaged man in sin or rebellion against the Almighty.

Still, it is really God who engages His enemy through the human race made in the Lord's image. He does this, primarily, through the one God called, in Genesis, 'the seed of woman' who came into the earth as a man, yet was more. This One came from God to the earth as a man of the line of Abraham and David, those to whom God revealed aspects of His hidden purpose in all things. This man of Israel lived among that people and engaged God's truth by His words and deeds in the body. He also engaged principalities and power of wickedness and triumphed over them as a man on a cross of death. (**Colossians 2:15** "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.") For by this cross God made Jesus the acceptable sacrifice for sin, who also made God just and the justifier of those with faith in Him. (**Colossians 1:19-20** "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."). So, by this sacrifice of Himself, Jesus triumphed over sin and death as a man.

*(Continued from last Issue)

Now believers, so to speak, live in that triumph though we continue to have skirmishes here and there (since we remain in flesh and in the world). This 'conflict' is internal primarily. There are enemy snipers, so to speak, trying to draw or pick us off the straight narrow way, using our own desires to lure us from faith in the truth of Christ Jesus. James speaks words of encouragement about this conflict in heart and mind. (**James 1:12-15** "Blessed are the men that endure temptation: For when he is tried, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."). These are also strong words which warn believers of self deception by former desires ... I say former desires! They are former because salvation through faith by grace gives the believer new desires, affections, and appetites. If one does not have these new ones they remain subject to the former ones, of corruption. These, to whom James wrote, were losing their focus of faith and hope in God Who gave them life by His Son. (**James 1:18** "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."). Their vision of Christ and His purpose faltered for some reason; the details of which James does not tell us. He rather gives his attention to the impact or affect which weakened their resolve in the faith once for all delivered to them. They were 'despising' their 'birthright' as Esau who sold his for a bowl of pottage or soup. This ungodly man could not keep his appetites focused on the prize and so he sold the birthright to the one who wanted it, for a bowl of pottage. These believers were vulnerable in this conflict

of their souls, that of the flesh and Spirit. So, James calculates his words to remind them of their birth, the new birth of the water and the Spirit, which God grants those who flee to His Son for refuge from His wrath that comes on the world.

This wrestling, or conflict of flesh and Spirit, is common to every believer. Salvation does not deliver us from it, but saves us in it by faith and hope in God's... **(2 Peter 1:4** "...*exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might partake of His nature.*") His nature within the believer gives life to our entire being, life indeed, life from above.

(1 Thessalonians 5:23 "*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.*") Every letter in

what we call the New Testament scriptures addresses this conflict at one level or from one aspect or another. These letters speak with intelligence and on a personal level to their readers. Most of whom were persecuted by enemies of the gospel or they assist other believers who are so treated. **(Hebrews 10:32-33** "*But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.*"), **(2 Thessalonians 1:4-5** "...*we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.*") These are only two examples of words to encourage believers to continue despite external afflictions from enemies of the gospel. However, the primary affliction of conflict is that within those with faith in God Most High, that of flesh and Spirit. Paul speaks to this in his letter to the believers in Rome. **(Romans 7:22-23** "*For I delight in the law*

of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.")

Some have thought Paul refers to his 'warring' of the past, prior to his faith in Christ. Yet, this entire section of the letter, what we call chapter 7, uses language that is present tense, not past, as to this conflict. He uses the verb 'do' eight times, in just a few sentences, establishing for his readers the reality of a current activity. Now the brother presses forward in his apostolic ministry to help believers who read this letter understand the warfare into which we enter by faith, that it is common to the course of faith while in the world. When we had no faith in God we were slaves to the flesh and its desires, un-willing, uninterested

and unable in the current conflict of faith and hope in Christ. Paul recalls that time to his readers with these words. **(Romans 6:16, 20** "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? ... 20 For*

when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.") It was as the demon possessed people Jesus delivered. They were not able to come seeking Him; others came for them such as the father of the boy thrown into fire and water or the gentile mother of the young girl. The demoniacs came to Jesus only because they had to confess His identity when He came into their vicinity. They abhorred His presence but the nature of His majesty forced them to acknowledge Him while the enslaved person could not even ask for the deliverance He granted. Now, after Jesus' triumph in His cross over these enemies and when the gospel then came close to us, we were freed by faith from the sin which had enslaved us to end in destruction! So, we then entered the realm of this present conflict!

Salvation through
Faith by Grace
gives the believer
new desires.

Continued on page 5..

Our Current Conflict continued...

(Romans 6:22 *"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."*)

Christ sets believers free by their faith in Him which also empowers them to continue in His truth and light. He spoke this way about it :

(John 8:36 *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."*) John later wrote of it. **(1 John 5:4-5** *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"*)

This 'overcoming' is not to war with political, economic, social, or military powers who force men to submit. The overcoming of faith is the personal submission of flesh and its appetites through yielding to the Holy Spirit. **(Galatians 5:16** *"This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*) This conflict has no

part in what worldly powers seek to obtain and maintain. **(Romans 8:5-6, 12-14** *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ... Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."*)

The walk of faith, in the Spirit, involves power to serve the living God in the light and truth of His dear son Christ Jesus. This freedom is calculated for us to engage the righteousness and truth of Christ in our inner man and bear fruit to God. Read again Paul's description of this conflict. **(Romans 7:22-23** *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my*

mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.") This text reports active conflict of the flesh and the Spirit in each believer. Jesus does not quickly destroy the old man with its desires, they are crucified, or handed over to the cross, daily, as Paul declares of his own walk. **(Galatians 2:20** *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*) This was Paul's daily experience, not a one time event. Also, this is not the exclusive experience of apostles for Paul speaks of it also in his letter to the believers in the city of Rome.

(Romans 6:4-7 *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing*

this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.") Then the Spirit repeats it with this application to his readers, which we now are. **(Romans 6:11-13** *"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."*)

Let us then be done with empty ritual and religious activities that do not strengthen, as to life and peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us be done with whatsoever quenches the Spirit's jealous desire to conform us to Christ who purchased us with His own blood. Finally, let us be done with anything

**Let us then be
done with empty
and ritual religious
activities that do
not strengthen**

which grieves the Spirit's intent to bring the things of Christ to us. Such is our stewardship of spirit, soul, and body for God's approval on the last great day.

Now we know we have no power in ourselves for such a conquest of the old man. It will come only as we yield ourselves daily and wholly to Him Who is the Judge of the living and the dead. For this reason the Apostle Paul exhorts believers with these words. (**Colossians 3:1-8** *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."*) Fix your heart and mind on the things God intends for those in Christ Jesus. Such a posture demands we put to death or mortify whatsoever draws us from the appointed or commissioned task.

Consider our Savior's words to this very thing: (**Luke 9:23-24** *"And he said to them all, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.'"*) So, living by faith in Christ is a violent endeavor since we are in a hostile body and world that works to deceive, distract, and destroy those who walk contrary to it's course. (**Ephesians 2:2-5** *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power*

of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." These spiritual forces of wickedness do their work indirectly, as does God. They cannot attack the Throne of Heaven since they are thrown down from the Majesty of His presence. (**Revelation 12:7-9, 12** *"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ... 12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."*)

So, this is the arena of conflict, our current habitation of body. However, this is also the arena of faith, hope, and love granted by the grace of God in Christ Jesus, His Son. (**Ephesians 2:6-7** *"And hath raised us together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*) Now, brethren, heed bro. Peter's words as to this conflict. (**1 Peter 1:13-16** *"... gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."*) Such words are calculated by the Spirit to fortify us in the current conflict!

The Waiting Saints



**BY: BROTHER
ROBERT COBB**

1 Thessalonians 1:9 -10

For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

We, like Christ, have been given a “mission” and it is imperative that all those who have departed from iniquity are actively engaged in the accomplishment of it. Our great commander has not left us alone in this work. He has accomplished the part that was impossible for us to do, that is, the putting away of our sin. Now, all those that have, by His grace, entered into this most blessed arrangement can testify that this deliverance is both real and satisfying. It is the preliminary work in order that we may actively “wait” for God’s Son from heaven.

The act of waiting, while at the same time fighting the good fight of faith, is a full time job and one that a lot of professed believers have not fully considered important. In order to be ready for the coming of The Lord we must have already “turned from Idols” in order to “serve” the living God. This is not a passive work, but one that will require all the grace and diligence that we have been provided of in the

We are told to “work out” our own salvation with fear and trembling, (Phil 2:12) There is nothing casual that is involved with that work. Waiting in the world can sometime be a boring proposition. If we are at the repair shop sitting in the waiting room, those around us are sitting idly by, reading magazines that they would not normally waste their time on, but they are waiting for their car. They did not come to the shop to wait, but to have their car worked on. Waiting in this sense can be non-productive, but the child of God will seize every opportunity to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. I have actually found that everything that requires our time and effort can be done “heartily” as unto the Lord (Col 3:23) Even waiting can be productive if seen from the heavenly perspective. Actually, waiting for a believer is something that expends energy. Remember those five wise virgins? They took oil with them “in their vessels” and in their lamps, and while they waited for the bridegroom, the oil in their lamps was diminished. In fact, it was so much diminished that the five foolish virgins actually ran out of oil! Waiting can be a very productive time to gain insights and understanding that will be required during those times when we are called to “stand fast” in the evil day!

Jesus has delivered us from the wrath to come, this is another reason why waiting is so pleasant for the believer, we know that there is an end to our waiting, imagine how frustrated you would be if the mechanic never did finish changing your oil! You didn’t go there to wait the rest of your life, but just until the job was finished! The same applies to Jesus’ work, He is not appearing in the presence of God for us!

He is our "great High Priest" in things pertaining to God. He has promised us that if He went away, He would come again. Jesus is not presently with us in the body, but some glorious day, the sky will split open like a scroll and the elements will melt with the brightness of His appearing! Jesus will come! All the promises that He made will be fulfilled in that day, all the time spent getting ready will finally pay off, but what of those who refused to wait? What will Jesus bring to them? We are given a very vivid picture of this by Jesus when He said "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" Everything that the wicked loved in this world will be swept away in a matter of moments! Jesus will have come unto them like a thief in the night, all the sin that they found so satisfying will be gone forever, yet the lust for those things will remain in them for all eternity, they will want to sin, but they will not be able to satisfy that desire.

The saints are now "vexed" with being strapped with "the old nature" that remains inside them. They have been taught by God to hate sin, and to love righteousness. Yet, their tortuous time spent here is abruptly ended, and their expectation realized in the hope of Christ appearing! He will bring with Him everything that they have come to love and joy in. When Jesus appears and they are "changed" in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they will find the perfect peace and rest of a continual holiness and awareness of the God who will then "dwell with them" and be their God!

Saints, trust the good word of God! The wait is worth whatever it cost you to maintain. The good fight of Faith is worth every black eye and bruised knee you acquire as you actively engage "principalities and powers of this present evil world" They may inflict some pain and sorrow, but be of good cheer, it isn't over yet!!

A WORD CONCERNING TROUBLE

There is almost a universal view in our day of blessing that defines it solely as God always delivering us FROM trouble and inconvenience. While It is true that The Lord has chosen to work in this way on many occasions, it is not the only way which He has chosen to work things out. We have many instances of this in scripture, where men were simply delivered from the evil intentions of their enemies - When by the experience of the people there really was no fight, but The Lord fought for them. Israel had this experience in their deliverance from Egypt. *"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace". (Exodus 14:13, 14 KJV)* This is a blessed thing!: to know that The Lord is able to entirely frustrate the intentions of the enemy against His people. Seeing this for yourself gives you tremendous benefit - knowing that when you are in a time of trial or testing, it may very well be that the Lord chooses to simply deliver you from any given situation which would be a cause for trouble and calamity is a comfort. However, this being said, wisdom is to be coveted in this area of reasoning as it concerns the will and purpose of God. The same God who told Israel that he would fight for them, empowered David in the time of battle to enter into the fight and prevail against his opposition. *"For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me." (Psalms 18:39 KJV)* The point here is that the people are not really the primary consideration. God's purpose does not consist of making things as comfortable for men as he can. All one must do is take an honest inventory of their experience in this world to come to the conclusion that this doctrine of health and wealth being preached today is spurious. Whether through the Red Sea on dry land, or by fighting through the tumultuous waves of a shipwreck - in all of these things, whether by deliverance FROM trouble or grace to make it triumphant THROUGH trouble - to God be the glory, great things He hath done !

I WILL BE USEFUL



BY:
BROTHER
JUSTIN
COBB

Dear brethren, we know that our God is a perfect God, (Matt 5:48), and all of His ways are perfect (2 Sam 22:31 ; Psalm 18:30 ;). From this truth, it is then understood that God does everything with one hundred percent efficiency, productivity, and reliability. So, since we are called according to God's purpose (Rom 8:28, Eph 1:11), we who keep his commandments abide IN Him, and Him in us (1 Cor 6:19, 1 John 3:24), and His purpose does not change, but stands (Isa 14:24) then, it can be said that you must also have the same character traits of being efficient, productive, and reliable in the business of the Kingdom. You must be perfect as God is perfect! (Matt 5:48)

The LORD only desires people who will participate in the workings of the Kingdom of Heaven, and has by no means elected people to enter the Kingdom who will be of no use to Him! Doing so would be contrary to His very purpose and nature. The ones He is raising up to become His sons and daughters have a tremendous use to Him! Even though we may not know what our use will be in heaven (1 Cor 2:9), we do know we will be praising God and the Lamb for eternity (Rev 5:13), we will reign with Him for eternity (2 Tim 2:12), and we will judge the world, and angels on the Day of the LORD (1 Cor 6:2-3). We need to be ready and fit for this use!

Think of the parallels we see in this world concerning things that are useful. If we think of the food that we consume, think for a minute on the usefulness of wheat! Wheat is a USEFUL commodity! Wheat is used in everything from Beverages like root beer and hot cocoa mix, coffee substitutes, breads, rolls, wafers, donuts, muffins, breakfast cereals, puddings, even body washes and shampoos. Apart from these many diverse benefits we get from the wheat, the opposite is true for the part of the plant known as the "chaff". The chaff is the paper-like substance on the outside of the wheat kernel. It serves no use. It is known as a "waste product" and there are presently only 3 uses for wheat chaff here on earth. It is either burned or buried, or consumed by beasts (used as a non-nutritive filler in animal feed).

This parable is given to us in the Word. Clearly seen, it shows that the LORD only regards things that are of USE to Him. He likens His people to the useful wheat, and the useless people are referred to as the "chaff". Anyone who is of no use to the LORD at harvest will be dealt with severely.

"Whose fan is in his hand, and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:12 NKJV)

Another parallel example revealed in the Word concerning things deemed "useless" are the tares. When tares are young, they are sometimes mistaken for the wheat crop. But as the two grow together, their differences become apparent. At the time of harvest it's easy to tell the good wheat from the useless tare. Regardless whether a plant resembles wheat or not, the usefulness of the plant is the deciding factor for what is harvested and what is thrown away. We know that wheat is useful. We

know that tares are not. Such is the heart of man. One matures perfect in Christ, the other is left with no use at it's end.

*"Let both grow together until the time of harvest. I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."
(Matthew 13:30 KJV)*

The FIRST thing the LORD will do on that day, is get rid of the waste. Since the harvest must be ready on that day, anyone that is not ready to be harvested for use will be useless, and will be "thrown away. They will remain in a perpetual state of uselessness forever. No music will be played, no songs will be sang, or written. No craft of any sort will they practice. No work of any sort will be accomplished by them forever. If this is not a sobering though brethren, I do not know what is!

*"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at ALL in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;"
(Revelation 18:22 KJV)*

We live in a time where men have been given more than enough revelation of the things of God and resources to be able to seek out God, and to be profitable workers in the Kingdom of God. They are expected to know these things about God! There has never been a time in the history of man, where such a collection of resources and revelations about God are available to men as they are now. There are hundreds of versions of the scripture, commentaries, audio and video sermons, books and articles written by the saints that

are accessible by anyone anytime on any mobile device or personal computer. We have been given MUCH, so much will be required of this generation (Lk 12:48), yet anyone who is not faithful with even a little on earth, the little that they do have, will be taken and given to someone else. They will be thrown into eternal torment in hell, which is a very sobering thought! :

*"For to everyone who HAS, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does NOT HAVE, even what he has will be taken away. And CAST THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
(Matthew 25:29-30 NKJV)*

***"Anyone who is
of no use to the
LORD at harvest
will be dealt with
severely"***

The great thing about the LORD, is that He always has work for his servants to do. He will not come up short with work for us. He may give us a brief period of rest, but this is ultimately to refresh us for more work, and is not where the person should linger. If a professed believer is not

involved in the work of God, something is hindering their ability to be used by the LORD. Unrepentant sin is the obvious answer many would give, someone has their affections set elsewhere. However, very little is spoken today about the sin of idleness. For example, I have heard many professed believers, (and at one time I myself have been guilty of this very thing) say things like "I would have come to the church meeting, but I'm just too busy to make it." If the LORD does not want you to forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb 10:25) would it be His will that you would be so busy that you couldn't make it? On the contrary, attending the assembly is one of the main ways we become useful here on Earth!

Continued on page 11...

I Will Be Useful.. CONTINUED

The bride of Christ must be prepared, and this is a work that must be done by those who are willing to participate and become useful to that end. Each individual member of the Body of Christ is unique in their usefulness to encourage, strengthen, exhort, edify, comfort, assist, advise, teach and instruct, evangelize and prophesy. We have all been given these useful gifts by our Heavenly Father (Eph 4:11) and are co-dependent on each other's gifts.

*"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."
(1 Corinthians 12:21 KJV)*

Because of this danger of idleness, Paul taught that if the people in the church were not willing to work, "...neither should they eat." —(2 Thess 2:10) After all, if a gift is given to someone by the Lord, they are expected to use what He has given them, and those who do not effectively "waste" the gift they are given. And as a result they are considered by the Lord to be among others who have wasted what they have been given.

*"Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."
(Ezekiel 16:49 KJV)*

While there are a lot of professed Christians who are given to mass doses of entertainment, idleness does not simply mean you're doing nothing at all. From a worldly perspective, people who lay idle in the works of the Lord can appear to be very busy. There are some who do a large number of things, even though

they may be physically and mentally exhausting, they produce nothing that contains any lasting value, or eternal productivity. This kind of work does not benefit the saints of God or give glory to the LORD. It lacks any significance concerning the Kingdom of God. We can be wearied by filling our lives with activities that are not necessary. We must be good stewards of the time that is given to us. For this reason the scriptures say things like:

"...exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things..." (1 Tim 4:7b-8a KJV)

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but

as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:14-16 KJV)

Now we understand that there is some work that is necessary for the survival of the body, or for the survival and raising of our children. Everything should be done heartily "unto the LORD". He knows our hindrances and our hearts. He knows the differences between our needs, and the selfish desire of man.

"And whatsoever you do, do it heartily as to the LORD, and not unto men." (Colossians 3:23 KJV)

Those who choose to please men when they work, instead of aiming to please the Lord lose sight of this very important call. The LORD must be the focus of our work, or we run the risk of doing things in vain. Going through the motions in a ritualistic type sense without involvement of the heart will not be honored by the LORD. Whether teaching something you ought not to, or doing something you shouldn't be doing,

**"The LORD
must be the
focus of our work,
or we run the
risk of doing
things in vain"**

removing your heart from the equation always leads to vain worship of God.

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, (Matthew 14:8-9 KJV), (Isaiah 29:13)

If we are God fearing individuals, we must NEVER allow our work, hobbies, crafts, or activities to get in the way of the LORD's priorities.

Therefore we do not willingly forsake the assembly of the saints. (Heb 10:25) . We do not "draw back" when we have set out to do something (Heb 10:39) We warn others who are in danger (Eze 33:7-9), and put the brethren in remembrance of the perils of the last days (1 Tim 4:6). We are full of pity for others, and courteous (1 Pet 3:8). We are always ready to give an answer to the hope that dwells in us (1 Pet 3:15). We encourage, exhort (Heb 3:13, 10:25), and comfort the brethren, we are given to hospitality without grudging (1 Pet 4:9), and bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2)--- all of this and more we do, even when it is not convenient for us to do so in our present state. We love not our lives to the death (Rev 12:11), we follow the lamb wherever he goes even if our bodies don't prefer it (Rev 14:4). The schedule of a God fearing man or woman does not interfere with the workings God has said His saints will accomplish! In fact, our schedule IS the LORD's schedule. Any schedule contrary to his schedule must be re-written to conform! We are given a solemn warning in the scriptures concerning what we do with our time. The Queen of Sheeba (who we read of in 1 Kings 10) laid aside the business of an ENTIRE KINGDOM to hear the wisdom of ONE MAN. But of course we know, that Jesus Christ, is infinitely more wise than Solomon ever was, or could be!

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

(Matthew 12:42 KJV)

Now I don't know how busy you are, But I can tell you that even though I may be really busy at times, I can assure you I am probably by no means as busy as a Queen of an entire population of people! Are you?

When we see what Christ has to give as it is in

truth, worthy of our time. We will, If we must, sacrifice time, sleep, finances, and energy to seek HIS face, and HIS wisdom to become directly involved in DOING the LORD's will. We will endure persecution, hardship, and weariness, because we know that laboring in the work of the LORD is never done in vain, and is always rewarded!

Therefore, my brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the LORD. (1 Corinthians 15:58)

In conclusion, my purpose in expounding these thoughts is to get the reader to clearly see that serving the LORD cannot be trumped by anything. The LORD requires us to be useful to Him. Our workings will be a reflection of what lies in our heart. If the LORD surely has our entire heart, mind, and strength, it will not be difficult to avoid the "bread of idleness", and to abound in every good work that He has prepared for us here! Let us press on in confidence knowing that it will never be the LORD's will for us to be "too busy" for Him. And, furthermore, He doesn't want to hear your excuses. He always gives adequate time, resources, and grace for us to accomplish our duties. Praise Him that He is able to deliver thee!

TO BE A PART OF THE FIGHT



By:
Sister
Sarah
Dill

(11 Years Old)

Why? Because if you are in the fight for him you should think of him. You also should pray to the Lord. If you need help and you do not know what to do, go to God in prayer. If you don't think you need to pray, then you are not fighting. You cant fight without help from the Lord. It says in ;

2Ti 4:7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*

First I want to begin with this scripture in:

Exodus 14:14 *The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*

Here are some things I am going to talk about; It will not be easy, you will have to try, think on God, pray to him, thank him, love what he loves and hate what he hates, and much more. These are examples of what it means to be in the fight.

First, it will not be easy. In the the kingdom it will be hard. In a way, It will be tough to run in the race, but if you ask the Lord to help you, he will. You must stay on the right path, but if you stay with the Lord, he will surely help you. Also, you will have to try. If you want to be with the lord you will have to fight, if you try you can do it, because the lord will help you. You can not be lazy and weak, you need to be active and strong.

Also you must put on the new man, walk in the spirit, and put on the armor of God, not the flesh. You must put the old man off, and keep the flesh on the cross. Think of God while you are in the fight.

You also should thank the Lord. There are a lot of reasons why you should thank him. The Lord has called you to be with him and placed you in Jesus. He has opened up a way for you, and he died for you. In addition to this, you should love what he loves and hate what he hates. If there is something different in you, if what you hate is not what he hates, and what and you love is not what he loves, this tells you that you like the world better, you and God do not agree, and this is wrong.

Now, in all these examples we can learn something. If you want to win the fight you will have to know about these things. If you are not in the kingdom you will not make it. If you love him, know him, and believe him you will make it. So, to go with him you have to fight, run the race, and learn more about him. Brethren, I encourage you with these things. I will leave you with:

1 Timothy 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

It is Given

...Lay Hold on Eternal Life...



By: Sister
Nicole
Cobb

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (Matthew 13:11)

When his disciples asked him concerning the reason why he spoke in parables to the multitudes this was his response. This may sound like heresy to some in our day, but this is the truth! God makes a separation, he gives some to know the truth, and some are not given to know the truth. For those who are not given, it says of them: *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12 KJV)*

On the other side of this consideration as it concerns those who have heard the gospel: in **Jude 1:3** he tells us that our faith was "*delivered*" in **Romans 10:17** Paul tells us that faith "*comes*" in **Ephesians 2:8**, he calls faith "*the gift of God*"

God is the one who gives us to hear the gospel. Anyone who has believed the gospel has done so because God opened their eyes to see it. They have not merely agreed intellectually to the points of the doctrine. They believed the report of what God has done in Christ on their behalf, because they were able to really see it for what it is. It was the result of divine illumination, not intellectual study.

This is a very important thing to see in view of the things that we have yet to overcome in our present circumstance. The strength of our ad-

versary is much too great for us to rely upon the continuation of a decision that we made. We have to be able to see that God is the one who began this good work in us - and he is forward to make sure that he gets a return on his investment. That will give us the confidence we need overcome.

With that being said, some have made an accusation against God, saying "If God is the one who made the decision as to who would believe and who wouldn't how can he hold anyone accountable for their decision"? To this, we hear the words of our Brother Paul in the 9th chapter of romans: "*who art thou o man that repliest against God*"? God is God and we are not. This must be the foundation of our understanding when thinking about divine choice. There is no choice that is better than Gods choice - it is right for him to make this decision. Someone had to make the decision, arent you glad it was God?

Even in the present time we can see the way in which he has gone out of his way to be gracious in his dealings with men. He sent his Son to die on our behalf to pay for the sin that we could never have paid for, he chose apostles and prophets to write of what he did. he told us about the wonderful promises that he has promised to those who believe, gave us a record of these things. Everyone will have had the opportunity to hear the gospel but, not everyone will receive it. The Lord has done this to bring glory to himself. having given opportunity for all men to at least be confronted with the gospel in this way

The Lord has shown his righteousness in that even though he provided a means for men to be retrieved, those who don't believe wont receive it. Theres not going to be anyone in hell who didn't have the resources to seek him. In the end if men are left to the fate of being cast into the lake of fire, it will not be anything that God did. as far as not making a way. it will be because they didn't have faith.

LETTERS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD

A Report Concerning The Reward of The Unprofitable Servant. by: Brother Justin Cobb

After a long battle with the enemy throughout the week, we, the soldiers of the King's regiment 101st battalion, sat down in the mess tent inside the camp. We were looking forward to receiving a nice warm meal after enduring a hard week on the battlefield. One of our comrades had stayed behind to watch the camp, and to prepare this meal for us in our absence. As we sat in anticipation, we spoke with each other about all the attacks we jointly overcame that week. We were so thankful to have such a supreme commander. We sat in discourse concerning these great things, and also what we might be having for dinner. Each one of us was thankful to be alive, and growing eager by the minute for the provision set aside for each man. However, as the time passed, the tables continued to sit

empty, for no food had yet arrived. The men began to wonder if something had happened to their chef. The concern began to rise about his whereabouts, when suddenly, a man emerged from the back of the kitchen. It was the chef.

He stared at us and said, "I'm sorry... there's no food prepared, I could not cook this week." Not one of us understood his strange words. One of the soldiers in our company began questioning him, "Brother, what has hindered your duties? We will

gladly assist you to fix something up for everyone." To which the chef replied, "I need no help, and even if I were to have assistance, I'm afraid it's too late. You'll have to find provisions elsewhere. I know! How about you come back tomorrow?". Others began to speak up, one of them asked, "Are you not commissioned in this great war, to feed us, your brothers in arms, with the provisions our commander has provided

you to distribute? Are we not the commander's troops, and are you not the chef and one of us also? Please explain what has hindered you."

We waited for an answer from our brother chef.... "Now now! Listen!", He sharply replied in a harsh tone of voice, which was accompanied with a look of irritation and disdain, "It's not nice for you all to judge me like this, I haven't judged

any of you, have I? I've had a very busy and difficult few days, and I just really didn't have the time to cook for you! I ran into some issues helping another man out, and it has really drained me of energy. I didn't have the energy to cook for this week. I'm really sorry but as of now there is no food prepared."

The soldiers were grieved at this statement, and could hardly believe the things they were hearing. A corporal stood up and addressed the chef, "Brother, I apolo-



gize if anyone here has offended you. We are only trying to understand what has hindered your ability to perform your duty. Sir, if you will please listen, we have all done our part to fight the battle, for each and every one of us has a duty to perform. As you know, Daniel is in charge of the artillery in our unit. Did you hear? He took down four strongholds this week following the coordinates of our commander! He had to sit in a foxhole for three days straight, in the rain, with mud up to his waist, all while bearing with no sleep to accomplish this, trusting in the commander the entire time! David is in the ranks of the infantry, as you also are aware. But did you hear that yesterday he led a team of six that bravely rushed a bunker and overtook the enemy over the dark hill? He was out-numbered two hundred to one! He of course was careful to follow the paths pointed out by our commander, but he trusted in his lead, in a situation that most men would cower in. I haven't seen such bravery and faith in all of my time as a soldier! The rest of us were greatly encouraged in our faith when he emerged victorious! Many more of us had assigned duties and each one of us carried them out as good soldiers, and they were by no means easy tasks. We are all here today, alive and well because we looked to our commander in faith, doing all that he has commanded. Also, we worked together as a team, each one of us benefitting from the work of the other. It was not easy for us by any means, we also were physically wearied in doing our duties, and are still weak in our bodies now, but we have accomplished all so far with a glad heart, and we will gladly press on the more. You however, sir, have stayed behind this entire time to have the duty and privilege of preparing the meal. He gave to you all you required to perform your duties, just as he provided us with the same. May we ask how you have been too busy or too weary

to perform your assignment? So may we ask, what exactly has hindered you in your duties?"

The chef, now with a calmer tone of voice answered, "Ok... I'll explain to you all what occurred a few days ago. It's a really sincere explanation why things are amiss now. I was beginning to prepare certain portions of the meal, to make it easier on the day I was to cook everything. I had already gotten a late start on it, when I received some personal letters and a gift package from my wife, who currently lives where I was called from. A mail man I recognized from the neighborhood I used to live in before I enlisted dropped them off, which I thought was strange, since usually I receive letters here from the King's courier only. I asked him why he had come all the way out here, and he told me that my wife sent him as surety that I received the package. With that being settled, I was overjoyed and relieved to finally hear from her, and I really wanted to write back to my wife and children. Since I joined this company I really haven't spent a whole lot of time with them, they were mostly against me going.... Anyway, I was beginning to miss them a lot after reading the petition in the letters to "come home". So, I decided to take a whole day to write to them. I took pictures, wrote long letters about how much I missed them, and then mailed the packages off.

The next day this same man came back me. He asked me if I would accompany him down the valley on the other side of the hill. He claimed that he required my military experience to drive the vehicle on the other side. I normally would have said no, but seeing as he was so kind in delivering my dear wife's letters to me, I agreed to go. He told me he had something to show me that would cheer my spirit up and give me the energy I required to cook the meal. So

...Fight The Good Fight Of Faith...

I followed him, and when we got down the ravine, the sunset was very beautiful, and the weather was very fair. We arrived at the truck that was parked, and full of supplies. He said that the supplies needed to be delivered to a civilian outpost just down the road, and if I would assist him in unloading there would be a bonus package in it for me, whom the man told me was worth a week's wages."

"Enough!" said one of the soldiers, "You're wasting time! Let's go cook something together before it's too late! There's no time for explanations right now." "Excuse me, and let me finish my story, you rude man!"

the chef snapped back in anger. Then, after about a half a minute of silence, he continued telling of his affair, "This man also told me that the road was broad and fair, and not filled with any perils, so my way would be easy going. I knew I had a lot of work to do here, but I figured I

could use a break from being stuffed up in this kitchen tent... So we set out. The breeze was very pleasant, and the road was smooth to ride on... and then the truck broke down. The moment the truck broke down, the man riding with me jumped out of his seat, and ran away laughing like a maniac, and I was stranded there. I tried to use the radio communicator in the truck to reach base, but it was stuck on a frequency we do not use, so I tried to manually dial in the frequency, but could not find anyone. In my frustration I sat on the roof of the vehicle and waited for someone to come by. It was so nice outside, I only closed my eyes for a minute so it seemed, but then I awoke suddenly to the night that had fallen upon me as I slept. I had to walk back in complete darkness, and when I

finally arrived this morning, I was far too weary and bruised from my journey to begin my work. I have been resting since then. I have terrible blisters and thorns on my feet, and I lost my way a few times and had to climb the face of the cliff, and now look at these hands, torn to the bone!! Even our commander had a day of rest at the end of the week, why can't I have mine too? Why must I suffer needlessly?"

We pleaded with him, "Listen brother, we will wait here for you, go back in the kitchen and make something quick, while there is still time, before the commander shows up to dine with us, and discovers

that you have not prepared anything! Here, take some of us with you, however many you need, we will gladly assist you!"

But even after their generous offer of assistance, the chef refused, giving the excuse that there was simply not enough time to prepare such a massive meal, and that

everyone would have to wait until tomorrow to feast. He assured us that he would begin cooking first thing in the morning, and that the commander would understand his feelings and his need to rest... that is if the commander even showed up today at all."after all, he is a commander of forgiveness", said the chef,.. and just as he was about to walk out and leave the soldiers to themselves, that's when the commander walked in to the mess tent.

"I heard there was no food prepared or provided for my soldiers gathered here today." The commander addressed the chef, "was it not I who gave you the assignment as the chef this week? Was it also not I that opened your culinary understanding, and strengthened your skill and ability to pre-



pare a meal? Was it not I who provided you with all the necessary provisions to prepare and distribute to the company accordingly? But of course, I have given all of this too you and more, for I have also given you to understand your duty as a chef! ", said the Commander with fire in his eyes. "Now, stand before me as a man and explain yourself, soldier, if indeed you can!"

The man tried to answer Him, but began to stumble over his words, (because now suddenly he knew in his heart at that very moment that he had acted foolishly), "I was tricked by a man from where I used to live at in the world," he said, "I was wearied in returning, I simply had no time to cook Sir." but the Commander continued, "You wasted an entire day mailing letters of endearment to people who hate me, and who despise your association with me. Then you followed a soldier whom belonged to the evil one, our enemy. Why would you follow him and become yoked with his workings over mine? And not only that, by the time you had realized this, you let despair take hold of you, and then you slept. I was glad when you came back on foot, and I understand all feelings of infirmity, but your weariness differs. It has not come as a result of carrying out a command, of persecution or of serving the King. Your weariness in the body that you are experiencing is a result of your own disobedience against the King and against Me. Nevertheless, if you would have called on me for forgiveness, I would have settled the matter with you. However, you did not ask to be pardoned, neither did you ask for assistance in performing your duty. Oh chef, I would have gladly granted it! Am I not merciful? Would I not have given you the time required to prepare the meal times seventy seven? Or given you the help you required? Is anything too difficult for me to accomplish? But no, you refused to call

on me for help. You were more concerned with yourself : your feelings, your situation, your concerns, your self-inflicted troubles, and your woes than you were with doing the will of Him who sent me. You are guilty of your idleness. You have disobeyed me, and you have grieved and disadvantaged your fellow soldiers, and you are not sorry in your heart that you have done this. You're just as sorry as a convict standing before the judge, who is sorry only to escape the sentence against his deed, and not because of the grievous thing he has done. If this convict goes unpunished, but is let loose, and the threat of a sentence is gone, rest assured he will kill again! Don't you see, O' Chef? You have lost heart for me. You have no desire to do the things I tell you because you do not love me. Your excuses make you a liar. You have become useless to me. Tell me, do I have any use for a medic who does not treat the wounded? Do I have use for artillery who do not fire on the enemy? Do I have use for couriers who refuse to deliver the important packages to base, or mechanics who will not service vehicles? Perhaps you believe that there may be use for infantry that do not march, rangers who do not scout, or watchmen who do not sound the trumpet? I tell you the truth, there is no use for ANY who are idle who are called by My Name, so neither is there use for a Chef who does not cook for his fellow brethren in arms!"

After He had spoken these words, He turned to the rest of us and said, "Take this man out of the camp, and send him off. He shall never cook again." And with that the soldiers blindfolded him, tied his hands up and sent him towards the setting sun, where his feet stumbled on dark mountains and he fell and rose no more. Tell everyone you know in your battalions about this incident, so that we may not lose any more men this way!

WHO ARE YOU, OH MAN?



**By: Brother
Jonathan Blakely**

ROMANS 9:20 *"But who are you, oh man, to answer back to God?" (ESV)*

Some people often speak freely about God without really acknowledging whom it is they are talking about. People think they can say whatever they want to God because they do not know who he is. This is a main tactic of the devil; he distorts, perverts and misrepresents who God is. Because of this men do not have any fear of God. However if they really knew who he was they would not be so quick to speak against him so openly. So God asks such people a question.

"WHO ARE YOU?"

Here we see a word that encourages self-examination. Some may feel they have the authority to speak against what God has done, but do we really have such authority? If any honest person takes a moment and thinks about this question they will see they fall very short when compared to the living God. Go ahead and compare yourself to God. How many things have you spoken into existence? How did your plan of salvation work? Are you all knowing and powerful? Can you remove people's sins? Can you cause time to cease and then continue? Can you keep all things working and in order? Can you destroy the world with a flood and cities with fire and brimstone? Are you perfect in everyway and completely lacking in any form of deficiency? Are you the one who truly determines what is good and what is evil? If you answered "yes" to any

of these questions I am sorry to say (to be brutally honest) you are a liar. Obviously these are things that can only be attributed to God. After getting just a glimpse of what God can do take a look at yourself and just see what you can do. I can assure you that nothing you can do even comes close to the things listed above. So again let us ask the question, "Who are you?" Next to God you are truly nothing. You are HIS creation, he was not created, and rather he is eternal and never had a beginning. It makes no sense for a man to try and answer back to God.

"OH MAN"

God shows the answer to the first part of the question. He asks who we are then he follows by saying, "oh man". Other translations say, "a mere man" (International Standard and Weymouth New Testament) which I find to be a very fitting way of putting it. Not just any man but a MERE man. This is not just talking about the one who is answering back but rather it is speaking of all mankind. What God is showing us here is that being a man, as far as he is concerned, is nothing remotely impressive or intimidating. What is man when held up next to God? He is a tiny parasite and a speck of dust, powerless and pathetic. Why should God have to answer to someone so inferior to him? Why must God be obligated to tell such a frail form of existence what he is doing? Why must the living eternal God tremble before someone whose life is but a vapor? Before you ever get tempted to be angry with God just remember, "I am a mere man". Before you think about questioning God's will just remember that it is GOD that you are talking to!

"TO ANSWER BACK TO GOD?"

First we are called to look at how deficient we are, now we are to consider how great and powerful God almighty really is. Take a moment and think this through! To answer back to God is to answer back to the one who created heaven and earth, the one who planned out creation and salvation before anything was created, the one who knows the hearts and thoughts of all men, the one who had power to execute his will through the earth as he sees fit, the one who can give life and take it as he pleases, the one who has the power to make a man a new creature through his only begotten son! How can you possibly question or rebel against one with such power and might? The

ONLY reason men fail to heed these words is because they have a distorted view of God! God is the one in charge of his work and no man on the earth is going to change that!

Thankfully God can see us as "new creations" and "Sons" when in Christ. Rather than questioning God we obey him when in Christ, because the new nature that is created in you when you come into Christ is in perfect harmony with Gods. So now the question is, "Who are you NOW?" I can answer that question. You are a servant of righteousness. Continue to feed your new man and grow in your faith so that you will not fall into a state where you are trying to resist the will of God.

CONCERNING THE DAY OF THE LORD...

Transport yourselves to that "Great and terrible day of the Lord", that day when we will all stand before God and receive our reward for those deeds done in the body. We are all there, Moses, David, Elijah, Paul, our Mothers and Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Husbands, Wives, Sons and Daughters, everyone that has ever lived, and in the presence of this innumerable company we will stand before God and receive a just reward. What would you give to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant..."? What relationship would you not sever, what price would be too great to ensure divine acceptance on that day. Brethren, I am confident that there is nothing this world has to offer that would be worth trading for the joy of hearing the Great God of Glory say to us on that day "Well done, good and faithful servant enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful in few things, I will make you ruler over many things." - **Sister Mattie Blakely**

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD

By ; Brother Robert Cobb

Romans 10:10

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

God has created man in His image and likeness (**Gen 1:26**) Yet, because of the sin of Adam, man has fallen into a condition of deadness toward the God who created him. This is nothing new to most reading this message, in fact, most all of us could testify that there came a time when God revealed this condition to “our hearts” - I am not talking about that fleshly organ that resides just beneath your chest cavity, I am speaking the the “heart” of your spirit. The scriptures teach us concerning the “thoughts and intentions” of our heart (**Heb 4:12**) These thoughts are so woven into the fabric of our whole person (spirit, soul and body) that only the “word of God” (the scriptures) can lead us into the proper discernment . It is not merely the words on the page, but it is a matter of the heart being affected by the Spirit of God as we imbibe the words of God.

No person is convicted of “sin, righteous and judgment to come” merely by reading the text. We have been made in the image of God, and although, as I have already stated, Adam sinned and cast the whole human race into spiritual ruin, there remains a faint, yet powerful image of the God who created and sustained us in every man. The Gospel of Christ Jesus makes its appeal to that part of our human constitution.

Man does not “find” God of his own will or accord. (**Jn 6:65**) Yet, there is a yearning or deep seated desire for man to acknowledge his God. In fact, if a person will simply hear the gospel and obey it, he will be received of God.

However, those who do obey will confess that it was a matter of the heart, there came a time when they actually wanted to come to Jesus and that “time” or “season” was appointed by God. (**Acts 17:26**) In other words, we can all say that we didn’t find God until we became convinced that “He is” and that He will reward our diligent seeking for Him by allowing us to find Him. *“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness”*

One day Jesus set this question before His disciples *“whom do men say that I am”* - And they said, *“Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets, then Jesus asked He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* (**Matthew 16:15 –17**)

Jesus taught His disciples that everything from God hinged on their faith, or to put it another way *“him that believeth”* He even stated it very clear when He said *“...If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth”.* (**Mark 9:23**)

The entire chapter of Hebrews chapter eleven lays out example after example of those brethren of old that overcame extremely impossible odds because they trusted the promises, or Word of God. This is one point that God wants men to see and understand, that God actually worked circumstances in the lives of those who have gone on before us, to demonstrate to us what and how those who have faith will react in those situations!

We who now live in the "New Covenant" era are both blessed and held responsible for a greater amount of revelation than was available in any other time.

God proved to us through Abraham that righteousness can, and will, be imputed for believing in the God of heaven. Yes, God did set up the first covenant, which was based on our keeping of the Law of Moses, but the problems with keeping the Law was inherent in the nature passed down from our father Adam, his failure to keep just one commandment led to the failure of all the sons of Adam.

We are not guessing at this, we are taught that the "Law was added because of transgression" (Gal 3:19-24) The Law was a type of school master, one that is very good at its job, to prove that we are really sinners at the heart level. This means that if you were only saved from your past sins that would not be

good enough. If man is going to truly be delivered from sin they must be delivered from that old Adamic heart, the one that loves to sin.

Once a person is fully convinced that he or she is in fact a sinner, and they realize that they stand naked before a holy God, unable to change the sins of the past, nor are they able to avoid the sins of the future, they are indeed lost in sin and unable to save themselves, then Christ can do His "salvational" work. Until then, Christ really does not find relevance in the hearts of men. If God really does "love man the way he is" then what need do they have of a savior?

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Romans 4:8) God has found a way, through the removal of sin by the atoning death of His Son, in order that, He might "impute His own righteousness" unto all those who believe! (Rom 3:12 - 2Cor 5:21)

IT ISN'T EASY!

If circus acrobats walked on wire strung only 1 foot above the ground, would we pay good money to watch with baited breath and awe? Hardly! God has put us on display to show His power to save and deliver us from temptation, from real persistent evil. John wrote that Christ's followers would walk as He walked. (1 Jn. 2:5-6) Jesus walked on this earth in His fleshly body being tempted yet not falling. His was a high wire act never replicated before nor since. Walking on water was easy for Jesus compared to overcoming sin! (Heb. 5:7) It didn't require His praying three times with blood mixed with sweat to do that. Overcoming temptation, changing our lives for the better, is tough. Anybody who is doing it or has done it can tell you that it is so. If you are seriously trying or even contemplating walking like Jesus walked, (and we must), please never, never, never be deceived to think that it will be easy or just come naturally, as supposedly for others. Not so! But then, if it was, everybody would become followers of Christ, and there ain't no glory in walking the broad path that leads to destruction.

PRESS ON! - Brother Jeff Hostetter



COMMENTS FROM THE FOXHOLE

“We are seeking not merely to survive, not merely to avoid deception, but to make it through this world triumphant, that we may be afforded an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom of our God!” - Brother Matthew Cobb

“I am thankful that God is a very present help in the time of need and that he gives us people to sojourn with that build us up and encourage us to press on toward the prize before us.” - Sister Baylie Sims

“Each day I need resurrection power to overcome, that comes from abiding in Christ daily, walking each hour in His might and by His power.”
- Brother Jeff Hostetter

“A person who is sober minded lives according to their faith and readies themselves for the coming of the Lord” - Brother Justin Cobb

“To know you have eternal life is like having an elixir from which you can drink freely. It will strengthen you.” - Brother Given O. Blakely

“We are at war - we can't simply take a day off” - Sister Nicole Cobb

“A person can not claim to love God, Christ and his people while indulging in wickedness” - Brother Tony Parker

“The walk of faith in the Spirit involves power to serve the living God in the light and truth of His dear son Christ Jesus.” - Brother Gene Hutchcraft