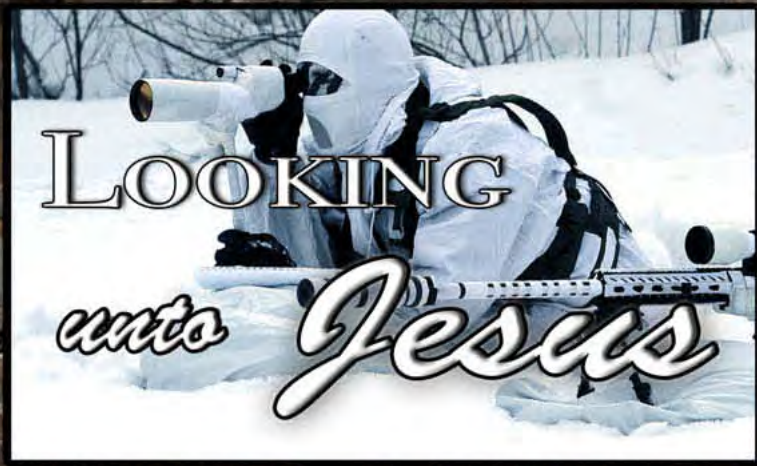


BATTLEFIELD

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



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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 From The Battlefield and send to the address above. All gifts are tax deductible, and a tax receipt can be sent upon your request.

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BROTHER ROBERT COBB

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BROTHER JUSTIN COBB

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"

BROTHER MATTHEW COBB

Brother Matthew does the layout/editing for this publication. He also delivers Lords Table Meditations, and monthly sermons at the Word of Truth Fellowship in Joplin, Mo. His desire is that this publication would reach those who are in desperate need of comfort, edification, and clarification about the nature of the good fight of Faith.

RUN

TO OBTAIN

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.

Amidst the conflict of this life, it may sometimes become easy to get lost in the struggle of it all.

While we must become experts in running to be able to successfully navigate the battlefield of this present evil world, we are not to merely become accustomed to the race. We have not been called to run perpetually, the enduring that must take place in the present is only in preparation for the greater work. It is good to live with this end view in mind. In fact, even more than this, I think it could be said that those who do not possess such a forward view run uncertainly. Imagine a race that has no determined finish line. How would you gauge your progress? How would you have any indication that you were headed towards the conclusion of your running?

The same could be said of a war that has no defined terms of victory. Of all the battles fought among the nations throughout the history of man, the most tragic and depressing were those that were started without a clear goal or path to victory. In the good fight of faith, We are not to become used to being in a war zone. Our warring is a warring of necessity, we aren't warmongers.

There have existed certain civilizations throughout history who prided themselves on battle. The most revered individuals in their society were the warriors, who, by the strength of their own arm sought after glory and victory in battle against their enemies.

The glory that we seek, however, is not as those - who glory in the battle itself. We battle in prospect of a time of peace, when what we have fought for will be realized.

Micah 4:3

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

The point here is that those who have learned to press themselves during times of conflict and have learned patience and endurance, are able to do more with times of peace than those who have not. In the present, let us submit ourselves to the grind stone, so to speak, in prospect of what work may be able to be done when we are sharpened and prepared for Glory.

So then brethren, contend for the crown, run for your reward, struggle to seize, press to possess. Remember always that what you are being shaped for is nothing less than Glory! To be a royal diadem in the hand of your GOD.

PRESS THE BATTLE

A COMMENTARY BY BROTHER GENE HUTCHCRAFT

God aggressively moves forward to fulfill the counsel of His will in the earth. As He does this He also reveals some of His interests, thoughts, and ways in the working of that counsel. Men are not able to discover or perceive these things without God revealing them to our hearts and minds. As the prophet wrote, *'Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.'* (Isaiah 40:12-15). Once revealed, it is then necessary for us to believe Him else we insult God and stand under the weight of His wrath. For God loves justice and judgment before He loves men! Yet, He is merciful to those of contrite heart toward Him. Let us then flee to Him for refuge from the wrath that comes upon the earth!

God made the earth and all that is in it, the world and all it contains. He created it for His purpose and the involvement of those made in His image. As part of that counsel, God allowed an enemy to enter the earth to tempt the man and woman. By sinning, they fell. Then, the Most High opened the next aspect of His purpose by aggressive words of justice and judgment. He spoke them to that enemy while the man and woman, in their sin, listened to God's judgment. For the execution of that sentence involved them.

'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' (Genesis 3:15)

God fulfilled these words in a manner that man could not discover or understand except it is revealed in later scripture. *'But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.'* (Galatians 4:4). We know the One of Whom the Spirit speaks through the apostle Paul.

Some ten generations after Adam and Eve God revealed to Noah the next aspect of His agenda to redeem His name and a people of His possession. The Lord did this to sustain the earth from the blight of human sin until the fulness of time. *'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). The holy and righteous God has limits beyond which He will not tolerate sinful human behavior. This was also true in the case of Sodom, Egypt's enslavement of Israel, and the wicked tribes inhabiting Canaan. It was also true of Israel when they violated God's covenant, name, and purpose for them. These are only a few examples in which God judged the condition of men and imposed His will upon them. Their actions revealed the intent of their hearts and hands. So, God then acted in justice and judgment. Such is the nature or character of the Almighty One with Whom we have to do.

God is the judge of the earth's inhabitants, those of every generation belong to Him Who is the Ancient of Days. Events in the earth are under His piercing insight.

'The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.' (Psalms 33:13-15) *'Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?'* saith the LORD. *'Do not I fill heaven and earth?'* saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 23:24) *'Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.'* (Jeremiah 32:19)

Despite the revelation of these things, Israel refused to acknowledge the truth and turned to their own desires. These same desires continue making men corrupt and miserable today. They lead them on the path to destruction from the Lord, if not in this present life it will come when they go to God for His judgment. All of these things are aspects of God's purpose to affirm and glorify His name in the heavens and earth. This judgment process has, is, and will happen in the human experience. While those with faith benefit from it, those without faith are sent to a place prepared for those who reject the Most High and His revelation. This is also made known to us.

Which are you, a believer or unbeliever, in this working of God's counsel, truth, wisdom, and power for His name's sake? Have you confessed His righteousness and yielded yourself to His will in faith? Do you partake of God's peace that surpasses human understanding? It is a peace first with God Most High and then in your own heart and mind. Do you know Him, His pleasure upon you, and the comfort of His goodness and truth which also surpass that of anything this world has to offer? And the world offers competitive options, in the short term. However, all such things give

way to the greatness of what God provides for those with whom He is pleased. Now, faith is the means appointed of God by which we enter and abide in these good things of His promise.

As is written, *'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'* ... *'But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.'* (Hebrews 11:1, 6)

*...Believers
enjoy an extensive
record of
God's Goodness
and Truth...*

Believers enjoy an extensive record of God's goodness and truth. In it God's Spirit demonstrates the benefit of trusting and abiding in what the Most High provides for those who seek and trust His pleasure upon them. And He reveals what pleases Him. *'Thus saith the LORD, 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glori-*

eth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.' (Jeremiah 9:23-24) *'He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.'*

(Psalms 33:5)

Dear reader, position yourself within the boundaries of His love. God gives the rain and sun only to those who avail themselves within its boundaries. Those who remain in a cave cannot partake of them. Even so it is with His love. No man obtains it simply by existing. And they cannot partake of it by rejecting His revelation and the knowledge of Himself through His Spirit inspired Scripture.

....CONTINUED ON PAGE 5....

“PRESS THE BATTLE”
...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4...

So, enter into the realms of light and peace, the hope of eternal things that cannot even be shaken, much less removed.

One does not obtain and possess these things simply because they and you exist. You must hunger and thirst for it, take hold of it in faith, and not turn from these to competing interests of the earth. Jesus came from the realms where these things reside. He came to report, announce, or declare their reality to blinded men. Moses' law only hinted at their existence by shadows and types. Men could not know their reality except One come and speak of what He knew and saw, as did Jesus. He expected Nicodemus to have some grasp of them, and challenged him to believe. *'Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?'* **John 3:10-12**

So, God's agenda involves the revelation of these things provided in the power of Jesus' indestructible life. They are not only concepts or ideas but firm realities which await only the day of their full revelation. The present heavens and earth are as a scaffolding on a building under construction. It is removed once the work is done. Even so, the present heavens and earth God will remove at the appointed time. Prepare yourself for that time! Press the battle! Let not the night veil the glowing skies. Continue to believe the gospel and the revelation of these things which shall have their fulfillment.

CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

By: Brother Jeff Hostetter

Today, I begin another challenging and wonderful day as an immortal being living presently in this body of clay. It is hard, presently in this time of sojourning, to be "trapped" here in time and space. *"the sons of man are ensnared at an evil time."* (**Ecclesiastes 9:12**). Truly *"the days are evil!"* (**Eph.5:16**) Time and chance, bittersweet - truly the world is a dangerous, difficult, and disturbing place indeed! But as an eternal creature -having a present physical, earthly sojourn- I can make the most of it by the power and wisdom that God has given me through His own Spirit as per **Ephesians 5:16**: "making the most of your time.."

Most people think that their eternity really only starts after they die. This is a deception that disempowers and disconnects Christians from their victory potential daily overcoming. Don't be one of them! Your immortality and eternity starts at your new birth in Christ, not after the death certificate is signed and the mortician prepares your body for burial. This is the only chance *"There is hope for a tree, but man dies and lies prostrate. Man expires and where is he? So a man lies down and does not rise until the heavens are no longer."* (**Job 14:10,12**) - We will ever be given to make a difference here, amongst the living, to impact and influence those we love (even our enemies!) for Christ. Make the most of the time, and remember, God has raised you up, after burying the old man of sin, and given you a new identity as a son of God, a child of light, a new creature in Christ!



THE
PIQUANT
PARALLEL

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 veryday life

- Brother Justin Cobb

There's nothing like the feeling of being home. Home is where the family lives together and multiplies. It is the base of family operations. Most necessary functions for living are carried out at home. We eat most of our meals at home. We clean ourselves in our showers and tubs. We rest and recharge our bodies for the next day at home. When we are sick, we prefer to stay home than in a hospital bed. We also celebrate and entertain at our homes, relax, and unwind. There is a peaceable and comforting feeling to being at home. Everyone has at some time heard the phrase, "It's good to be home!". Seldom do you ever hear the opposite! The longer a person is away from home, the more likely they are to miss being home, and the happier they are when they finally return to it. Homesickness is a feeling we can all relate to in some way.

Men dream of the additions they can make to their home, and most homes have some sort of renovation either planned or in progress to make their home more comfortable for themselves and their guests. A man's home is heavily invested in, not just financially but personally.

We live in the middle of a cursed and temporal realm with an ungodly generation. As a result, there are some people who do not have fond memories of home, and some who run away from home due to abuse and fear. Some people are homeless, and do not have a home at all, but I doubt that those who are without a home or in bad homes do not desire a good home for themselves.

Our earthly homes are a direct reflection of our heavenly home. While our earthly home is here on earth, our home in heaven resides in an eternal realm wherein dwells righteousness. Nothing that defiles shall enter in. (Rev 21:27) No one will despise the heavenly home. Those who do not have a home here will have one there, if they are living by faith. Jesus is preparing a place for us! (John 14:3)

This heavenly home is a home of eternal joy, comfort, and rest. (Rev 21:4). There are no trials or tribulation. Nothing will "go wrong" in heaven. This home is a place that we will never have to leave (Rev 3:12) We will live with our God, and He will not be ashamed to be called our God (Heb 11:16b). We will be home with an innumerable company of saints—our heavenly family!

So we desire this heavenly home, and look forward to it someday. (Heb 11:6) Are you looking for the promise of His coming?



These things
I write...
That We Sin Not

With spiritual wickedness all around us zealously striving to deceive us, it is imperative that we help each other keep our focus on Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation. Our enemy tries to get us back into a state of condemnation by tempting us to do the things that God forbids. I desire to write things that will aid the saint in not committing sin against God. Resisting temptation is a fight, but it is one that we can win if our focus is on the One who gave Himself for us.

By: Brother Jonathon Blakely

THE NECESSITY FOR FAITH TO INCREASE

FAITH LIKE A SEED

Faith, as used in scripture, is no option for the saint. The scriptures are clear that without faith no man can please God (**Hebrews 11:6**), and that faith is the victory that overcomes the world (**1 John 5:4**). God has even declared that the just, His people, will live by faith (**Galatians 3:11**). If faith "comes by hearing" and Jesus is the "author and finisher of our faith", then we should have no trouble concluding that faith comes from God. Do we dare imagine that God gives any spiritual resource that we don't need? With such declarations in the word of God, one should never wonder if faith is a necessity in regards to salvation. With that being said, what should we do with the faith that we have been given?

Men must have faith, but that is not the end of the matter. It is easy for men to be overly simplistic when it comes to faith in God. Faith, once one has it, must be increased. Faith may begin small, but one cannot endure to the end living on small doses of it. Indeed, the Lord Jesus spoke of what faith can do when it is the size of a mustard seed (**Matthew 17:20**), but the tiny size of the seed is hardly the point, rather it's the potential of the seed that is being emphasized. The tiny seed looks as though nothing significant can come from it, but when

and becomes a tree (**Matthew 13:32**). Likewise, our faith is never intended to stay small. We must be sure to live in such a way that it is constantly growing, lest the Lord Jesus say to us as He has to others, "O ye of little faith" (**Matthew 16:8**). We desire Him to speak of our "GREAT faith" (**Matthew 8:10**).

This reality that faith needs to increase becomes all the more clear when the believer realizes that he is in a warzone while living in this world. Believers are set apart from the rest of the world and are identified as God's own people, but they have that identity while living in a world that hates God. While in this world, we have to fight "the good fight of faith" (**1 Timothy 6:12**). There are influences seeking to destroy that faith that is keeping you in right standing with God Himself. If your adversary the devil can get you to stop believing, whether it be by means of worldly wisdom, circumstances, academics, tragedy, or what have you, he will succeed in bringing you back into the condemnation that God brought you out of!

THE DANGER OF FAITH NOT BEING MAINTAINED

Everything hinges on our faith, so much so that men must never be casual about it being maintained or become presumptuous that there is no risk of departing from it. Jesus scolded those with little faith because such a state will lead to a man's inevitable fall from grace.

With little faith, men will only walk a few steps on the water before sinking beneath the waves (**Matthew 14:30**). With little faith men will not be able to overcome stronger foes that rise up as they draw closer to the prize set before them in glory. The bottom line is that *"little faith"* will not keep a person believing, rather it will end with a person departing from the faith (**1 Timothy 4:1**), shipwrecking it (**1 Timothy 1:19**), or it being overthrown (**2 Timothy 2:18**). Such a thought would only bring joy to that devil who is roaming around like a lion seeking to devour you. But what would cause faith to shrink? By looking at the scriptures we see exactly what causes such a terrible thing to happen. Faith can be overthrown by the words of men. Paul wrote to Timothy about Hymenaeus and Philetus, who caused the faith of men to be overthrown because they said the resurrection of the dead had already occurred. Paul also told Timothy that men would depart from the faith due to giving into seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

Do the things you give your ears to stir up faith or does it cause your faith to wither? Have you ever heard something that caused you to doubt that the scriptures were in fact the Word of God? Has anyone ever told you something that left you wondering if the God expounded in the scriptures was really the true God? Did you ever listen to something said that made you question if there was a God at all? Any doubting of God's word is caused by an assault on our faith, a war waged with words. With this being said we must be aware of the source of the things we hear.

Giving our attention to the wrong thing may very well result in our faith being snuffed out.

BUILD YOURSELF UP

Thankfully we are not without resources in this world. Our faith can be overthrown, but there is an alternative to that. Faith can be KEPT (**2 Timothy 4:7**). That's right, a mortal man can go the entire duration of his life in this world and not depart from the faith. A man can run his course in this world and never leave Jesus Christ. Don't question it, believe it! Jesus has made provision for this to happen for all who come to Him and follow Him! We can make this certain by building ourselves up in the most holy faith (**Jude 1:20**), contending for the faith (**Jude 1:3**), and walking by faith (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). Give your ear to things that make it easier for you to believe God. Take in things that expound the meaning of scripture, not things that confuse its meaning. Never be content with faith being little and don't treat it as though it were maxed out. As you get closer to the end the opposition will only get fiercer. Your faith has to be stronger than the opposition, whatever level it may come at.

The exhortation is this, ask the Lord to increase your faith (**Luke 17:5**)! When tempted to sin, ask yourself this, "What will this do to my faith?" Can you really afford to sin when your salvation is so dependent on faith in Christ? Why give yourself to something that makes it hard for you to believe in Him? Why throw away divine favor for a split second of carnal pleasure? Keep the faith soldier, your life depends on it!

Jesus

The Ultimate
Revelation Of



CONFLICT

Brother Given Blakely

Part 4 of a series on "Inner Conflict and It's Remedy"

Jesus Christ came "from above" -- from another world (John 8:23). His coming was an intrusion into a conflicting order. Even in a humbled state, the prerogatives of His Godhood laid aside, there remained a sharp contrast between Himself and "this present evil world" (Phil 2:5-8; Gal 1:4). In Him we find the ultimate revelation of spiritual conflict.

HIS BIRTH

From His birth, the world opposed Christ. Herod diabolically attempted to rid his empire of this heavenly Competitor. So violent was his opposition that he proceeded to slaughter "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under" (Matt. 2:16).

HIS YOUTH

A conflict of worlds was seen during Jesus youthful life. On one occasion, when He was twelve years old, He articulated the conflict to His mother.

After a laborious search of three days, His "parents" (Luke 2:27), found Him in the temple. Concerned that He had not been more thoughtful of them, Mary said, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." The "holy Child's" answer proclaimed the conflict. "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business"? (Luke 2:48-49).

HIS MINISTRY

During His earthly ministry, our Lord was found to be in conflict with traditional religion. This conflict was the result of His insightful declaration of truth. Following His "sermon on the mount," this observation is recorded. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt 7:29). His was not a learned historical disquisition or linguistic study.

He unveiled to the people what He had "seen and heard."

The frequent skirmishes He had with the Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers were evidence of a conflict between spiritual perception and devotion to dead tradition. The conflict between these two perspectives still exists.

CHRIST'S SUMMONS AMIDST CONFLICT

Christ calls men to Himself in the crucible of conflict and contradiction. To a decadent world and a lethargic church the clarion call still rings out. *"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"* (Luke 9:23). The requirement of self denial postulates conflict. The taking up of ones own cross presumes that there are competing influences that must be violently opposed and subdued. Were there no conflict, there would be no such summons.

Addressing those that were *"at ease in Zion,"* our Lord spoke clearly of His mission. *"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household"* (Matt 10:34-36).

We have examples of other household conflicts:

Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau. Our Lord's language should not surprise us. The discord generated by the Lord's presence is more revelatory than disruptive. It is the unavoidable result of embracing Him that is *"separate from sinners"* (Heb 7:26).

DELIVERANCE FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD

Because of its basic contradiction to God, Jesus came to *"deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of God"* (Gal. 1:4). Presently, we are delivered from its power and influence. Ultimately, we shall be delivered from it completely, *"spirit, soul, and body"* (1 Thess. 5:23).

Salvation, from this perspective, is the translation of men from the inferior realm to the superior one--from the corrupted world to the eternal one. These are opposing orders between which dissonance is unavoidable. Our transition to the everlasting realm is described in these words; *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son"* (Col 1:13).

A GOOD DEFENSIVE POSITION

By: Brother Tony Parker

"He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:16

The context from which this verse belongs concerns some judgment God is preparing to bring upon the land. If this judgment is indeed for the Assyrian invasion surrounding Jerusalem then it will be seen that God brings complete judgment from which there is no escape.

If we back up to verse 14 ,the passage speaks in reference to this judgment, *"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"*

God speaks through the mouth of his prophet and He asks this question: *If the sinner and the hypocrite both were fearful ,who then shall dwell with the everlasting fire and burning?*

The answer is given in the following verse *"He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears*

and He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

"The righteous shall dwell on high, and the fortress of the rocks shall be a high retreat" In these high places the righteous of the Lord will find protection from the wicked and find sustenance for life. They that flee to God as their "rock and fortress" God shall be as the strongholds of the mighty rocks and pillars"

Fellowship with God is to be conscious of his presence, and for those who dwell on high, He is our dwelling place.

To dwell on high is to have our attention and our affections set on things that are above. For this reason, Paul exhorts the brethren to set their affections on things above and not on the things of the earth, In fact, it says in another place *"God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* It is God's intention for men to dwell in high places, He has taken the saints to very highest place when he put them in Christ Jesus. Men with good intentions have sought to find places of lofty thought among the conversation of the wise. And, while seeking to be lifted up out of the common life, men have turned to music, art, and all kinds of influences.

But, none of this could ever raise a man up into the place of calm and peace where God resides. Nothing we find on earth can take us up out the turmoil of trouble and strife. We must find our way to those things above, a place above this world.

To this affect, the scriptures exhort us to hope and trust in God.

"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works." The scriptures declare it is good for men to draw near to God, for God is good.

It is the testimony of heaven, that God is truly the only high tower into which men can go and find refuge. And he has provided this place for all men everywhere to come and take refuge as the prophet Isaiah declares *"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"*.

When a man draws near to God, and trusts in Him, he will find a place that is beyond this world, a life that extends beyond this realm, and a hope that is lasting. These are man's greatest need. All men need someone who is greater than themselves, a life that is greater than this one, a purpose, and goal for living ,

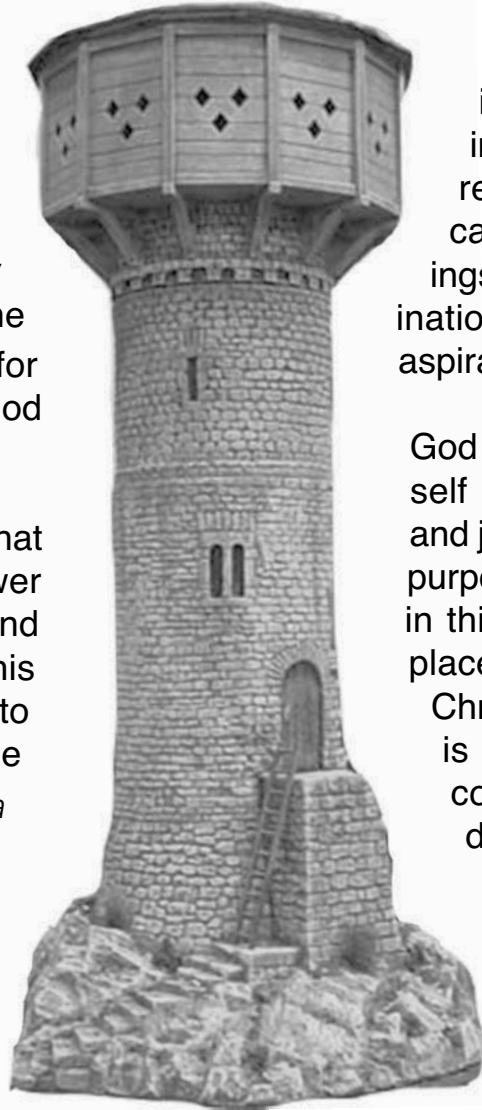
We need a world than is better and greater than this present world. Our needs are greater than this world, for our true needs extend beyond our physical necessities. Every generation of man has concluded

the same. Truly, our real need cannot be found in this world and this place is not capable of providing those essentials that reside in every man. It cannot satisfy the longings of the heart, the imaginations of the mind, the aspirations of the soul.

God has determined in himself that everlasting peace and joy; real satisfaction and purpose would not be found in this world but, in another place. It is for this reason Christ Jesus has come. He is our hiding place, our covert, rivers of water in dry places, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. For those insightful and trusting ones who have found Him are content to make

Him their dwelling place, they are content to abide in Him, for He is our everlasting fortress and secure position.

"The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." **Psalm 18:2**





Till He Come

Part 4 of a series on the Lord's Table

By Brother Robert Cobb

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (1 Corinthians 11:26)

Why do we have "devotions" before we eat the bread and drink the cup?

I am not going to pretend to know when the church began this practice, of someone standing before the brethren to lead them in a time of focus on the scriptures before they "ate the bread and drank the cup", but we know by experience that it is a good one. That is, it is good as long as the words that are used really do focus our attention on Christ.

I cannot begin to tell of all the stories I have heard about inappropriate communion meditations, where the people were led to think about all manner of strange things at this table. Some filled the brethren's minds with speaking of "country pride" or others didn't say anything and went right to saying a little rehearsed prayer, getting right to the business at hand!

While I am by no means suggesting that we can Lord over others faith in the matter of exactly how this remembrance is observed, I do think it is appropriate to have it clarified, what is this "pre-remembrance" all about? How ought we to approach the Table?

A communion meditation is a time when someone who is "skilled" in the scriptures, one who has a "lively connection" with Christ, and is "filled" with the Holy Spirit of God, leads the brethren in a time of intense focus on what was involved in Christ laying down His life.

The Apostle Paul gives us an indication of what is to be on our minds as we gather around this table in 1 Corinthians 11:23 -26: *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."*

We are to be thinking about Jesus, His body in particular, and the fact that "it was broken" for you. Also we are exhorted to consider "his blood" and the connection that it has to the new covenant.

The focusing of our hearts and minds on the Son of God actually laying down His life is a profound and lasting consideration. It will yield continual fruit. I know that there are some who cannot accept that this message is capable of blessing a person time and time again, but they are missing the fact that Jesus is living and presiding over this table! He makes the remembrance significant! It is His Spirit that is in those who are eating His flesh and drinking His blood! This table is not merely a place to set "the emblems". It is not just a ritual that Christians observe to "hype themselves up" to live another week in their cultist ways. This table is all about imbibing, or taking in the life of Christ!

He is serving at this table, and those who are remembering Him, are receiving! I cannot find any scripture where it is commanded that a meditation be given before this table is observed, but as we look into the seriousness of this table I can surely understand why we do. I do not ever want to be guilty of coming to this table without adequate focus, and if those who stand and lead at your assembly do not help you to enter into this time in a proper manner, then just ask others, who are more spiritual to lead the meditation time. We have no word from God that suggest that only "elders and deacons" have to be the ones to lead in this remembrance, but I suggest selecting men to lead this time the same way that they chose those men to attend to the widows in the book of Acts "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. (Acts 6:3) If you would need the Holy Spirit to wade on tables, then surely the requirements for leading at the Lord's Table should be no less!

What does it mean to "eat His flesh and drink His blood"? Jesus was very pointed on this matter as He spoke to a crowd that has followed Him only for the miraculous bread, He had told them that He was the bread of life, and that all who ate of this bread would live forever, they could not understand His words and they said "shall this man give us His flesh to eat? Upon hearing this Jesus said :

John 6:53-58

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

A Communion Hymn

By Charles H. Spurgeon

AMIDST us our Belov'd;stands,
And bids us view His pierc'd;hands;
Points to His wounded feet and side,
Blest emblems of the Crucified.
What food luxurious loads the board,
When at His table sits the Lord!
The wine how rich, the bread how sweet,
When Jesus deigns the guests to meet!
If now with eyes defiled and dim,
We see the signs but see not Him,
Oh, may His love the scales displace,
And bid us see Him face to face!
Our former transports we recount,
When with Him in the holy mount,
These cause our souls to thirst anew,
His marr'd but lovely face to view.
Thou glorious Bridegroom of our hearts,
Thy present smile a heaven imparts:
Oh, lift the veil, if veil there be,
Let every saint Thy beauties see!

Praying With All Prayer

*With Sister
Adah Hutchcraft*

Reliance upon God is a full time engagement and a fight of faith. If mind and body waste away, and you can do nothing but rely upon Him in faith, then you still give Him your all - and that is precious in His sight.

Gracious Father,

First and foremost I am Yours, and this is both a mercy and delight to remember. For by this knowledge You cleanse me and set everything in proper perspective. As I recall this, I increase in sensitivity to Your Spirit, and become more discerning with my affections and thoughts. Thank You for adopting me into the beloved, and for giving me the joy of knowing You as Abba Father.

Most faithful Father,

With whatever time I am given, may I always make time with You. For it is there, alone in Your presence, seeking You in prayer and through Your word, that I receive what is obtained in no other way. Thank You.

Gracious God,

Awaken deeper faith in me. Give me fresh perspective to see You for Who You are, to see myself in the Light of Your Truth, and to see others through the eyes of one who is forgiven much. May I delight in Your beauty, worthiness, and goodness which all compel me to give myself to You unreservedly, honoring You above any other. Teach me to cloth myself in Truth and grace, regardless of surrounding influences. Banish shame and fear, these weeds which creep into my being when the sight of You grows dim. I believe. Help my unbelief. Awaken faith in me, and I will flourish.

In the Name of Christ, Amen

Jesus : Head over all things to the Church

Jesus has been given to be the Head over all things to the Church because He alone is adequate to do the work which is required to be done for the Church to be brought to a state of perfection. I would like to for a moment, look at His credentials, if you will, for this divine office.

Firstly, Jesus is the only One to whom it is appropriate to give this dominion, because He is the One who always does the things that pleases the Father. The chosen of GOD to bear the weight of sin had to be, in all aspects, innocent of it. In order for the purpose to be accomplished, it required a perfect sacrifice, one who would bear the sin as a lightning rod, as it were, of the wrath of GOD - to die in the place of the guilty. Yet also, this same one, death must have no claim on, that he may be a living representative of those for whom he died. It is essential to this purpose that Jesus, the One whose blood is the propitiation for our sins, be the One to apply the blood to those whom it was shed for. Only He could do this work.

Secondly, Jesus is a man. In addition to this perfection and Holiness required, there was also a need for the chosen One of GOD to be able to relate intimately with humanity, in a way that is not otherwise resident in the Godhead and heavenly personalities.

Having been born into the world, and made flesh, He understands what He could never have understood as the Word - what it is like to have need. He understands what it is like to be weak, and to feel pain, what it is like to be hungry, to be tired. He knows what its like to be persecuted. He gained a capacity that He did not have before: to be able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Now that being said, He doesn't know what it feels like to sin, rather he knows what it feels like to be put in an environment in which sin resides. He can sympathize with our frailty. This is absolutely essential for the work which He is doing. Could you imagine if GOD put an angel in charge of these things? One who has an absolutely unflinching countenance? Who shows no mercy and has no sympathy for the weakness of men? Praise GOD that this is not the case! He knows when to chastise and when to bless, when to be merciful and when to rebuke. He does not lay upon us more than we can bear, because he knows how much we can bear! Also, implied in His manhood - something which He never could have attained to as the Word - is that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Hebrews 5:8-9 KJV)

This is what was required for Him to be the Author of this salvation, that He would be "perfect" - Not to imply that in His nature as the word He was imperfect, (we are talking about the Word, the One who was in the beginning with GOD, and was GOD). However, in the role of a Savior there was something lacking in the divine character that had to be had in order for Him to be perfect in His capacity as Savior. He had to learn obedience, so that He could teach it, so to speak. He had to learn compassion for men that surpassed a Holy GOD beholding iniquitous beings. He had to understand weakness so that He could minister to it.

Is it not a comforting thought, brethren, that we have an advocate on high who can be touched with feeling of our infirmities, yet has no limitations in the area of authority? Doesn't it bring you comfort and assurance that Jesus has been placed in this position so that all that He is, and all that He has accomplished can be ministered without hindrance. What a blessing brethren, that He has been given to be the head over all things to the Church!

A Word Concerning **Pressing...**

By; Brother Robert Cobb

Genesis 19:2-3

And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

In our present generation “pressing” anything on another person is considered improper, I mean, after all, you could end up offending them! Yet we can see that Lot was not content to leave these men in the street all night. It was not that Lot thought that they might get cold, or even that they might get hungry, but later in this account we will find that there were “unnatural” dangers that lurked in Sodom.

Lot knew the true condition of Sodom; the Holy Spirit has exposed the mind of Lot in 2 Peter 2:8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) – Lot could tell that these men were different, they were not the regular type of people that visited Sodom and Lot was not about to leave them to be defiled in the street. So, when they refused his offer, He “pressed” upon them – “he urged them persistently” (NETP) – “he insisted, wouldn’t take no for an answer”(MSG) – “Lot entreated and urged them greatly until they yielded” (AMP) – Lot would not let this thing go, and why? Because Lot knew what went on in the streets of Sodom after the sun went down.

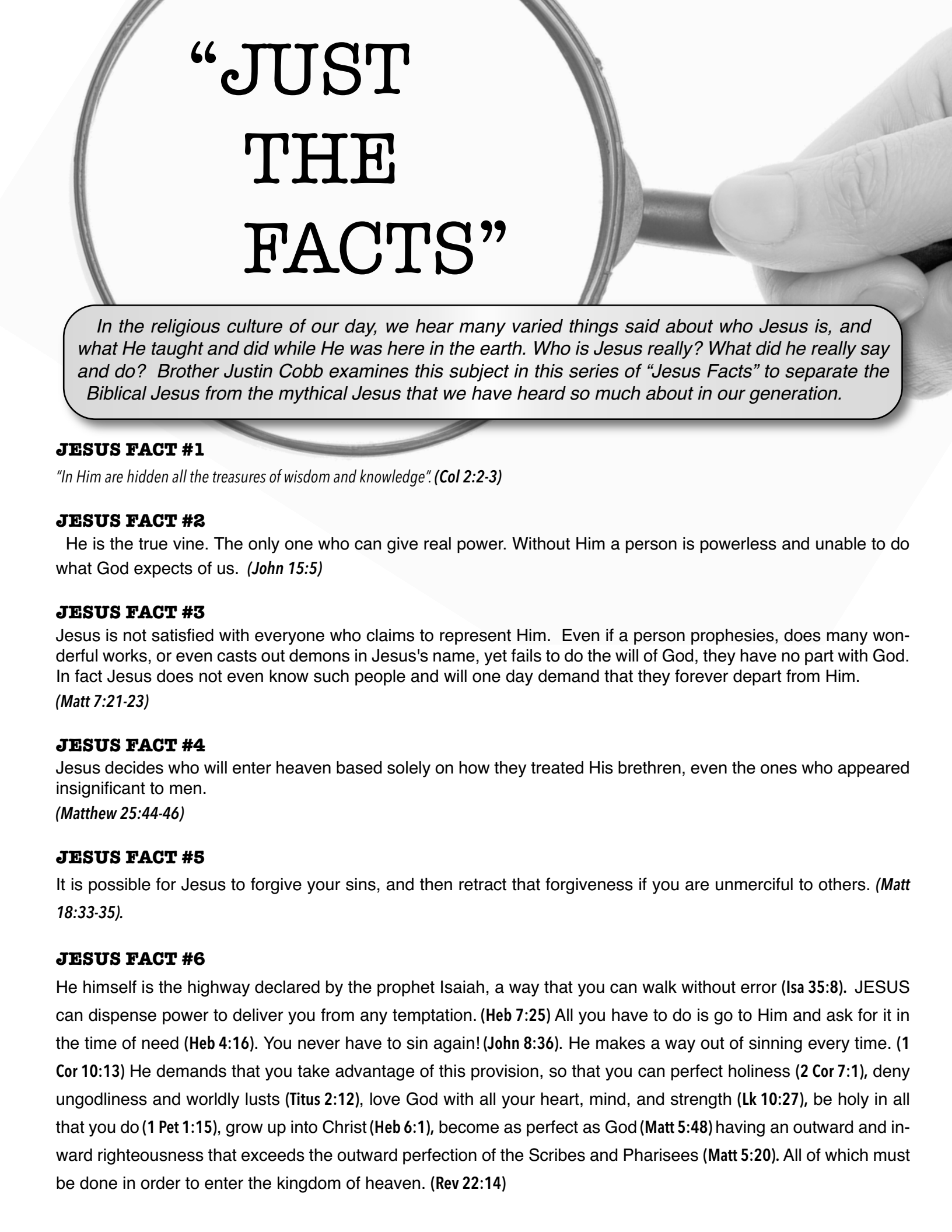
Just as “righteous Lot” was confronted with the moral dilemma of leaving two strangers out in the dangerous streets of Sodom, we too are confronted with a similar dilemma.

We know what evil lurks in the heart of every “natural man”- those who are living in a world that is dominated by sin and the Devil, in a world where every one has, at one time or another, been taken captive by the enemy and dominated by sin. But God has already provided a “safe haven” for those who will seek it. Just as Lot knew that his home was a place where these men would be kept safe from the outside defiling elements, Christ Jesus has been provided for those who are seeking to be delivered from this fallen condition known as sin.

Lot presses upon these men to enter into this place of safety! And even after they had refused he “pressed upon them greatly” and they submitted to his plea – Do not think that your “pleadings” with people are falling on deaf ears, when Paul preached in Athens it may have seemed like the “smart people” were not interested, but really the smart ones “joined themselves” unto Paul. I know that “pressing” things on people is not popular today, but it should be. When we see the situation as Lot did, we will pressure the people to get into the place of safety.

Men need to be made aware of their present distress, they need to know that God made the world, He made them and that they will all have to stand before Him one day and give an account of what they have done “in their body” – before anyone is able to properly understand the gospel (see it as good news) they have to know that they need a Savior! – In the preaching of the Gospel, all of these issues are addressed, but before anyone is going to respond, the gospel must be preached!

When we can see the reality that awaits those who turn away from God, we will “press the issue” and just as Paul in Athens - by God’s grace, we will save some!



“JUST THE FACTS”

In the religious culture of our day, we hear many varied things said about who Jesus is, and what He taught and did while He was here in the earth. Who is Jesus really? What did he really say and do? Brother Justin Cobb examines this subject in this series of “Jesus Facts” to separate the Biblical Jesus from the mythical Jesus that we have heard so much about in our generation.

JESUS FACT #1

“In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”. (Col 2:2-3)

JESUS FACT #2

He is the true vine. The only one who can give real power. Without Him a person is powerless and unable to do what God expects of us. (*John 15:5*)

JESUS FACT #3

Jesus is not satisfied with everyone who claims to represent Him. Even if a person prophesies, does many wonderful works, or even casts out demons in Jesus's name, yet fails to do the will of God, they have no part with God. In fact Jesus does not even know such people and will one day demand that they forever depart from Him. (*Matt 7:21-23*)

JESUS FACT #4

Jesus decides who will enter heaven based solely on how they treated His brethren, even the ones who appeared insignificant to men. (*Matthew 25:44-46*)

JESUS FACT #5

It is possible for Jesus to forgive your sins, and then retract that forgiveness if you are unmerciful to others. (*Matt 18:33-35*).

JESUS FACT #6

He himself is the highway declared by the prophet Isaiah, a way that you can walk without error (*Isa 35:8*). JESUS can dispense power to deliver you from any temptation. (*Heb 7:25*) All you have to do is go to Him and ask for it in the time of need (*Heb 4:16*). You never have to sin again! (*John 8:36*). He makes a way out of sinning every time. (*1 Cor 10:13*) He demands that you take advantage of this provision, so that you can perfect holiness (*2 Cor 7:1*), deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (*Titus 2:12*), love God with all your heart, mind, and strength (*Lk 10:27*), be holy in all that you do (*1 Pet 1:15*), grow up into Christ (*Heb 6:1*), become as perfect as God (*Matt 5:48*) having an outward and inward righteousness that exceeds the outward perfection of the Scribes and Pharisees (*Matt 5:20*). All of which must be done in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. (*Rev 22:14*)



The World Categorizes

“TROUBLE”

By: Brother Given Blakely

“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

(2 Cor 1:4)

The world conveniently categorizes “trouble,” then develops professed experts to assist people in those classified troubles. That is the world’s manner, and it has successfully convinced the modern church to adopt its strategy. Thus there are specialists in encouraging and comforting the young, the old, the married, and the unmarried. We have specialists in dealing with the “addicted,” and the divorced. There are specialized ministries for discouraged preachers, and business people. It all has the appearance of wisdom, but it is by no means wise, and does not get at the root of the matter. Whatever “comfort” may take place within such a persuasion is not deep enough, and hence is not lasting.

Our text affirms there is a comfort that can be ministered to those who are “in ANY trouble.” The qualified minister of comfort is the one who himself has been comforted by God. The area of genuine expertise is not the trouble, but the comfort – which is designed for those who are in “ANY trouble,” “any affliction” (NASB) , or “any tribulation” (DARBY) . This is a comfort that strikes at the root of trouble, which is NOT found in circumstance or outward experience.

It ought to be noted that we are speaking of comforting the people of God. God Himself has spoken on this matter: *“Comfort ye, comfort ye MY people, saith your God” (Isa 40:1)*. To be sure, it is in order to minister to the needs of other people as we are able. However, the FOCUS is on the saints of God.

James speaks of ministering to “A BROTHER OR SISTER” who is *“destitute of daily food” (James 2:15)*. John writes, *“But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his BROTHER have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” (1 John 3:17)*. The early churches heard of a famine, or dearth, that would be global in its impact. A prophet named Agabus *“signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar” (Acts 11:28)*. In response, *“the disciples (in Gentile territory), every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the BRETHREN which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul” (Acts 11:29-30)*. Later, Paul traveled throughout the Gentile world challenging them to *“make a certain contribution for THE POOR SAINTS which are at Jerusalem” (Rom 15:26)*.

He told the Corinthians, who were also contributing to this cause, that their offerings “*supplie the want of THE SAINTS*” (2 Cor 9:12).

Because this is a sensitive subject, I am quick to say that God has given no word to suggest it is in order to neglect the need of anyone within the sphere of our influence. However, the emphasis is clearly placed upon the people of God.

Concerning the words “any trouble,” all “trouble” is common in that it is in “*this present evil world*” (Gal 1:4), and is experienced in “*this vile body*” (Phil 3:21). It comes because of our faith, and because we are “*strangers and pilgrims in the earth.*” The devil is the one who promotes it, even though “trouble” can be associated with Divine intention (1 Sam 16:14).

“Comfort” – that is, comfort sent from heaven – is designed to alleviate the circumstances caused by being in this world, a foreign land, and being hounded by our adversary the devil. It makes little difference what outward or inward form the trouble takes. It has to do with heavenly citizens being in this world. It has to do with those possessing eternal life being in the realm where death dominates. It pertains to a blessed people being in a cursed world. It is the result of walking by faith among those who are walking by sight, and living in the Spirit among those who are living in the flesh. For the people of God, “ANY trouble” falls into those classifications, and ANYONE who has been comforted by God is qualified to minister

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-with Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Our freedom in Christ is not liberty as men would assume - it is not autonomy, or independence. We were not made to be individuals in the purest sense, we were made by and for God Himself. It is only as we are in line with His will, that we are really most truly liberated from all that hinders us. To be truly free is to be a servant of the most high GOD.

Whose agenda will always prevail? Who has all power in heaven and earth? Who is never frustrated? Who always gets what he desires? Who is never prevented from accomplishing what he sets out to do? Who is truly more free than GOD himself?

Those of us who are in Christ Jesus have gone from being slaves to the will and whim of a defeated foe who is in his final dying moments, to being a willing free servant of the one who has always won and will win!

BURNED UP!

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10-13)

The scriptures are clear in their testimony of this event. This present world is going to pass away. The earth in which we are currently living will be burned up. There is a specific day coming in which the heavens and the earth, the elements as we know them, will melt with fervent heat. However, despite this testimony that the Lord has given us, this is not well known in the day in which we live. There may be some sense that there is eventually an end, a "doomsday" or "apocalypse" if you will, but it is not attended with any kind of certainty. It is actually most commonly thought of as science fiction.

As it concerns those who don't believe, a great amount of business is focused upon making this world a better place to live in, environmentally speaking. We hear this kind of language on almost a daily basis. The ozone layer is depleting, we're being bombarded with greenhouse gases, we're experiencing global warming, and climate change is going to ruin the world! There is a massive amount of organization and infrastructure dedicated to attempting to prevent or repair the environment. While I do not doubt that there may be some kind of legitimate scientific data supporting the fact that there are changes occurring in rising sea water temperatures, melting of the polar ice caps, etc. - I think that people are missing the point. Personally, I find it telling that men are arrogant enough to believe that they are the main cause of these changes, and that they will be able to reverse them.

As the end approaches, we ought to expect these things to be shaken. Rather than primarily seeing these things as a problem that man can fix, we should see them as they are, signs of the times. These events are like a preheating to the oven of judgement. As believers, knowing the eventuality of the passing away of the natural order, we ought not spend an inordinate amount of time making provisions and plans in the world as if it was going to last forever. Time is not a factor with God. From the perspective of eternity, it is as if the determination was just made. The earth and its works will be burned up on that day. Make it your business to take the measures necessary to wait expectantly for it so that you will not be taken surprise when it happens.

2 Peter 3:11

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

If there really is nothing of this world allowed in the next, if it really is all going to be burned up, then what should our stance be in this present world?

The question that you have to ask yourself as it concerns what you are giving your time and affection to is this: is what I am seeking after going to pass through the passing of the natural order intact? Is this still going to be here after heaven and earth pass away? Pursue godliness, press forward, run the race that is set before you, be diligent to obtain new things, and gain new ground. Make sure that you don't involve yourself in anything that would cause you to be hindered in making any more progress than you have thus far. Make sure to maintain the things that you have already been given.

Steadfast Saints



Brother Levi and Sister Katie Miller are two very sensitive brethren. I personally have had the pleasure to witness them bloom into a fruitful, God glorifying example of a husband and wife who are a true parallel to Christ and the Church. Their perseverance through trial, and spiritual stubbornness to prevail and overcome despite earthly circumstance makes them an inspiring display of the grace of God.

Brother Levi has demonstrated, over the years, an ability to survive through times that would be tough enough for others to imagine, let alone go through themselves. Sister Katie has shown that she will not allow any previous misconceptions of religion to overshadow her love of the Truth. She seeks to know the truth above all else.

These brethren also have excelled in raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The children themselves are a testimony to the goodness of God, and bear mentioning. Their two sons, Enoch and Canaan, are tender hearted and willing to learn. Both have participated in reading and scripture reciting in the assembly. Their two daughters, Ally and Taylor, excel in tenderness of spirit. Taylor has an exceptionally sharp mind for her age, and has applied it in expressing her faith through writing, music, and speaking in the assembly.

I THANK GOD FOR THESE STEADFAST SAINTS



COMMENTS FROM THE FOXHOLE

Brother Robert Cobb- "Faith always obeys what God demands!"

Sister Taylor McKowen-

"Society has taken love and simplified it into a mere idea that is built upon selfish reasoning. Love is real and powerful, and when the common and selfish mindset is obtained, it loses what it is intended to be. It is not simply a fluffy and happy sensation. It has deeper roots, that are grounded in Christ."

Brother Rob Laptad -

"The battle plan is only made clear by God's revelation, with an understanding of our confirmed allegiance, comprehension of a clearly shared objective and an awareness of the Spirit's leading. Christ as head over his body of believers, granted differing gifts and working together to give all glory, honor, and praise to our righteous Commander, Lord, Savior, and King Jesus."

Brother Given O. Blakely -

"The power of the Kingdom is found in God's Word and Christ's testimony, not in man's explanation of the same."

Brother Jeff Hostetter -

"Illusions of control can and do create false assumptions that lead to frustrations, and even lead to sin! God is on the throne! Our lives really and truly are not our own, we were bought with a great price".

Brother Benjamin Blakely -

"If you put on the armor of the Lord, when you're tempted you won't give in to sin. "