

Issue #7

FROM THE BATTLEFIELD

Summer 2015

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 ANOTHERS

BURDENS



Looking unto

Jesus

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This Magazine is used as an Outlet for expression for all those who have a desire for the Truth, for those who have been given to see how needful it is to maintain this perspective: that we are in fact in a battle! Much as the Israelites who, after having been delivered from Egypt found themselves engaging in warfare to move into the land promised to their father by the Lord, we press forward in our good fight of faith that we may obtain the prize which has been promised to those who overcome!

Listed here are some of our regular contributors to this work. We are always open to share the good things that the Lord has given the brethren to see. this opportunity is open to any and all. As long as it is Edifying and according to the truth as it is in Christ, it may be considered for inclusion in our publication.

Visit our active group on facebook where you can read more insights from brethren that could not fit within the limited pages of this magazine! @<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fromthefoxhole/>



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Anyone wishing to be added to the mailing list for this publication may send their requests to the above physical and email address. These magazines are provided free of charge, however anyone wishing to make a donation to cover the cost of printing the cost is approximately 2 dollars per issue. Anyone wishing to make a donation should make out their checks to the word of truth fellowship in joplin, mo. All gifts are tax deductible, and a tax receipt can be sent upon your request. .

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Bro Robert has an extensive video ministry, through which he records and posts hundreds of gospel messages online yearly. He also himself delivers regular sermons and bible lessons. He has been a faithful steward of the work that the Lord has given him! Brother Robert handles the printing and distribution of this publication.

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The Lord has laid it on the heart of this brother to write to you concerning spiritual parallels that we can see in every day life. To avoid the dulling effects of the activity of every day life this perspective is essential!

Author of "The Piquant Parallel"

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The Good Pleasure of GOD

2 Thessalonians 1:11 *"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness,"*

God has gone to extensive lengths to reveal this aspect of his nature to mankind, that he is good. Although it is very true that he is the judge of all the earth, That He is holy and terrible , a consuming fire and angry at the wicked every day, He is also a good GOD, and it is his desire to share of his goodness with mankind. He really is not looking to damn you on a technicality. He is not a hard taskmaster, requiring more of his servants than they can bear. He isn't waiting for you to slip so that he can judge you, rather he is looking to bless. This has always been true, Although it has not been able to be seen as it is in the day in which we live, this is one of the reasons for of the redemption of mankind to provide a mans by which his grace and kindness, his goodness and mercy might be able to be made manifest. in times past he communicated this aspect of himself to those who were sensitive,in Moses's day up on the mount, when God passed before him, he proclaimed : **Exodus 34:6** *"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"* David was able to see this about God, as well when we wrote in the psalms , *"The Lord is Good, his mercy is everlasting, his truth endureth to all generations"*.

This is the nature of our God, and it is able to be seen abundantly in salvation, In Christ , we see the paramount exhibition of his mercy, and goodness, In his epistle to the ephesians, the apostle Paul declared to us that this is the future of those who are in Christ, that in the ages to come, the Lord will show unto them the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus. This is the focus of our God in redemption However, Goodness is not just pleasantness, it is tied up in righteousness. Abundant in goodness and TRUTH

That which is HOLY, that which is truly good is that which is worthy of virtue, this is something that can only be said of God. The savior himself said while he was upon the earth, in response to those who called him Good master, " why callest thou me good? There is none good but God.

In this Text, we are witnessing the sensitivity of our Brother Paul to the will of God in his prayers, that he prays for them that GOD would fulfill his own good pleasure, that he would be satisfied, that he would be able to fulfill all that he has desired to do in them according to his eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. That the exhibition of his goodness, of his desire to bless, and for his nature to be revealed and expressed in them, and in the working out of it, would be fulfilled. If you can see it rightly this really is the most fruitful and the most profitable thing that you could possibly ask for! This is Gods agenda, salvation is gods prerogative so to speak. He is the one who established this purpose, and he is the one who is working to bring the plan to fruition. And on an Individual level, only GOD really knows how this would be most profitably worked out within you. What more could you possibly ask for?

If this is true, then does it not behoove us to ask that the Lords will be done in all things? Think of how glorious this is brethren, that we have a God who is good, who is abundant in mercy, and loving kindness, and it is his good pleasure to ensure that all of these things are granted in abundance to those who are in Christ Jesus.

With this in mind. How ridiculous does it sound for a person to act with their own self interest in mind, how ridiculous does it sound to be selfish in anything. Even those who are self seeking in the world, seeking after their own glory and their own satisfaction, they are not even able to imagine or want something that is as great and profound and satisfying as what the Lord has provided for those In Christ Jesus.

PRESS THE BATTLE

A COMMENTARY BY BROTHER GENE HUTCHCRAFT

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."
(Isaiah 53:12)

Earth is a place of conflict both visible and invisible. The elements of our world compete and clash one with the other in a futile display of power, (*Romans 8:20*). People often get caught in these which produce storms and other forms of upheaval that even reshapes the earth in the case of volcanos or earthquakes. Moreover, there are invisible spiritual powers present and active in the earth. These have power over the physical elements just mentioned. Some powers are comparatively minor, such as angels who hold the winds, (*Revelation 7:1*). Or four angels bound in the Euphrates River, (*Revelation 9:14*).

Yet, there is One Who has dominion over all powers, visible and invisible, in heaven and earth. A prominent demonstration of this came in the days of Noah. *"And God said unto Noah, 'The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.'"* (*Genesis 6:13*) *"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die."* (*Genesis 6:17*) God imposed His power in this manner because men rejected Him.

Then, they entered a downward spiral which came to total corruption of heart and mind which the Lord ended by the violence of righteous judgment. Scripture contains many lesser demonstrations of God's ability and willingness to judge sin in His righteousness, truth, and goodness.

However, it also contains a record of God's surpassing judgment of sin and man. That judgment is the subject of our leading text from the prophet Isaiah's record; a prophecy of what was to come seven centuries afterward. The words speak of a man under God's wrath, suffering for deeds He did not do, now was He responsible for their effect. Sinful men are the source for, *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."* (*Isaiah 53:6*)

God's imputation or attribution of sin to another was violence on a level that has not enter the heart or mind of men. Yet, heaven enacted it within events when the Galilean, Jesus of Nazareth, suffered on the Roman cross at Golgotha. It was God Who made Jesus' 'soul an offering for sin.' This action placed Jesus within God's wrath and justice where Jesus paid and God received the cost for human sin. This payment satisfied the debt against the Almighty which man piled up by their rejection of God and His righteousness.

Such a transaction puzzles the human mind, that divinity would engage the earth as a man to pay a debt owed to heaven by the wicked human race!

Yet, this is just what the Father and the Son did when He made 'his soul an offering for sin.' An action in which Jesus was fully aware and cooperative! Other beings were involved in this spiritual transaction as well. Satan was the primary one as to this rebellion against God.

He rebelled in heavenly places and then God allowed him to also enter the earth and spread this rebellion through the innocent yet weak humans. Now the enemy of man's soul did not know that this creation of earth and man was heaven's offensive to expose the nature of sin and enhance the luster of God's glory in which Satan's earlier rebellion dealt a blow in the sight of heavenly powers. This glory of God is central to His eternal purpose. It involves His name and wisdom in which God uses His power to create the earth and orchestrate events that lead to Satan's destruction and an increase in God's glory. Jesus' death work out part of this eternal purpose on the earth.

The text of Isaiah's record, with which this article began, goes right to the impact or outcome of these events which played out in Jesus Christ. His personal sacrifice of spirit, soul, and body greatly pleased, even satisfied, God's justice and wrath; that is their demand for payment of sin's offence. God's nature is such that He cannot simply overlook human sin. It must be resolved as the law directs; "...life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."*(Exodus 21:23-25)* Such is God's justice and wrath for the sake of the truth!

So, this action centers on God, Whose righteousness and goodness found its fulfillment Jesus. He gave His life and body as a ransom for many. And it is sufficient to satisfy the debt to God's name and more; even to purchase those whom God predestinates, calls, justifies, and will glorify by the life of His Son.

God has, in fact, given all things to the Son for the glory of God's name. Jesus is able, by the power of His life, to fulfill God's will for this great purpose of having a people, taken out of the cursed earth, for fellowship with the Almighty.

The fulness of God's grace now rests on Him Who proved, in the earth, that He is fully capable and willing to use the power of grace for God's purpose; to honor His name and take a godly people from this rebellious realm where the prince of the power of the air holds sway over all.

So, when Jesus appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh He began destroying Satan and His works. Even as a man Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. Then He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and so became the source of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. This final act of His death finished the work of Satan's destruction!

By Jesus' all encompassing work of obedience He then obtains from God the 'portion with the great' which is what the Father promised Him. David recorded this promise in one of his songs. *"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."* **(Psalms 2:8)** God also granted Daniel a snapshot of the presentation ceremony, if you will, which he record for us. *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."* **(Daniel 7:13-14)**

*Gods nature
is such, that
He cannot
just overlook
human sin.*

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ----->

"PRESS THE BATTLE"....CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE...

Human involvement to benefit of these things comes by faith which then produces its characteristic obedience in those saved by God's grace, cf. Romans 1:5; 16:26 God's great salvation in Christ Jesus is heaven's offensive to tie up the strong man and take his possessions, (*Matthew 12:29*).

And God engages this battle in a Man sent from heaven; in a body prepared for Him. Jesus inhabited this body in the wisdom and favor of God Who then grants Him the spoil to divide with the strong. The strong are those who believe and, *"according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."* (*Titus 3:5-7*) And such blessing is only the beginning or the entry door, so to speak, of the realm which we now inhabit. In another place Paul calls these, *"spiritual blessings in heavenly places."* (*Ephesians 1:3*)

Believers are not strong in ourselves to enter and inhabit such as this. It is only as we abide in Christ that we have such strength. Jesus declared, *'for without Me you can do nothing.'* (*John 15:5d*) And Paul also declares, *"...ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* (*Colossians 3:3*) One must be strong of heart and mind to enter and dwell in such an environment. God's power through Christ provides this power! The following were strong men. Yet, Moses trembled exceedingly and fell to the ground at the revelation of God.

Also, Daniel, a man highly esteemed of God, passed out in an angel's presence. And John the apostle fell prostrate to the glorified Christ Who then told him not to fear, (*Revelation 1:17*).

So, dear readers, be strong in the might of God. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." (*Hebrews 10:22-23*)

1 Corinthians 9:24

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain".

This is the kind of determination that is required of those who have become participants in this "so great" Salvation that God has provided in Christ Jesus. It is true that we have been given other runners to run with, encouragers of our faith - brothers and sisters to help us along in the race of our lives, but when it comes down to it, the prize will only be obtained as a result of our own personal involvement and participation in the race that has been set before us. No one else can run for you, no one else can believe for you, no one else can obtain for you. You are called to work out YOUR OWN salvation. So, with your confidence and trust in the keeping power of God, and with your faith planted firmly in Jesus Christ, the captain of your salvation, I exhort you to press toward the mark, keep the faith, run the race with patience, and lay hold on eternal life! Run that ye may obtain!

TILL HE COME

Part 2 of a series of articles on the subject of the Lords Table

By: Brother Robert Cobb

1 Corinthians 11:26

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come

God has not given us a table of remembrance in order for us to live in fear of doing something wrong. When we come to this table, primarily, it is not for men to think about themselves, but we have come to "*show the Lord's death till he come*"

1 Corinthians 11:28

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

The examination of ourselves is not to see if we have sinned, it is to see if there is any evidence that God is working in us through the person of Christ Jesus! - We are told that some were sick and even died because they did not properly "*discern the Lord's body*" Jesus died to take away our sin, and we are coming to remember the effectiveness of that reality. When we initially came into the kingdom of God we were "baptized into His death"

Romans 6:3-4

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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

This "newness" of life does not wear off like other things in this world, it is "ever increasing" in all those who are walking with Christ in the Spirit. We have come to this table, not primarily out of an obligation (although one exists) but because it is our preference to honor our Lord, fellowship with Him in his death, and await His return.

We have come to know and realize that it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom and we draw near unto Him, through faith, not with a fearful heart, but out of a Godly fear (respect and reverence) because we have tasted that the Lord is good to all those who are in His Son.



It is not that we are "*fearless*" but we have a Godly fear, there is way too much in the scriptures concerning the fear of the Lord for anyone to conclude that we can be casual before the Lord, and it is that same Lord that we are drawing near to at this table.

We read that the fear of the Lord...

is clean (**Psm 19:19**)

is the beginning of wisdom (**Psm 111:10**)

is to hate evil (**Pro 8:13**)

It prolongeth days (**Pro 10:27**)

By it men depart from evil (**Pro 16:6**)

that the early church "walked in the fear of the Lord" (**Acts 9:31**)

God is not looking for a reason to condemn men at this table, but to bless them. His Son has given Him every reason to bless those who "*out of a honest and good heart*" have separated themselves from the world in order to "*remember His Son*", who is seat at His own right hand in the heavens.

Those who come to this table out of a desire to see Christ more clearly have every reason to expect a blessing from our God!

BE FILLED



***By: Sister
Nicole Cobb***

It is a good exercise to consider the capacity that GOD has given us to meditate, to ponder, to think. The stewardship that GOD has given us in our minds is one which cannot be taken lightly. What are we using our minds for? What are we filling them with? Everyone, whether they realize it or not, is filling themselves up with something. There is no neutral ground when it comes to this. There are really only two manner of things: things of this world, and things of heaven - thoughts that the carnal mind entertains, and thoughts that the mind of Christ ponders. Just as one cannot simultaneously partake of the Lords table and the table of devils - the carnal mind and the mind of Christ cannot be used at once. It is not that it should not be done, it cannot be done.

The question this morning is, are we leaving room for things of this world to creep in? If we fill our minds with heavenly things then there will be no room for temporal things to creep in. An example of this can be found when Jesus said in: **(Matthew 12:43-45)** *"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."*

When we talk about this, it isn't a merely matter of trying to empty yourself of evil thought - it is focusing upon filling yourself up. When we were regenerated, we were given a clean slate.

Prior to that time, we were enemies of GOD in our mind by wicked works. However, when we came into Christ, we were given the mind of Christ, and a cleansed conscience. If we do not take advantage of this, we will by default return again unto the way of the carnal mind. We are like vessels, as it were, that can only hold so much. We must exercise ourselves to be filled up with the things that GOD has given us in Christ Jesus. It is very important that we take full opportunity to, as the Apostle put it, apprehend that for which we have been apprehended of in Christ, to fill up on what The Lord would have us filled with.

The apostle Paul prayed this for the brethren at Ephesus that they might *"know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God"* **(Ephesians 3:19)** Later in his epistle, he exhorted them also: *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit"* **(Ephesians 5:18)** He prayed also for the Phillippians : *"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."* **(Philippians 1:9-11)**

This is the manner of GODs purpose in calling his many Sons to Glory in his Son Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus commanded that the water pots be filled when he attended the wedding at Cana we are to be filled to the brim. When we are all filled up with what GOD has to give in his son, nothing else will fit.

(John 2:7) *"Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim."* When we are filled to The brim with the word, our focus stays on Jesus. There is no room for anything else. We aren't easily distracted, we aren't easily lead astray, we are filled with what is most important. There is no room for Satan's temptations or to be carried out or thought upon.

While we still must go through this world, we can be in the world but not of the world. These distractions that go on today with so many of the things happening don't have to distract us. We know GODs promise and our hope is in the world to come. In our day, satan is trying even more to distract us from the most important things. If he can only get us thinking on these things that even seem of some importance, then he can slowly distract us from The Lord.

Sometimes it will be things that seem completely legitimate and important in the world, worrying about your children, family, your home, your work, food, clothing, etc. But in Christ there isn't anything that we don't have or that isn't provided. The Lord knows that you have need of these things, and he will provide what is needed. Do not burden yourself with care for them, the Lord has freed you from having to fill up your thoughts and concerns with the things of this world.

Going back to the filling of these water pots that we just considered in the occasion when Jesus attended the wedding in Cana of Galilee, the action was not an end of itself - these were filled for them to draw from. There was a transformation that took place.

Paul spoke of this in his Epistle to the Romans: *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* (Romans 12:2) This transformation that takes place when we participate in the will of GOD in this matter is unto Glory - the glory of GOD in Christ Jesus, reflected in his people.

The genuine people of GOD are the proof of the effectiveness of the death and present ministry of Christ. Their lives are like trophies of grace, a shining light that shows forth the wisdom and power of GOD.



...Lay Hold on Eternal

That being said, if that is the effect of filling up oneself with the spirit,

What happens if we don't do these things, if we don't use our minds for what was intended by The Lord?

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient..... knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." (Romans 1:28,32)

Considering Those who have been given an opportunity to hear the good things, and have rejected them, we don't know at what point in time The Lord cut off their vision. There are certain depths of sin which are a result of divine abandonment. Men chose to set their minds on anything other than him, and GOD gave them over to them, as a judgement. he gave them over to those things that they loved so much more than him.

Such a prospect is a frightening thought indeed, but we are thankful that this does not HAVE to be said of anyone. There has been adequate provision made for us to obtain that which is better - which and fulfills, and against which thing "there is no law." There is no limit to how filled up with The Lord you can be! You can get as much as you can handle, and The Lord increases your capacity as you continue to participate in this process.

So, brethren, I exhort you to take advantage of this opportunity to get filled up. There are many things in the word of GOD that make great food for thought. Many morsels of truth have been set before us, don't let them pass you by.

Let us be aware of the capacities of our mind, and labor to not allow it to be occupied with anything other than that which is profitable

BATTLE READY

GOD's Provision of Remembrance

A Lords Table Meditation given

By: Brother Tony Parker

The Lord instituted this table, and knowing the Son always did what pleased the Father, We can safely say the Father wanted this done. It's a good thing. It is good for us, it is full of blessing.

There are ways given for expression during our meeting times together. We sing and pray, we preach and teach. Each thing we do differs in varying degrees of value depending on how much Jesus Christ is showcased.

A song service, for example, is uplifting and edifying to the degree it is able to make Christ Jesus the most central person. The time we spend at this table is a superior to many other things because it is clearly all about Jesus Christ. In my most clear thinking, I can say I know this. Because, I know how God is.

There is a great multitude right now, a great number of those who have not bowed the knee to this present evil age. As God allows for Satan to press the battle, we will see them as they draw the line and declare they are on the Lord side. They amount to a fighting force made up of those who are presently in the kingdom of God fighting and struggling against the powers of darkness that rule this present age. The scripture calls the people of God a special people, they are like God's special forces. These are the only ones who are aware that a battle is being fought.

Darkness is bringing the fight to the saints saying, "We will have not have this light shine on us. We will not have this man Christ Jesus reign over us." So, they press the battle on many different fronts.

This pressing of the heathen makes for a front-line. There is a front line, brethren! To speak in military language, like Paul did, this is our "home front" right here. We are the army of God, wherever we are. However, this is our support position where we do those things that prepare us for the front line.

I suppose we could actually say Heaven is the true home front, where the supplies and support originates, but here on this earth, in this place, the gathering of the Saints is the home front in this battle for the truth and light of God.

There is a military front line position, a particular and specific place where the captain of our salvation can be found : That is where the real fight is taking place.

He can be found here, our captain, along with the advanced and responsible on the frontline. This is the place where all our spiritual discipline is put to work. This is where all our information gathering, all our knowledge and understanding is to put to task. This is where our experience in godliness makes the difference

In Ephesians 6 Paul is speaking of the individual soldier. It every soldier's responsibility to stay fit and ready for the front line. Every soldier is responsible for putting on the whole of armour of God, and standing in the evil day. These are things we do personally, and it is as do these things that we are made fit and usable for the front line.

Our personal struggle to stand fit and able in the army of God is not the front line just as the home front is not.

Saints who can identify the front line and are able to fight there are hard to come by

We do not have to wonder about the nature of this warfare. Paul tells us that what we wrestle with is not flesh and blood. Rather, these things are evil forces that are spiritual. Paul calls them "spiritual wickedness in high places." The front-line is drawn where darkness and light meet. It is not confined nor defined by a particular place but, it is spiritual and unseen, it can be anywhere and everywhere.

On the one side, it is those unlike God, the wicked, and on the other, it is those possessing moral goodness, godliness and all holiness. This is the circumstance for the people of God in this world.

It is in this context of all this that God has given us this table to aid us in our remembrance of his Son. It is designed to keep us fit for the kingdom, that we might be found worthy in the day of His coming. The table is about Jesus and it has value and purpose. The Lord's Table is able to edify us, it will exhort and comfort us, admonish and rebuke. The table of the Lord will do this. We are encouraged time and time again as we come here to remember. In very simple terms it is by remembering that we guard against forgetting.

Remembering is the primary reason we have this table. To remember we have a deliverer, one who has been given to the saints. Remembering is so linked to our salvation that God gave us this provision to remember him at this table. Nobody wants to hear on that final day, "*you must have forgotten.*" You must have forgotten the one who called you out, the one who delivered you from unfruitful works of darkness. You must have forgotten the forerunner who went up before and prepared the way for you.

How can a man be saved who has forgotten Christ, who has very carelessly moved him out of the spotlight? If a person becomes indifferent to Jesus, if Jesus is no longer their focus in life – this is what has happened, they have forgotten.

It takes energy, planning, deliberation and forethought to not forget our salvation, to keep at the forefront the one who personally brought this salvation to us. Jesus brought salvation to men. He

put salvation within their grasp. He

removed sin, and set us free from our enslavement

to it. He bound up the strong man.

Satan is bound brethren! All men are now free to come to Jesus. All

that they have to do is to get up and come. From

one point of view, brethren, we have already been delivered

and the hope we have

is our sure salvation.



And yet, It can also be said that until we leave this earth we have not been completely saved. At this time we are delivered from the rule of Satan over us, and the hope of a full salvation is in the coming of Jesus Christ.

If we don't remember this, we will not be found looking...Paul told Titus to "*speak these things with all authority, exhort and rebuke*" The Lord ask in (Luke 18:8) "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

This exhortation is to all the saints everywhere. Let us be of that number who are found looking him when he returns.

His Hand STUCK to His Sword !

By Bro Given Blakely

"He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder." (2 Samuel 23:10)

When David gathered fighting men together, he had no regard for mere appearance. At

one time, when he escaped from Achish king of Gath, and king Saul as well, he went to the cave of Adullam. There men gathered themselves to him. They were described as *"every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented"* (2 Sam 22:2). They were four hundred in number, and proved to be a powerful army.

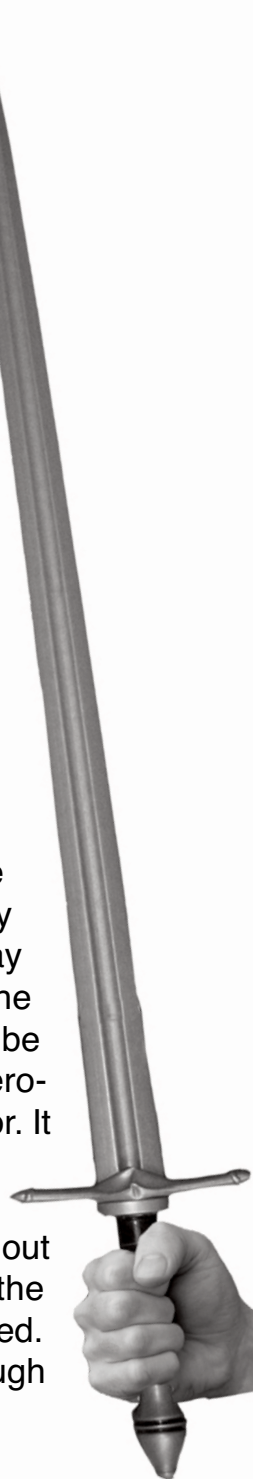
Also, among the army of David, were some "mighty men" that excelled in battle. The top three men were Adino the Eznite, Eleazar the Ahohite, and Shammah the Hararite. Their exploits were impressive. Adino, the first in rank, *"killed eight hundred men at one time"* (v 8). Shammah, ranked third, defended a field of lentils single-handedly against a troop of Philistines, killing them all while he stood in the middle of the field (v 11-12). The second man, Eleazar also was a great warrior.

On one occasion, the Philistines defied Israel, and gathered for an epochal battle against them. The occasion was especially critical, for all the men of Israel had *"gone away."*

But at this point, Eleazar stood up. He did not sound a trumpet to rally the armies of Israel, but stood against the enemy all alone

He pressed the battle against the Philistines, attacking them with his sword. He fought so long and hard that *"his hand grew tired and froze to the sword"* (NIV). But that day, the Lord wrought a great victory over the enemy through a single man, while all the others were *"gone away."* The other men finally returned, but there was no battle to fight when they came back. All they could do was take the *"spoils,"* or, as the NASB reads, *"strip the slain."*

There remain battles that will have to be fought alone – battles where brethren are not present, and the fearful run away. But in such times, God is looking for a person through whom He can bring the victory. It may be a mighty warrior like Eleazar, or Shammah. It may be a judge like Samson, with only the jawbone of an ass in his hand. It may be a young boy named David facing a ferocious giant who was a seasoned warrior. It may even be an Apostle like Paul who has the entire world as his field. But rest assured, the person who launches out against the forces of darkness in the power of the Lord will not be disappointed. God is still working great victories through solitary people of faith.





Blessed are You, O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

for You are the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. Comfort us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from You. You keep us in perfect peace as our minds are stayed on You, because we believe Your promises. May we trust in You forever, for You are an everlasting rock.

In the Name of Christ, Amen.

Wondrous Father,

Every day I want to increasingly perceive what You are doing and comprehend Your ability so I can join You with a willing and faith-readied heart. You are worthy of my deepest trust and most joyful expectation. Teach me to judge nothing before the time and to hope in You. Let it be said of me, I received of You because I asked, not doubting.

In the Name of Christ, Amen

O God Who Sees,

See my faith, for I believe; I ask that You help my unbelief. Doubt can creep in so subtly through an unkind word or an unthankful spirit. Let these have no place in me! You are our faithful and generous Provider: I know You can cleanse me of all unrighteousness, and give me excellence and steadfastness of faith. I have greater expectations of grace's work in me as a result of seeing what You can do. Perform your excellent, transformative work in me! My heart is full of adoration for You!

In the Name of Jesus, our Defender, Amen.



(2 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

GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND

This is a peculiar expression in scripture, it is the only way that it is expressed quite in this way, but the truth of it is all throughout.

To prepare oneself for something requiring readiness, strength, and endurance, The parts of the body between the hips and the lower ribs, especially regarded as the seat of physical strength, or generative power

In other words, to gird up your loins spiritually is to put yourself in a position where you can quickly, and with minimal hindrance use the strength, power, or capacity which you have been given Godward. However, our text does not merely say gird up your loins, but gird up the loins of our mind. Your mind has a certain utility, a strength, a usefulness which can be used to accomplish various tasks. Girding up the loins of your mind, is to apply all of your mental strength to being able to use it to accomplish what you have been given to accomplish, without being drawn away to other things, and to do so at any given time. The idea is not only to be able to use your capacity to the fullest amount but to be able to do so without delay. To be quick on your feet. This charge is given to the saints of God with the state of the world, and even their own natural capacities and propensities in mind. There is a whole host of enemies against you who are quick to take advantage of moments when we are bogged down with the cares of this world.

This is something that does not happen automatically. It is the natural response of flesh to be slow in reacting to things. This takes effort and diligence in order to accomplish. This ability to be able to react instantly to circumstances in which we find ourselves, when we are given to see the action that is needed, also is acquired before the circumstance occurs. It is something which is preparatory, not obtained on the fly.

BE SOBER

Not only ought we to be in a state of readiness, but we ought to be careful of involving ourselves in anything that would hinder us from doing so. Sobriety is similar to girding up your loins in the sense that it involves with it a sense of readiness., but it is different because it emphasizes more of what you choose not to do. Sobriety is a state which must be maintained. There are a whole host of things which can be ingested so to speak, spiritually which cause us to not be able to see things properly. This concept is mirrored in the physical as well.

Sobriety is the opposite of drunkenness, and drunkenness is a condition which comes upon a person because of something that they have allowed themselves to ingest which causes the loss of ability to perceive the reality of the world around them as it really is. It may cause them to act in a way which they would otherwise not act, because they have forgotten things which ordinarily they are considerate of concerning the truth of the world around them.

However, this being said, i am not saying that sobriety is not merely a state of not being drunk. Sobriety is a state that is maintained by making a conscious choice to not take in anything which causes inebriation.

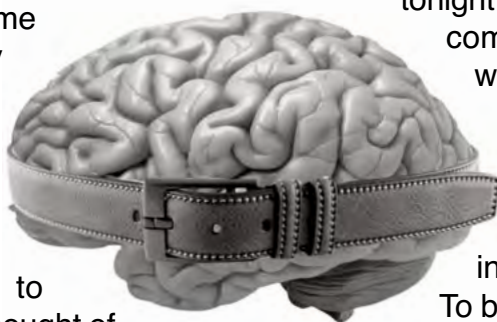
In some instances, this may involve choosing to ingest things which boost awareness. taking in things that would help one to stay awake and aware. In Christ, as we travel through this world, we are constantly being presented with things to take in. The world makes its call to us, especially in the generation in which we live. Its hard to go through a single day without being barraged with advertisements for things that the world finds pleasure in. Every single day satan makes his appeal to you, and brings before you perhaps, things that you used to find pleasure in, things that would cause you to forget about God and Christ. But, likewise, every day we find that the mercies of our Lord are new. Every day, he holds out to us the provision we need , that we might be as daniel, who refused to defile himself with a portion of the kings meat and his wine, rather choosing pulse and some water. That the world when they look at us may wonder how it is that our countenance is fairer than all of those who choose to indulge themselves in earthly pleasure. We are spiritually partaking of pulse so to speak. something which is not thought of by the world as appetizing and rich in flavor, yet we are flourishing on it, and find it more satisfying than anything which the world ever offered us.

AND HOPE TO THE END

As we travel through this life, laboring to set ourselves apart from the world around us, in a state of readiness for anything which might come against us, and being careful to maintain our spiritual purity, and sensitivity to the dangers all around us, we do so pointed in a certain direction. None of these things are an end of themselves, and are not meant to be the way in which we will spend our time eternally. They are things which are necessary for our journey through this present evil world, but they will not always be needed in the capacity which we have them now. These things are all done with the world to come in mind. Hope is a mainstay for the child of God. It is everything.

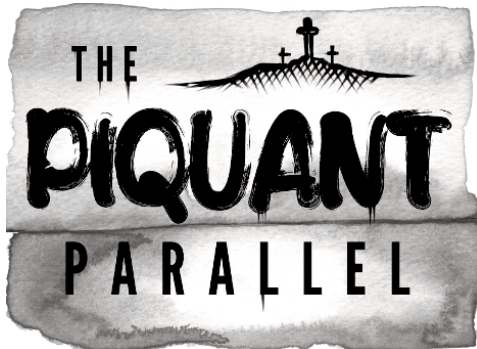
We are not simply living to rise above the world, but to rise even unto the heavenlies. Our expectation of the world to come, and the joys which await us there, actually allow us to pass the time of our sojourning in the wilderness of this life with joyful anticipation. Our confidence that the Lord is not only able but willing to accomplish all that he has promised us in the ages to come, is what allows us to live in a way which contradicts the way the world presently looks to us via our natural sight. which brings us to the conclusion of our text

FOR THE GRACE WHICH IS TO BE BROUGHT UNTO YOU



All of these things which we have spoken of tonight are meant to prepare us for the coming of our savior. This grace which is spoken of, is grace to allow us to stand before a holy God justified in his sight. To be one of the ones who have joy and rejoicing at his coming, rather than fear and agony. To be able to, as Paul referred to in his letter to the Ephesians, having done all, to stand. To be able to abide the day of his coming.

So then Brethren. I exhort you to gird up the loins of our mind, to intentionally and with effort apply yourselves to use the capacity which the Lord has given you to reason and think, to think upon spiritual things. To be ready to receive from him what he has to give you. Be sober, labor to cast away from yourself anything that would cause you to be limited in your capacity to perceive the truth. And do so in a posture of hope. Just as the Lord Jesus himself, when he was on the earth, set his gaze steadfastly towards Jerusalem in determination to do what he knew he must do to redeem you, set your gaze stedfastly heavenward. Fix your eyes upon the reward that awaits. Set your affection on things above. Follow the captain of your salvation as he is bringing many sons to glory!



The piquant parallel is a column that gives you, the reader, pleasant things to consider. In these series, I will connect everyday experience with a thought that pertains to spiritual life, and gives the reader food for thought, to assist you in setting your thoughts on higher things in the midst of the hum-drum of everyday life

- Brother Justin Cobb

All parallels, or rather, parables exist only because of the truth. All things were made for a divine reason, and nothing was made without God in mind. All things were made by Him, for Him (**Col 1:16**) and for His pleasure (**Rev 4:11**). God did not create a flower just to create a flower. He did not create a seed that grows into that flower for that reason either.

In Matthew chapter 13, Jesus tells a parable to the multitudes. This was not profitable to them or even His disciples until the meaning of it was opened up by Jesus. Jesus, of course, only opened this parable up to His disciples (**Mt 13:18-23**), to the others it's meaning would be concealed, and the truth hidden from them (**Mt 13:15**). Every parable on earth points to what God has done, is doing and will do. It can only be revealed to those who are learning from Jesus. If a person is not denying themselves, taking up their cross, putting Jesus in priority over anyone else, forsaking all that he has to follow Jesus, they are not learning from Jesus. (**Lk 14:33, 14:26, Mt 16:24**). The truth will be hidden from such people.

But to those of us who are "pressing in" to see Christ, to look at the things that are unseen, those of us who are denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and who are not conformed to this world, we are not in darkness about the workings of God. If Jesus spoke of a seed, and likened it to the state of a man's heart, then that is why the seed was created to begin with.

Jesus didn't come up with the parable after the seed was made, He came up with the parable BEFORE the seed was made. The seed was made because of the parable, and not the other way around. Taking then this principle (through the eyes of faith) we can see that the things that are around us are created to reflect some of the the unseen realities of the spiritual realm.

As I was walking in the spirit, I made an observation concerning a certain behavior we all share. The spirit led me to think of this parallel:

I was at work one day, and one person stated that they were hungry. Another person agreed, and before I knew it there were 8 or 9 people all "In on some pizza", each contributing money towards the purchase of a very large pizza. When it arrived, they all took their breaks together, and all ate together. People seem to want to eat with others. They invite others to meals, they have backyard barbecues. In just about every social gathering on earth food is involved, if not the very centerpiece of the gathering. When we hear the word of God, we want to share it with others. There is a necessary fellowship of the spirit, that drives us to be fellow sojourners, and to have a heart joined in unity with those who love the truth.

The assembly of the saints is a place to get filled, to share spiritual food with one another. It is not a place where we hash out our failures and sins!



By: Brother Robert Cobb

Romans 6:14 -16

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 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?

The "dominion" of sin must never be allowed to find a foot hold in those who are making a profession of faith. While it is true that the saints continue to have the "capacity" to sin, they are not living under the "dominion" of sin.

Who is Paul talking about when he says "over you" - He is speaking of those who are walking in the Spirit, to those who are "crucifying the flesh" - Paul is not sanctioning sin in any sense of the word.

Grace is not a silent, static category that a person is inserted into when they come into Christ, but the Grace of God is actively working in all those who are "walking by faith" - Grace is "teaching men to deny ungodliness and worldly lust" that they would live lives that would honor God, Christ and effectively prepare them for the world to come.

When men sin they have yielded their "members" or bodies unto the Devil, it is Satan who is the father of the sin, and all those who sin instantly become his servants. Now, I know that it is not fashionable to speak like this, and perhaps we will hear that "hey wait, we all sin, right?" well, thats not really the right response - While we may all have the capacity to sin, not all are actively "yielding their members" unto sin! Since the day you were "baptized into Christ death" you received a new capacity! This new and living way brought the ability to "deny ungodliness" or we might say, we no longer have to serve sin!

When we are tempted to sin there is personalities (behind this "seen" realm) at work, Satan knows that if he is successful in distracting a person long enough, from what God has made them in Christ Jesus, that they will sin, but if we understand the matter of temptation

correctly we will find that Christ has fully addressed the problem of temptation!

James tells us that when "any man is tempted" he is drawn away "of his own lust" - Now, those who are in Christ Jesus have access to "new and living" resources that were not previously available unto them, when they were living in the flesh. The Holy Spirit we find is also actively holding out eternal realities, making strong appeals to that "new part" which was created by God in all those who have believed on Christ. That "new man" is created in "all true holiness" and righteousness - which means that just as your old man has desires that Satan can attempt to access through sin, the new man has desires for higher, and better things that can be accessed through righteousness!

Now, if this were the end of the matter we would be in a sad condition! But remember, we have an intercessor in heaven! Christ Jesus can be "touched" with the feeling of our infirmities! Now, what does that mean? Well, some think that it means that Jesus understands when we sin, but we know that this cannot be the case because Jesus NEVER sinned! Jesus does not know what it is like to sin! So, what does it mean?

Jesus was "tempted in "all points" just as we are! Jesus was tempted in all the "categories" of sin - The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life - Yet, it is important to mention that Jesus was always victorious over temptation! Yet, the fact that He was tempted has prepared Him to be the perfect high priest unto God, Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted to do something that is wrong, so, now, when we are tempted to sin, we can run to Jesus, and the only man who never sinned can show you the "way of escape" - now, the only time we will ever sin is when we do not "go to Jesus" and escape the sin!

So, the bottom line "whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" - Which inclination are you giving into? The Spirit or the flesh?

Grace and Peace, Brethren



This series is not intended to be a retreat into mere academic inquiry. While we will explore various texts, we will focus on identifying the nature of the faith-life. If God's people do not know the character of the battle in which they are engaged, Satan will get the upper hand with them. My ultimate purpose is to give advantage to the people of God. If God is to be glorified in us, we simply cannot be uninformed about the life we possess in the Son.

IDENTIFY THE CAUSE THE NATURE OF THE INWARD STRUGGLE

Why do we have struggles within? What is it all about? Some think the new birth eliminates inward struggle. Is this so? We will seek to clarify spiritual struggle, giving you an appreciation for why it is present. Considerable time will also be given to describing that struggle.

CONFIRM THE SOULS OF THE BELIEVERS

Getting into Christ involves a triumph over the devil. But that is not the end of our exposure to him. The great difficulty is NOT getting into Christ, but remaining, or abiding, in Him. A "good fight of faith" is not related to being converted, but to remaining sanctified (1 Tim 6:12). Intense spiritual activities like running (Heb 12:1-2) and wrestling (Eph 6:12) have to do with life after we are born again.

This is why early messengers were so involved in confirming and edifying the saints of the Lord. "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). God's people must be strong if they are to finish their course. Understanding the nature of inner conflict will contribute to that strength.

AFFIRM INWARD STRUGGLE TO BE AN EVIDENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

One of the loftiest insights I ever received was this: struggle is evidence of spiritual life. For years I interpreted inner conflict as a sign of distance from God, spiritual weakness, and Satanic triumph. It is important that you see this is not true. When you have conflict with Satan, it is because you no longer belong to Him. When you experience war within, it is because you have been reconciled to God. The part of you that remains unregenerate did not go to sleep when you were born again.

INTERPRETATIONS OF STRUGGLE

Because the Divine imagery in man involves intelligence, he continually attempts to interpret his condition. This can be good, but it can also be evil. If we assess our situation from the perspective of this world, we will be forced to wrong conclusions. If, on the other hand, we reason as spiritual men, we can profit from introspection.

1. Ignore by turning to distractions

Inward struggle is viewed by some as antithetical to us. Because of this, some attempt to remove its grim reality by resorting to distractions. They think these will bring relief. The inordinate quest for pleasure and the practice of fleshly indulgences are examples of this kind of activity. It is tragic that much of the religion of our day is nothing more than an appeal to this type of distraction. Religious entertainment is not to be the thrust of our gatherings.

2. Evidence of inferiority

Others, particularly in the religious realm, view inner struggle as evidence of inferiority. The presence of conflicting emotions and thoughts are considered evidence of the absence of grace. They are also thought to suggest the presence of rebellion. Therefore, doubts and fears are generated by this view of incongruous experiences.

3. Pretend it is not there

Those enamored of a state of inactivity suppose that conflict is inevitable, and that any effort to address it is pointless. Their fatalistic view forces them to ignore their struggles, pretending they are not there. The result is that they are carried about by their emotions. They rise and fall on the ocean of experience, bobbing up and down upon the uneven sea of life without hope. They do not extend themselves to appropriate the good, nor do they exert effort to avoid evil.

STAND STILL AND SEE

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you. (2 Chronicles 20:17 KJV)

There are times when you must fight, when you must struggle and strain, labor and endure, when you must stand firm, quit yourselves like men, gird up your Loins, and press the battle with every ounce of strength you have to ensure your victory.

And yet, there are also times when you must lean and rely upon The Lord to deliver you. There are battles we all face that are beyond our means of fortitude and endurance, that have to do with things that are completely out of our control. It is times such as these that we use the faith and trust that we have learned in our past experience of GOD empowering us to overcome our circumstances in life. Think back in your life of the things which you have been delivered from. How can you account for these victories other than that The Lord delivered you enemies into your hand?

Sometimes there's really nothing that we can do to affectively work through a situation except trust in the sovereignty and goodness of GOD to resolve the matter as he sees fit. In fact, as much as we have labored in this publication to communicate the need for our own personal involvement and continuance in the good fight of of faith, there are a large number of things associated with your salvation with which you had absolutely nothing to do. From the highest perspective, really, The victory has already been ensured for the one who chooses to fight in the Lords army!

In Word or Deed

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
(Colossians 3:16-17)

Paul, in our text issues an exhortation that, if taken seriously, causes us to seriously examine our conversation. This text is a reminder that we are not free to be careless in any of our actions or words. If we are not careful to be single in our aim, we will find ourselves attempting to compartmentalize our lives, and hold back things for ourselves. Our flesh will attempt to create a separation between our service to Christ, and our own personal enjoyment which, if allowed to continue, will inevitably cause us to choose ourselves over him. Our text reminds of the necessity of setting our affection on things above. In fact, it has not been but a few verse since the beginning of the chapter where we were admonished to *"set our affection on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."* This total bringing into subjection of our thoughts and deeds is in fact an evidence that we have done just that. The one who has their heart and mind fixed upon him, and walks according to the spirit will naturally bring forth fruit unto God in their actions and words.

This is not an exhortation which can be given from Mount Sinai. This is an exhortation fit for those who are in Christ Jesus. Unlike the law, which required a lengthy explanation with the utmost amount of detail to make it clear to the people what they ought and ought not do, The reign of grace does not hardly require any.

Regenerate man is able to take a statement as broad and sweeping as this, which covers the whole thrust of life in Christ, and make the application for all of the things which fall under it.

The divine nature within the regenerated does much more to direct their conversation than a lengthy explanation of rules ever could. It in fact also requires much more than Law ever could. This request, to in all that you say or do, act in a manner that would be pleasing to Christ, seen from the eyes of mere human capacity is an impossible task. But, we remember the words that our saviour spoke to the Apostles "with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" Despite those who may protest, what Paul is exhorting those in Colosse to do is in fact possible! It is the result of continuing in the way in which we were set in our baptism into Christ. It in fact, is true of all those in Christ to one degree or another.

I am not saying that since we came into Christ, we have not ever said or done anything that was out of harmony with the life that we have been called to in him, We admit that we have not yet attained a state of complete perfection and holiness, and that there have been times when we have not been as steadfast as others, but when there were instances in which we slipped, they were the exceptions and not the rule. Since coming into Christ, our lives have been characterized by living unto Christ in a state of continual and increasing sanctification.

There is a prevailing attitude in our day that the expression of sin is more innocent than it, in reality, is. It has been said by many of those professing Christ in our current christian environment that "we can't help but sin".

I kind of get the feeling when reading and hearing some of the material that people are putting out, that they think the writers of scripture were kind of exaggerating when they said things such as this.

It has almost been programmed into the minds of the majority of professing believers in our day that the outbreak and expression of gross iniquity is almost inevitable. As if what we have been called to do in our text was merely a suggestion that we know in reality we will never be able to attain to, but it's a nice thought to have. Even the more contemporary translations have taken and neutered the text of scripture to reflect this bent towards excusing sin that they have cultured.

For example, In Romans 7 where Paul is testifying of the inward war which he finds himself in, in dealing with residing in a body of corruption yet operating according to the divine nature. They have taken and turned it into an expression of hopelessness, and a testimony of constant failure. When he proclaims, "oh wretched man that i am, " His expression is not one of personal guilt over a life of sin, it is one of disgust for the influence which he finds is unavoidably and constantly attempting to bring him into bondage, yet at the end of the chapter, and especially the beginning of chapter 8, he shows the solution to the conflict which allows him to bring his body into subjection, and not allow the wicked one's snares to snag him back into a life of sin.

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:25) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:1, 2)

In addition to teaching us the doctrine concerning the separation which has occurred between us and our old nature, it is a text of great comfort to the one experiencing temptation, it assures them that these wicked thoughts with which they are constantly assaulted, are not in fact theirs, and they do not have to own them. It is a testimony which teaches us that although we cannot help the inevitability of the evil one planting unwanted thoughts of evil into our minds, we can hold up the shield of faith and quench these fiery darts. That we are not debtors to live after the flesh.

"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." (Romans 8:12, 13)

However, this truth must be proclaimed if the people are to live godly. Those who neuter these texts by putting a subtitle on them, such as "but we all know", suggesting that it doesn't really mean what it says, or those who neglect to proclaim them at all, are doing as King Saul did when he ordered the army of Israel to abstain from food on the day of the battle. They have troubled the land. If only they could look past their preconceived notions and subtitles and accept the truth of the scripture. Were this to happen, they would, as Jonathan did, when not knowing the edict of the king, partook of the honey which they came across in their way, have their eyes enlightened. As long as people are unaware of the work that has been done in them in redemption, they will fall prey to the tempter every time he hurls his fiery darts in their direction. Especially when they are being taught by men who are essentially spiritual dart boards, whom are convincing others that we have no other choice than to be one as well.

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"IN WORD AND DEED"

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Those who insist upon constantly lessening the seriousness of the expression of sin are doing the church of God a great disservice. Let those who do so not bind their own personal experience upon others. Just because they have found in their own lives, that they were unable to keep from gratifying themselves with carnal desires, does not mean that it is not possible to do so. And even more serious than that, Let them not proclaim that they are walking in the spirit and doing these things simultaneously. Let them stop presenting their sin dominated conversation to the world under the name of Christian, thus bringing reproach to Christ, associating him with a powerless dead religion, and making GOD a liar.

Our outward expression is an evidence of our inward condition

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15)

The life of one who is in Christ is characterized by not living unto themselves, but unto him which gave his life for them.

With this in mind it only makes sense to do all with him in mind. Labor to maintain a condition where the entire focus of your attention, and the entire object of your affection is Christ. Do everything with the reality in mind that you are a part of him. Act according to the high calling of God which you have been called to IN CHRIST JESUS.

**GIVING THANKS TO GOD AND
THE FATHER BY HIM**

This phrase beckons us to consider our God personally. Let us not be of the mind that our God is not personally affected by either the obedience or obstinacy of those whom he has himself made. We must exercise ourselves to take caution when considering our Lord, that we not think of him to be without emotion.

God is in fact angry every day with those whom have been damned to spend eternity in the place that has been prepared for the devil and his angels, yet at the same time his heart is grieved because of their rejection of him. Not to the point of compromising his own righteousness to have them dwell with him, but there is grief nonetheless.

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." (Genesis 6:5, 6)

If the wickedness of man affects the heart of God in this fashion, How much more then, is God pleased by those whom have believed in his son, and have become partakers of the divine nature, and are being built together for his habitation?

It is with this in mind that we express Thanks to our God, who has done everything that could possibly have been done to save us to the uttermost. We realize that our purpose is not only to glorify God in our conversation, but it is the please the Lord himself. Our hearts are fixed upon our God, and we express thanks for his goodness and mercy.

Steadfast Saints



Sister Betty Cobb

(Written by Brother Robert Cobb)

I have known this member of the body of Christ my whole life, she has always been there to comfort and edify, exhort and teach. (I said always because she is my mother). I do not remember my Mother before she was in Christ, I was but six years old when she began to attend "The Church at 26th and Colfax", in Black Oak, Indiana. It was a small building, a former Pizza establishment which measure about sixteen feet by twenty, pretty small for twenty or thirty people to fit into, yet my Mother found something there she had never found anyplace else. She found someone preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and a group of people who wanted to know more about Jesus.

It was not because of my Mothers lack of looking for "the right church"; she had attended many other churches over the years, most of them wanted something from her, others just wanted more people to attend, but when she walked into that small but warm building that day, her life would change forever. She met a man named Given O. Blakely, and she met a group of people that harbored a deep desire to "know and understand God" and after just one visit, my Mother knew she would have to "come and see" what this sweet sounding word of the gospel was all about.

She began to attend the meetings and found that following God was more about "knowing Christ" then it was about being under a system of laws and regulations. She would learn how to read by reading the scriptures and she would come to see that this God who has previously only been presented as an angry ogre was truly a loving and comforting "father of lights" that wanted to bless, receive and change her into the image of His Son, Christ Jesus.

Over the many years of her search for God, my Mother would endure many severe trials, I think that one of the hardest was having an unfaithful husband, and children that would abandon eventually Christ. Yet, in the midst of all these things, God would prove His faithfulness to her, and she would continue to grow "in the grace and the knowledge" of our Lord Jesus Christ.

My Mother would be the first person that I would see "Christ" being formed in. I could see her in her bad times, as well as her good times, and through it all, I could actually witness her resolve to "follow Christ" being lived out in my presence. She continues to this day to impress me with her simple devotion to Christ, her willingness to find the best in those who she encounters, and even though she has been alone now for many years (my Father having departed after coming to Christ in the end of his life) she has found much comfort and encouragement in her latter years, serving Christ at the Banner of Truth Fellowship in Northwest Indiana.

I THANK GOD FOR THIS STEADFAST SAINT!



COMMENTS FROM THE FOXHOLE

Brother Robert Cobb - "The message from the homeland is certain "all who fight win!" and all who stand for what is right will be vindicated on that last day!"

Brother Jeff Hostetter - "Sinners need converted, and the saints need edified. If we continue to address and think of the saints as being the same as sinners, we are making a strategic mistake. We will continue to treat sinners and saints in a clumsy way that does not fully convert the sinner, nor perfect the saint."

Brother John Newton - "See the Judge, our nature wearing, cloth'd in majesty divine! You who long for his appearing then shall say, "This God is mine!"

Sister Teclah Mulele - It is a crucial time for every Christian to "Put on the whole armor of God" (Eph6:10-12)

Brother Benjamin Blakely - "Keep pressing on the higher grounds, and you WILL achieve Victory!"

Brother Jeremy Williams - "It is our job to keep what God has given us"

Sister Carol Maguire Mattice - "He is enough, and we all must learn that He is enough"

Brother Daniel Scalf - "Do not fool yourselves in regards to Satans capabilities in warfare"

Brother Aaron Hutchcraft - "It is evident that the devil is filled with wrath; he knows he only has a short time left. Let us also remember his time is short when we see things that come to pass!"