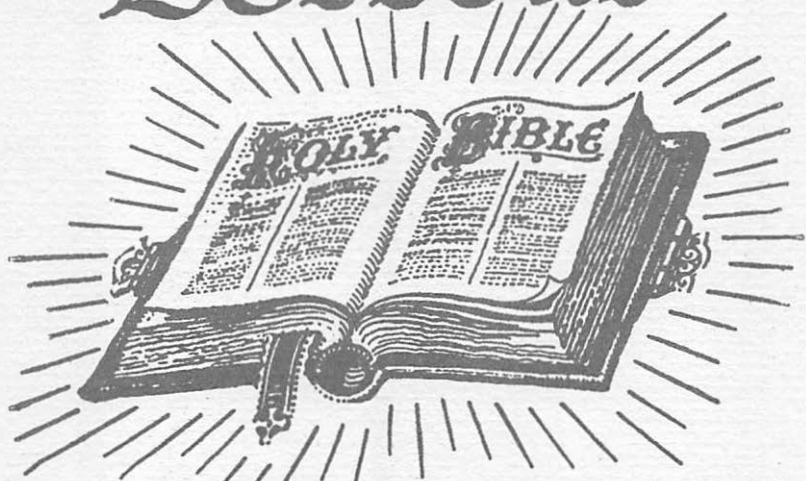


Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 31, No. 3
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People
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Volume 31

July, Aug., Sept.

No. 3

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THEME FOR THIRD QUARTER, 1999

Our theme for this quarter Bible Lessons will be "The Redemptive Work of Christ in the Earth". The various aspects of the mission of Christ to this world will be considered. Deliverance, victory, healing, and life will be brought out from the scriptures. We thank the Lord for inspiring our hearts with this wonderful truth! We just send it forth with an earnest prayer for God's blessings upon it to the good of every one.

—Brother Leslie Busbee



JULY 4, 1999

DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF SIN

Romans 5:12 By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Isaiah 5:18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.

Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. I John 3:8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Through his disobedience to the command of God Adam caused the whole human race to be under the rule of Satan. This caused mankind to be separated from fellowship with God and to live contrary to His holy will. But Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, was manifested to set man free from the power of sin so he can live in holiness and righteousness before God all the days of his life.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Romans 5:12), "*By one man sin entered into the world*": Sin took root in the nature of man through Adam and his disobedience to God. It came into the world and the seed or principle of sin was passed to all the descendants of the first created man. "*Death by sin*": With the entrance of sin there came death. Man fell under the sentence of physical death as well as spiritual death and separation from God.

(Isaiah 5:18), "*Draw iniquity and sin*": Instead of resisting sin and seeking for deliverance from its blight, so many draw it to them with vain desires, pride, and self indulgence.

(Isaiah 59:12), "*Sins*": It is interesting to note that the meaning for the term "sin" is the same in the Hebrew and also the Greek. It means "to miss the mark, or to err."

(Isaiah 59:13), "*Revolt*": To turn away from or against God.

(Isaiah 59:16), "*No intercessor*": No one to turn the tide against the powers of sin and darkness and make an atonement for man's redemption. The Lord beheld the deplorable condition of man and, since there was no one capable of bringing about a deliverance, He reached down with His mighty arm of salvation in Christ Jesus for our poor lost souls.

(Isaiah 59:20), "*Redeemer*": One who is next of kin and is able to buy back one's property that is lost. This alludes to the Law's provision for the closest of kin to take over a man's property at death and marry his widow. (Deuteronomy 25:5-10.) This is a beautiful aspect of Christ Jesus who bought back our property that was lost, that is, our spiritual life and fellowship with God, and married us to save us from eternal ruin. Bless His holy Name!

(John 8:35), "*The Son abideth ever*": I believe that what Jesus is saying here is that whoever is a servant or slave to sin cannot abide forever because he is not a true son of God. But the Son who is faithful and obedient to the Father and His will receives the inheritance of life eternal. Therefore, if we will continue to obey and follow the doctrine of Christ and thereby break the bondage of sin, we can truly be free to serve God acceptably.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is concerning the great deliverance that Christ, as the Arm of God, brought to us from the woeful powers of sin and error. Sin made its destructive entrance into the realm of man through the fall of our foreparents, Adam and Eve. With sin came death, spiritual and physical. We have the prophet Isaiah declaring the sinful state that mankind has gotten into from the fall of Adam. It is woeful and terrible! In Romans 3:10-18 Paul quotes from several other sources which describe the wretched condition of sinful man. The picture is so dark and seems so impossible and without hope.

But, thank the Lord, we see God reaching out to fallen man with His mighty Arm! The Redeemer is promised who will save the guilty sinner. And then we have what our blessed Saviour said about Himself, the Son of God. He instructed those who have professed faith in Him to continue in His word, thereby being His disciples indeed. And, by doing so, He said that we would know the truth, and the truth would make us free. But these poor, benighted souls did not know what He was talking about. They did not think that they were in bondage. But Jesus let them know that their bondage was the bondage of sin. And He gave them the glad tidings that He, as the living Son of God, had the power to set their souls free from this sinful bondage and they could be free indeed. This is the redemptive work of Christ in the earth and it is still in full operation today. Whoever will sincerely turn in true repentance and surrender to God can experience the great deliverance from sin and all that is unlike God. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How did sin enter into the world?
2. How does sin enter into hearts and lives today?
3. What does sin do to our connection with God?
4. What accompanies sin in the souls of men?
5. Why is sin the worst bondage a man can be in?
6. Why was there no intercessor for man in his sinful state?
7. What did God do about man's deplorable condition?
8. Who was the Redeemer who was promised to come?
9. How can we know the real truth?
10. How can Jesus the Son make us free indeed?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Sin is a terrible thing. It is a curse. It is the worst disease that a person can have. To live in trespasses and sins is death to the precious soul and a reproach and disgrace to one's name. Sin should be hated and resisted. Oh, one should never harbor any regard or favor for sin whatsoever. In our society sin is not taken seriously. In fact, most people are in total ignorance to what sin is and what detriment it brings to them.

God wants men to wake up to their woeful bondage and wretched state of sin. Jesus spoke of the truth making people free and the people did not know what He was talking about. They were not aware of their real bondage, the worst bondage that a man can be in. They were servants, or slaves, of sin. In the sinful condition a man lies, steals, blasphemes, lusts for evil things, hates, and does many other things that God is displeased with. Murder, jealousy, strife, and ill will exists in the sinful heart. Sin is to blame for all troubles and woes past and present. Because man in the beginning chose to reach for things beyond the boundary that God allotted to him, sin made its dread entrance into the world. It was a little thing, just to partake of fruit that God had forbidden. But it was enough to open the door for sin to come in. But look how sin grew. Adam and Eve lived to see the fruits of their sin mushroom into sorrow they never expected. Their oldest son murdered their youngest son in cold blood. It was not very long until sin had so messed up the human race that God was sorry that He had ever made man. So he sent a flood to destroy it all, but from the survivors, in a few generations, the sad bondage of sin had grown out of proportions again. God called a special nation to be His people, but sin ruined them, too. David, a man supposed to be after God's own heart, fell a victim to the pit of sin. One of Christ's own disciples fell by transgression. Sin is no respecter of persons. Satan takes pride in ruining the pure and holy. Sin will take the innocent youth and drag them in the filth. Sin will wreck homes, destroy high standards of decency and honour. It will topple kings and presidents. It ruins preachers and leaders. Let us resist sin and hate it with a perfect hatred.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Adam was created with God as His focus and it was God's plan to remain the center of affection to both Adam and Eve. But Adam sinned, or as the Greek and Hebrew translate, he "missed the mark." He didn't miss the mark because he was an incapable marksman, but because he willingly chose the wrong target through an act of disobedience.

The scriptures do not tell us what the end of Adam and Eve would have been if they had kept obedience to God as their goal. We do not know if they would have been translated like Enoch and Elijah, or if they simply would have fallen into a serene sleep and gone to be in God's continual presence. But it all changed when Adam changed his mark from God to self.

Self blinds the eyes. Every succeeding generation could not clearly see or understand God because of this blindness. The law was an attempt to show mankind what God was like, and what He required. But it wasn't until Christ came to this world and revealed again what God was like that we could see Him clearly as a target for our affections.

Today, because of Christ, we have a choice set before us, and we can determine what we want our life and last end to be.

—Wayne Murphey



JULY 11, 1999

VICTORY THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Romans 5:15 ...If through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

I Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Isaiah 1:19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Philippians 2:7 But (Christ) made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.

Hebrews 5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared:

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.

Romans 6:16 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?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. I Peter 1:22.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It was through disobeying the command of God that Adam brought sin and separation from God upon the human race. To bring about reconciliation between man and God there must needs be a return to perfect obedience on man's part. Man needed a Saviour who would not only pay the penalty for his sin, but would prove faithful and obedient to God. Jesus Christ fulfilled this need when He obeyed the Father in submitting to the death of the cross for our salvation.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(I Samuel 15:23), *"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft":* The sin of witchcraft was the act of seeking counsel from a witch or someone who had the power of divination and fortune

telling. It was a heinous and hated practice in the sight of God, for it was accomplished through the power of Satan. And it was so deceiving. That is why rebellion and disobedience is likened unto it.

(Hebrews 5:8), "*Learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*": This means that Christ acquired the real knowledge and experience of being obedient to God by faithfully enduring sufferings and being submissive and obedient in those sufferings. The real test of His qualifications as the Saviour was Christ's being obedient to die the death of the cross.

(Hebrews 5:9), "*Being made perfect*": Jesus was a perfect and holy Man in the sight of God, but He was not perfected as Saviour until He fully obeyed the Father's will to the farthest degree, and that was humbly submitting to be crucified with no resistance against His tormentors.

(Romans 6:17), "*God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin*": The apostle is not thanking God that they had been under the servitude of sin, but rather that their bondage to the devil *was a thing of the past* and that they have obeyed the truth of the gospel and been delivered from sin.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today deals with the thought of the disobedience of sin and the victory that is gained through obedience to God. We see that it was through the disobedience of Adam that we were brought into sin's condemnation. We have Samuel's rebuke to Saul when he disobeyed the voice of God in sparing things that God said to destroy. The prophet Isaiah sounds the warning to Israel and it is still true for us today. If we are willing and obedient we can enjoy the blessings God has promised, but if we fail to obey we will miss it all and have to suffer eternal destruction as well. The key scriptures in our lesson deal with that of Christ being obedient to God to the suffering of the death of the cross. It was because He was obedient that He can give grace to us to help us to resist temptation and be obedient to God in all things. It was through sufferings and great sorrow and adversity that He obeyed God. This perfected Him as our

Saviour, and He is the Giver of life eternal to all who will in like manner obey Him in all things. We are servants to whom we obey, Paul declares. Whether we obey the impulses and temptations of sin or the blessed and holy commands of God, we are the servants to whom we obey. We once obeyed the inclinations and attractions of the flesh with no regard to the will of God. This brought us under the power of sin. But we heard the doctrine of Christ and His holy way. We were drawn to Him by His lovingkindness and we have obeyed from the heart the truth which is in Him. Thus we are made free from sin, and have become the servants of righteousness. Praise God forever! In the Old Testament there was not only the cleansing of the blood atonement, but there was the washing of water in the cleansing laver. Even so now there is not only atonement through the blood of Jesus, but there is the practical cleansing of the washing of water by the Word and the doctrine of Christ. The cleansing of the blood alone is not sufficient. There must be a cleansing through obedience to the truth. This is where many people miss the mark. It is one thing to reckon our sins washed away by the blood of Jesus, but it is another thing to wash our souls through obedience to His precious Word.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the disobedience that brought sin into the world?
2. Why is it so important to God for us to be obedient to Him?
3. What is shown in us when we disobey the Word of God?
4. How did Jesus really show Himself to be qualified to be Saviour?
5. What was the real test of Christ's obedience?
6. Who has He become the Author of eternal salvation to?
7. What decides who we are servants to?
8. How can Christ help us to be obedient to God?
9. Will we be tempted to disobey and what should we do if we are?
10. How does obedience to the truth purify our souls?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

It surely means much for us to be obedient to God and His Word. Just professing His name and making big talk about it means nothing if it is not backed up with obedience. Paul spoke about us "having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." II Corinthians 10:6. He also spoke of how in time past we "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Ephesians 2:2. Disobedience, as we see in our lesson, was the downfall of our father Adam. It was through his disobedience in partaking of the forbidden fruit that brought sin upon the human race. Disobedience has been the downfall of many since then. I think of a prophet who visited king Jeroboam with a message as recorded in the 13th chapter of I Kings. The Lord worked mightily with this prophet in the eyes of the king and others. When the king asked him to come home with him, the prophet refused because the Lord had charged him to not eat nor drink, but to return by the way he came. But an old prophet took out after him and lied to him, saying that an angel had spoken to him to bring the prophet back to his house. And the prophet believed this lie and returned with the deceiver. Later this prophet was killed by a lion as he went on his way. See how the devil deceived him? Oh, it is critical that we obey the voice of the Lord!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The story has been told that after a fierce day of fighting at Marengo, Napoleon Bonaparte placed his sentinels at different points around the camp. They were charged on pain of death to stay awake, and to guard against being surprised by the enemy.

About midnight, Napoleon arose, and walking about, found a sentinel asleep, his gun lying beside him. The soldier, worn by the terrible fatigue of the preceding day, was unable to stay alert.

What did the emperor do? Softly and silently he took up the gun, placed it on his own shoulder, and acted as sentinel

until dawn. When the soldier awoke, he was filled with alarm at the realization that his duty was undone. Horror filled him as he concluded that he was a lost man. But Napoleon, whose generous act was prompted by his love for a simple soldier, handed back the gun, and bade the man be more attentive in the future.

"By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Christ, through His obedience unto death, did for us what mankind in his frailty had been unable to do. And it was done out of a heart of love and compassion for each of us.

—Wayne Murphey



JULY 18, 1999

HEALING FOR SOUL AND BODY

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 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.

Acts 10:38 God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Matthew 8:16 When the even was come, they brought unto him (Jesus) many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. I Peter 2:24.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The disease of sin spread its filthy germs over the whole human race, and along with it came physical diseases and sufferings. Mankind needed a Healer and One came from Heaven whose name was Jesus. He healed all who were oppressed by the devil in soul and body and is still the same today, well able to heal all who come in faith to Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 1:6), "*Putrefying sores*": The Hebrew says, "moist, dripping sores freshly made." "*Mollified*": Softened.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is on the healing of Christ the Saviour to the diseased world of sin. From the gospel prophet, Isaiah, we have first a picture of the woeful condition that existed in people's hearts and lives. It is in terms of physical things, but we know that it is really speaking of the condition of the spiritual side. This was the condition of Israel, a people who were supposed to be the people of God, but God is allowing them to be a scene of the depths of sin and woe, for they are a mirror showing the true plight of all mankind. What was said of Israel was true of the whole human race. All mankind was sick. There was much sickness and diseases of the body, but the main trouble was in the heart, in the attitudes, desires, aims, ambitions and dispositions. There was unbelief, lust, covetousness, dishonesty, strife and all the catalog of sins abounding. It was, as Isaiah put it, with the whole head sick, and the whole heart faint. But then from the blessed 53rd chapter comes the prophecy of the Healer, the Saviour who would bring healing and salvation. This is a wonderful prophecy of Jesus, the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary and the Victim for our salvation on the cruel cross of Calvary. The whole chapter is very vivid and clear and very accurate. Peter was called to minister to Cornelius and his house and He preached the gospel to them and told about Jesus going about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. Matthew tells about the many who were brought to Jesus and how He healed them all. He quotes from Isaiah 53, and even though the wording is a little different, it blends with the message found there. We also want to include what James had to say about healing, for we know that there is a provision in the healing of Christ not only for the soul, but also for the body. It is so wonderful to know that there is healing in Jesus for inward man in salvation from sin and evil, and for the outward man from sickness and disease of every kind.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why are so many people not aware of the disease of sin?

2. Why is the healing of the soul so much more important?
3. What is accomplished in the healing of the soul?
4. What are some of the diseases of the soul?
5. How do we know that Jesus Christ can heal soul and body today?
6. Why can a person not receive healing if he does not see his need?
7. What are some of the things one must keep in mind to be healed?
8. Why do we need to confess our faults to one another?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

We live in a sick society. There are many diseases of the body, but there are more diseases of the soul, the inner man. And this is what is plaguing our human kind. Pride is at the head of the list. This was the iniquity of Sodom. (Ezekiel 16:49.) Pride is deceiving because a person is proud with no reason to be proud. In fact, without people's pride they could not carry on like they do. Without spiritual vision to help us understand the way of humility and meekness we could not endure or handle it. So we have pride, the vain opinion of ourselves, warped and twisted out of its true shape, lifted up and confident in ourselves. Thus it sums up to be an evil disease, a sickness that the world cannot cure because they are not aware of what it is. Covetousness, the love of worldly gain, is another sickness. Here is another deceptive thing. People love their money because they feel a security in it. But it is false security, because it is not backed up by the promises of God. Riches can take wings and fly away. (Proverb 23:5.) So a man who bases his hopes and security on money and material wealth is a deceived soul. Let us turn ourselves away from these vain allurements and fix our trust in the great Physician and hold fast to Him all the days of our life!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Man's inhumanity to man plummeted to a new depth of shame when crucifixion was devised as a mode of punishment.

Cicero, a Roman statesman, orator, and writer, said of crucifixion, "Let the very name of the cross be far away not only from the body of a Roman citizen, but even from his thoughts, his eyes, and his ears."

To the Jews, the cross stood for even more than public shame and contempt. They believed the curse of God was on those who died by crucifixion. (Deut. 21:23.)

So Christ suffered the physical pains of the cross as well as the mental anguish and humiliation of Roman and Jewish disgrace. And He suffered it as a totally innocent man!

Surely something good would have to come out of this unjust situation. Christ didn't undergo this just to see how brave He could be. And God couldn't behold this scene of His only begotten Son's cruel death and not have some kind of reaction. No, there was purpose to this event, and the result was the availability of healing for our souls and the hope of a physical resurrection for our bodies. —Wayne Murphey



JULY 25, 1999

FROM BONDAGE TO LIBERTY

Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Luke 4: 14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee:...

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Luke 4:19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Romans 6:18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: 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.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Sin brings people into woeful bondage where they are not free to worship and serve God acceptably. Jesus can and will set our souls to liberty if we will come to Him with godly sorrow and repentance and be willing to take up our cross and follow Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Romans 7:14), "*I am carnal*": This should be more prop-

erly rendered: "I was carnal." The language of the apostle in the preceding verses of this text is past tense, as in verse 9: "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." He is speaking of his childhood innocence. The wording of the scripture here has caused many to think that this state of being carnal and sold under sin was the condition of Paul in his justified state in Christ. But this does not harmonize with other scriptures and the real essence of salvation. It is error to suppose that Paul was describing his Christian experience as being carnal and under the bondage of the devil. And yet so many today believe it this way. But it is not true. Paul is describing his sinful condition under the law and expresses it as the present as a manner of speech. This happens sometimes when we are relating and describing a past incident. For example: One relating an accident he was involved in might say, "Here I am driving along minding my own business when this drunk comes out of nowhere and before I know it he rams my front wheel and fender." He is speaking of it as in the present tense, but in reality it is a thing of the past. This is the way Paul spoke in this 7th chapter of Romans.

(Romans 7:15), "*What I would, that do I not*": The Greek text says, "For what I desire not, this I practice." This describes the bondage of sin, and this is what Paul is expressing. Under the yoke of sin one knows what he ought to do and he is not able to do it. Also that which he really knows that he should not do, this is what he does. The law alone is not sufficient to change a man and cause him to do the right. This is where the grace of God, given in Christ, outdoes the law. It not only shows us where we are wrong, but gives strength and power to triumph over it and lay it aside.

(Luke 4:19), "*The acceptable year of the Lord*": This means the year or time when God will accept us into His fellowship and favor and set us free from the bondage of sin. The type is found in Leviticus 25 where on the fiftieth year the trumpet of the jubilee was sounded throughout the land and all the captives were set free. Christ is proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of jubilee when all the captives under, the servitude of sin, can be set at liberty. As

Paul said in II Cor. 6:2, "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

(Romans 6:19), "*To iniquity unto iniquity*": Sin is progressive with no convenient stopping place. To give down and yield to sin in one point gives license and opportunity to go further and deeper. Every sinner's life will prove this to be true. "*To righteousness unto holiness*": The Christian life is likewise progressive. One must not be content to be righteous and justified, but there must be progress toward the attainment of holiness, which involves full consecration and death to the self life, receiving the fulness of the Holy Spirit, and a life of perfect holiness.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we will study from a scriptural standpoint the bondage of sin and the liberty Christ came to give us from that dark prison house. We will consider first a few scriptures from Paul's description of his sinful bondage under the law. He presents a very dark picture of defeat and frustration while under the yoke of sin that dwelt within him. He longed and yearned for deliverance and freedom but never found it until he came to Christ. Our concluding scripture for memory is his joyful conclusion and expression of his liberty since he found the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus and walked no longer after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Then we have Jesus in his message to the people in the synagogue at Nazareth, reading from Isaiah proclaiming that He was the anointed one to bring liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. We have included in this the reading from the Old Testament for it brings out more on liberty than the rendering in Luke. Then we have Paul's expounding of this freedom from the bondage of sin in Romans 6. He exhorts us to yield our members no longer as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but, as those that are alive from the dead, to yield ourselves unto God and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Our members he speaks of here are our eyes, hands, feet, ears, tongue, etc.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the bondage of sin consist of?
2. What does the law do in making this bondage worse?
3. What kind of prison is Christ speaking of?
4. Is every sinner aware of the fact that he is a prisoner?
5. How is a person made to realize that they are a prisoner of sin?
6. What are some of the things that make up sinful bondage?
7. What are we free to do in Christian liberty?
8. What is the feeling and relationship we have with our Redeemer?
9. How is sin so binding and so hard to get loose from?
10. Are there yet people pining to be free in the cages of deception?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Dark and gloomy is the state of the prison house of sin,

Shut out from the light of love, void of peace and hope within.

Chained to habits vile and vain, ways of strife and vanity,

Worldly haunts where pleasures flow, no real happiness to see.

Always seeking to improve, never satisfied nor glad,

From one place to place to move; always something to make sad.

Fear of death and endless night, no real comfort can one find

While in sin's seductive snare and the shallow carnal mind.

Adding sin to sin and more, and increasing all the time

While the devil makes one think that such living is sublime!

But within the heart the Conscience sounds her painful loud alarm,

And you're tossing to and fro, often getting hurt and harm.

Hear the great Redeemer's call: "Come to Me, I'll give you rest!

Ye that labour, laden sore with the toils of life distressed.

Take my yoke upon you now, learn of Me and seek to know
Of my meek and lowly ways and My Rest to you I'll show."

Many seek for freedom here, many die for freedom's cause,
But find disappointment sore in the din of man-made
laws.

Free from worry, hunger, pain, ignorance, tyranny, and shame,
This is what they seek to have with a chance for worldly
fame.

But while freedom they proclaim, slaves of sin they prove to be,
Overcome by pride and lust, love of wealth and vanity.
So the cycle onward goes and mankind is none the better,
For they seek not inward life but perfection of the letter.

Jesus came to set us free, and we can be free indeed,
If to Him from sin's dark yoke peace and liberty we plead.
Life from Him will quicken us and from death we can arise
Light and faith and victory shines their hope before our
eyes!

Shall we then remain in sin, in its prison house lie bound
When we hear the blessed truth and the gospel's joyful
sound?

See the doors are opened wide, Let us flee while best we can,
From sin's bondage let us part and embrace salvation's
plan!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Liberty doesn't mean we are free to be lawless. To the contrary, freedom is protected by responsibility. One foreign college student, when asked if she would like to stay in America said, "I should like the advantages of this way of living, but I am afraid I am not a big enough person to live in such liberty."

One who is sold out to Christ has no worry about being able to keep the law, or being a "big enough person to live in such liberty."

Consider it this way. Suppose a woman was married to what today's society would term a "male chauvinist." Let us

say the husband would demand that she rise promptly each morning and fix his breakfast and assist in getting him off to work. As soon as he left the house, she was to wash the dishes, clean the kitchen, vacuum, sweep, and dust the house. When he returned in the evening, he would make it a point to see if she had carried out all his orders in detail. With these regimented requirements, it wouldn't take long for the wife to grow weary of marriage. But suppose in the course of time the husband died and she met and married a man who knew the meaning of love and sensitive consideration. Do you think the woman would be any less the wife to the second man than she was to the first? No, with liberty and love, it is likely she would give herself more gladly to the necessities of a considerate husband.

Through Christ, we have gone from the bondage of the law to the joyous liberty of serving Him through grace.

—Wayne Murphey



AUGUST 1, 1999

WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR

Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Micah 5:4 And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

John 7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Luke 6:47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.

Proverbs 19:20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Proverbs 19:21.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It was a great and important part of the redemptive work of Christ in the earth to bring forth the counsels and instructions of the love and fear of Almighty God. The world, and mankind in general, are so full of vain and erroneous ideas and thoughts that sound counsel and teachings of the real truth are desperately needed to guide them in the right way. The doctrine of Jesus was the doctrine of Almighty God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 11:2), "*Counsel*": Advice.

(Micah 5:4), "*And they shall abide*": The Hebrew says, "And they shall sit down." I believe this is referring to the souls of men who will be willing to sit down at the feet of Jesus, like Mary in Luke 10:39, and listen to His doctrine and receive counsel and instruction for their eternal welfare.

(Ephesians 4:20), The Greek says, "Ye have not learned Christ in this way." To learn Christ one must be sensitive and open-minded, conscientious and with fervent desire to learn and to know what is acceptable to God. The stubborn and self indulgent cannot and will not learn of Christ. God works only with the willing and open-hearted.

(Proverbs 19:21), "*The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand*": The Hebrew says, "The counsel of Jehovah, it shall rise up."

LESSON BACKGROUND

Oh, how desperately we need to hear and receive the counsel of the Lord! Man is so prone to evil and so much of this is because of his ignorance and darkness. But the sad thing about it is that so much of the time people do not esteem counsel as they should. They are unaware of their need of it. They think they know, but they do not know. In this was one of the great and essential parts of the redemptive work of Christ in the earth. He came to teach us. Moses prophesied of him in Deuteronomy 18:15, saying, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken." Our Lord Jesus gathered about Him men whom God had given Him. These were His disciples. A disciple is defined as a learner, or pupil. Christ taught these men His doctrines and they received His words. These were the words of eternal life. Today we all need to become disciples of Jesus Christ. We need to learn of Him, of His meekness and lowliness of heart and all else about Him. In our lesson today we have scriptures that picture Christ as the great Counsellor, foretold in prophecy, portrayed in His life and labors, and stressed by Paul as the important

matter for spiritual success. Take note of the two scriptures at the close of our lesson from Proverbs. Beware of those devices that will be formulated in your mind that do not coincide with the doctrine of God. Most people live that way. But the counsel of the Lord will rise and stand when everything else passes off. We need the counsel of the Lord for our latter end is coming. We must leave this world and go out into the great eternal beyond. Now in these few fleeting years of time that are allotted to us we need to listen, pay attention, take heed, and obey the wise counsels of the Lord Jesus. We will have no one to blame but ourselves if we let the counsel of the Lord pass over us without our attention and obedience. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What need do we have for the counsel of the Lord?
2. What condition does a person get in who lacks this counsel?
3. What kind of attitude and spirit must we have to receive it?
4. Is there any counsel in the world that we have to be on our guard against?
5. How can we really know what is the right doctrine?
6. What must we do to really be on something solid?
7. What is the tendency of the flesh concerning listening to counsel?
8. Why was counselling and teaching such an important part of Christ's redemptive work?
9. Can a person be truly saved and be indifferent to the counsel of the Lord?
10. When will the counsel of the Lord pay off the most?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

"I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins (the tender heart that has received His counsel) also instruct me in the night seasons." Psalm 16:7. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Psalm 73:24. "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Proverbs 11:14. "The

way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." Proverbs 12:15. "Without counsel purposes are disappointed (The Hebrew says *frustrated*): but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." Proverbs 15:22. The Holy Scriptures speak very highly of the value of wise counsel and doctrine. We are prone to make our own decisions without really seeking the Lord and His people for counsel. I can look back in my life and see things that I did and steps that I took that proved out to be not the best for me. I thought I was doing right and all seemed to be well, but later on I saw that I had been better off if I had more diligently sought counsel about it. The destiny of our eternity bound soul hinges on our ability to receive the counsel of the Lord. The work of Christ in His visit to this world was not only to die for the salvation of men's souls, but it was also to teach us how to live. How we need to take heed to His counsel. We will stand before Him one day and give an account of how we have received His gospel. That will be a day that we never saw before. May the Lord stir our hearts to greater diligence to be attentive and obedient to His counsel.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Johann Goethe, the German philosopher, once said, "Give me the benefit of your convictions if you have any, but keep your doubts to yourself, for I have enough of my own." It would be a poor counselor indeed who interwove his advice with doubts. Look at the instruction Christ gave. It was always good, positive admonition complete with an assured outcome, which is still applicable today.

Christ's teachings were not derived from other men's wisdom, nor secondary in origination. The scribes of His day quoted earlier sources and debated endlessly the complexities of their burdensome tradition. Christ taught with the authority of God, and it was simple, original, and wholesome. It must have been like a breath of fresh air to the seekers of His day, even as it is today, in a society which is filled with endless questions and doubts.

—Wayne Murphey



AUGUST 8, 1999

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

I Peter 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

I Corinthians 11:23 ...The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 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.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: (*Which is shed for many for the remission of sins* . Matthew 26:28): this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 13:11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. I John 1:7.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ was made flesh and dwelt among men to shed His priceless blood as a sacrifice and an atonement for the salvation of our souls from sin. Through that blood we can be forgiven of our sins, sanctified wholly, and made perfect in every good work to do the will of God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(I Peter 1:18), "*Redeemed*": To be loosened or set free by the payment of a ransom price. "*From your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers*": The Greek says, "From your worthless living handed down from fathers."

(Hebrews 9:14), "*Conscience*": Consciousness or awareness of right or wrong, and of good and evil.

(Hebrew 13:12), "*Sanctify*": To make holy.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we take up the study of another important phase of the redemptive work of Christ in the earth. And that is the shedding of His precious blood for the atonement of the sins of mankind. Man was kidnapped by the devil and a great ransom for his deliverance had to be paid. Sin had brought a breach and separation between God and man. God was offended and His wrath must be appeased by the offering of the

blood of an innocent victim in payment for this terrible offence. It is evident that this was in the mind of God before He created the world, to have a way to redeem His creation in the event of their fall. Jesus Christ was that victim for our salvation, yes, a Lamb of sacrifice whose blood was the redemption price for our recovery from the bondage and penalty of sin. The gospels that give an account of the life and labours of Jesus have little to say about His blood and what it would do. But we have enough said along with the extended expounding of the other New Testament writers that makes it clear that the blood of Jesus was spilled for the salvation of our souls. We have included in our lesson Jesus's own words at the last supper when He took the grape juice and passed the cup around, labeling it as a type of His blood of the New Testament which was shed for many for the remission of sins. And the other scriptures make it clear that the blood of Jesus was the only means by which we can be restored to the favor of God. His is the blood of the everlasting covenant, the seal of God's favor, and the fulfillment of the type found in the passover Lamb's blood sprinkled on the door on that final night of Israel's captivity in Egypt. The blood on the door post of the home was a safeguard against the angel of death that went through the land. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Exodus 12:13. And, as Paul said in I Corinthians 5:7, "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does man need to be redeemed from?
2. What was the price needed for man's redemption?
3. What did Jesus say about His blood?
4. Why is blood a worthy price for the penalty of sin?
5. To what extent does the blood of Jesus save a man concerning sin?
6. What did Jesus do to sanctify us with His blood?
7. In what way can we go forth unto Jesus without the camp, bearing His reproach?
8. What are some of the things we must do in order for the blood of Jesus to be rightly applied to our need?
9. What does walking in the light have to do with the blood of Jesus cleansing us from all sin?

10. What all can be accomplished in us through the blood of the everlasting covenant?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. His precious blood was the sustaining price for our deliverance from the chains of Satan and His woeful bondage. We were helpless and undone until Christ paid the price for our rescue. Christ Jesus loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. (Revelations 1:5.) Christ purchased the Church with His own blood. (Acts 20:28.) He loved the Church and gave Himself as a price for her cleansing that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. Ephesians 5:25-26. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. (Ephesians 1:7.) What hope would we have if it were not for the blood of Jesus? What do we have to stand on, and what hope is there outside of the shelter of His precious blood? Let us remember that the giving of His blood was not without pain, humiliation, and death. His blood was not spilled in a gentlemanly manner as in an office amid sanitary conditions as being drawn from the vein with a syringe. No, it was shed through a shameful abuse of a wretched sentence of a criminal. He was mocked and crowned with thorns around His brow. He was beaten after the Roman fashion of many stripes exceeding the Jewish tale of thirty-nine. His back was lacerated and torn with the metal infested whip. He was nailed by his hands and feet to a cross and allowed to hang there until he died. Then after he was dead a Roman soldier pierced his tender side and there came out blood and water. So the manner of the shedding of Christ's blood was no easy process. It was suffering all the way. That is the price our blessed Lord had to pay for our forgiveness, for our sanctification. May we ever walk worthy of what He has done for us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One story tells of a missionary and his visit to an old blind chief, by the name of Me, in the South Sea Islands. The

missionary found the chief sick in bed, and inferred to him that his disease looked terminal. He then asked the chief about how he considered himself in the sight of God, and what the foundation of any hope he had might be.

"Oh," the old chief replied, "I have been in great trouble this morning, but I am happy now. I saw an immense mountain with steep sides, up which I tried to climb, but when I had attained a considerable height, I lost my hold, and fell to the bottom. Exhausted, I sat down to weep, and while weeping, I saw a drop of blood fall upon that mountain, and in a moment it was dissolved. That mountain was my sins, and the drop that fell upon it was one drop of the precious blood of Jesus."

—Wayne Murphey



AUGUST 15, 1999

PEACE, QUIETNESS, AND ASSURANCE FOREVER

Psalms 37:7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Psalms 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Isaiah 30:15 Thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Isaiah 57:19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him.

20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

James 3:14 If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Colossians 3:15.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, brings peace and quietness to the inner soul of man. All strife and contention against one's fellow man ceases as we learn to trust in God and let His peace rule in our hearts. We can overcome all fear and unbelief as we learn to rest on the promises of His Word.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 37:11), *"Inherit the earth"*: This would more properly be rendered as *"Inherit the land"*: The land to us spiritually would be the blessings of full salvation and victory over sin. It is the true Caanan land of the soul, that is, entire sanctification with all of its benefits.

(Isaiah 57:19), *"I create the fruit of the lips; Peace peace"*: God wants to put within the heart of man His peace and good will. He wants man to know that He wants to heal him and give him an expected end. Only when the heart of man is so filled with the peace of God can the fruit of his lips be accordingly.

(James 3:14), *"Glory not"*: The Greek says, "Do not exult over and lie against the truth." He is telling us here that to have envy and strife in our hearts toward our brother is a shame and a disgrace to the Christian profession. God has called us to peace and to allow carnal and selfish strife to infest our behavior is a contradiction of His truth.

LESSON BACKGROUND

From the wonderful prophecies of Isaiah and the precious truths of the Psalms we have an insight to the peace and quietness that God promised to bring to mankind through His Son, Jesus. Sin not only separated man from his Maker, but it brought mankind into a state of strife and terrible conflict. By the time the world was decreed to be destroyed in the days of Noah it was full of violence. Man was struggling against his fellow in selfish aims of fleshly lusts. The strife was not only open and visible war and bloodshed, but it was an inner strife and miserable wretchedness of heart and mind. One of the statements concerning the sinful condition of man as stated in Isaiah 59:8 was that "the way of peace they know not". But God did not want man to remain and continue in this strife and turmoil. He had peace and good will in His heart for man and He meant to make it so that man could enjoy a life of peace, quietness, and assurance. We have the wonderful words of our Lord Jesus telling us that He will give us His peace. In John 16:33 we have these precious words that He spoke also: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The apostle Paul gives us a good recipe for peace. His counsel is not beyond us. We can do just what he said. This peace will preserve our hearts and minds from fear and gloom and worry. The apostle James has some good counsel concerning this intrusion of strife and

envyings. He brings it to us after his instruction concerning the poison of the tongue and the damage it can do. A wise man can manifest his works from a good behavior with the true quality of real wisdom, and that is meekness.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we not be disturbed by the foolish ways of others?
2. What does it mean to delight in the abundance of peace?
3. How does loving God's law bring us great peace?
4. What causes people to become offended at God's law?
5. Why are people unwilling to go the way of peace and confidence?
6. What is the true effect of God's righteousness?
7. What is the attitude of God toward sinful man?
8. How does Jesus give us His peace?
9. What must we do for our hearts and minds to be in peace?
10. Why is strife and envying offensive to the Spirit of God?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Peace, quietness and assurance forever is a wonderful treasure to possess. There is so much discord, strife, bitterness and pulling apart in this world! Man knows not the way of peace. The turmoil and strife is within. It lies in the vanity of the heart that is reaching for physical satisfaction. People are striving, pushing and shoving their way through life. Instead of letting the peace of God keep them in quietness and calmness of mind, their ways are full of restlessness and agitation. Instead of seeking for peace and quietness we find sinful and blind humanity bubbling and simmering in strife with one another. Jesus came to bring peace to the soul. And this peace He wants to give is a peace that is a kingdom reigning within a man. It is the work of salvation to bring a reconciliation between God and man, so making peace where there was once discord. "Being justified by faith, we have peace

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1. The angels sang at the Saviour's birth: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14. God's attitude was peace toward man. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Jeremiah 29:11. Yes, the Lord's way is peace.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Toward the close of World War II, a cartoonist drew an illustration of an American soldier about to chop down a large terrifying tree labeled "World War II." A group of civilians and diplomats with portfolios of postwar peace plans stood near by. The soldier was saying, "I'll cut down the tree, but God help us if you don't prevent its sprouting again."

Despite the efforts of man, the tree of war is continually sprouting. Men, through their own power and understanding, strive for peace only to find it slip through their fingers. At times, it is so elusive that someone wrote,

"Peace upon earth was said; we sing it
And pay a million priests to bring it.
After two thousand years of mass,
We've got as far as poison gas."

It is only in a genuine and personal relationship with Christ that we find the true quietness and assurance for which the heart of man so fervently longs.

—Wayne Murphey



Does your Bible Lesson subscription expire with this quarter? If it does, be sure to have your renewal in this office by September 1 so that you won't miss the fourth quarter of 1999. There is a renewal form on page 64 of this book for your convenience.

We trust these Sunday School books will be an inspiration by helping to open up just a few of the hidden mysteries of our majestic God.

AUGUST 22, 1999

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

I Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,

and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. I John 3:14.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: In our sin and disobedience to God we were dead and void of spiritual life. But God gave Jesus the power to quicken our souls and cause us to pass from death to life in God. We are alive to spiritual blessings and fellowship with God. We also are given hope of our mortal bodies being quickened to live forever in the resurrection of the dead at the last great day.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we will consider the subject of the quickening power of Christ for the inner man and for this mortal body. Jesus explained that the Father, who has power to quicken and raise the dead, had given Him, the Son, the same power. The world was dead in trespasses and sins, as Paul in our Ephesians 2 text points out, and was in need of a spiritual resurrection. Their languishing, dying souls were in need of a new birth of life. According to our scriptures, we see that Jesus can bring that kind of life to our souls. We can be quickened, made alive, and raised up from the spiritual death that held us, to be able to sit with Jesus in the heavenly realm of His holiness and fellowship. This is something that we can have NOW, praise the Lord! Oh, what a wonderful experience to pass from death to life! Once we were dead and in the chains of the world and its carnal ways. But now we are alive from the

dead and our pleasures are now in the blessings of heaven and communion with our Beloved Master. We can live this resurrected life all of our mortal days. But that is not all! Christ also gives to us the hope of another resurrection, the resurrection of our mortal bodies. All that are in the graves are going to come forth in that last great day. The righteous and the wicked will both be brought back to consciousness and a state of being. The righteous will come forth to life and joyful awareness in the presence of the One they have loved and followed in this short life. But the wicked will awake to shame and everlasting contempt, as was spoken of in Daniel 12:2. Our scriptures in I Corinthians 15 are part of Paul's wonderful explanation of this glorious hope of the saints of God. How wonderful that we can pass from death unto life! We can be quickened now and made alive in Christ and live always looking forward to that time when we will be changed to immortality. Christ will change this body of our humiliation and make it like unto the body of His glory. Philippians 3:21.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be dead in trespasses and sins?
2. What does Christ have the power to do for us in that condition?
3. What must we do to receive this resurrection of the soul?
4. What does it mean to really HEAR the voice of the Son of God?
5. What are we raised up to in this spiritual resurrection?
6. What is the other resurrection that Christ spoke of?
7. When will this resurrection take place?
8. Who are the ones who will partake of the resurrection of life?
9. What kind of resurrection will the wicked have?
10. What must we do to be qualified to be in the resurrection of life?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Paul stated in I Timothy 5:6 that "she that liveth in

pleasure is dead while she liveth". Just think of it! A person can be alive in the body, thinking, speaking, doing, going, eating, laughing, or weeping, and at the same time they can be dead in a spiritual sense. All of a person's desires and interests are absorbed in the fleshly and worldly realm when they are dead to the joys of the Lord. Money, fine things, decorations, entertainments and such like make up the life and activities of those who are spiritually dead. Many things are done to please the appetites of the body with no thought about how it will please God. And thus, in this condition, many sins and acts of disobedience to God are committed on a daily, and sometimes, on an hourly basis. Fellowship with God is not on their agenda. God is not part of their program. The cares, riches, and pleasures of this life choke out the Word of God and they are unfruitful in matters that are most important. Such a life is indeed costly, sad to say. Sorrows and bitter reapings attend a life of a person who is dead in sins and trespasses. But the gospel, the Word of God, comes. It is preached, it is taught, it is lived and exemplified. The soul is affected and the heart is touched and moved. Repentance begins to take hold. Down in humility and remorse of conscience goes the soul, turning away from their vain life and seeking the heavenly life. Christ hears that prayer and draws near with His quickening Spirit. A great change takes place. Life enters into that soul and a new creature takes form. He is made alive. His sins are washed away and in their place is a love and desire for God and His blessings. Oh, this is real! This is the new birth, the new creature, and the first resurrection. He is risen to walk in newness of life. And with this wonderful experience comes a hope, yes, a hope of another resurrection and life to come.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A person does not fully live until they live with the hope of eternal life within. I read of a tombstone with an epitaph which said, "Born 1810. Died 1890. Lived 50 years." Perhaps that person spent some years of his or her life existing, instead of really living.

It reminds me of the small boy, just learning to write, who ended a letter to his uncle in this way: "I send you my love. I hope you live all your life."

You can have something very pleasant happen to you in life, but if you know something dreadful will follow, how can you enjoy that which is pleasant? In many states, when a person is condemned to death, he is given the privilege of requesting any food desired for the last meal. Now, how can a person enjoy a meal, even if it is made up of favorite foods, if death is to follow?

On the flip side, do you remember what it was like as a child when your parents told you to do a chore, and promised that when it was over you could go swimming, or get an ice cream cone? The work wasn't half as bad in light of the reward.

Problems of life are common to all people, both saved and unsaved. Salvation will spare a person many heartaches, but life will not spare them from trouble. But if there is hope of an eternal resurrection and life with God at the end, problems of earth are much more bearable.

—Wayne Murphey



AUGUST 29, 1999

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, PERFECT HOLINESS

John 17:11b Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye trans-

formed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

I Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.

I Thessalonians 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:10 ...We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

12 This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. II Corinthians 7:1.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, sanctified Himself and offered His body on the cross as a sacrifice to God that we might be sanctified wholly, and that we might be preserved blameless from this evil world unto His coming at that last great day.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(John 17:17), "*Sanctify*": To consecrate, purify, and make holy.

(John 17:19), "*I sanctify myself*": Jesus consecrated Himself to do the will of God in submitting to the death of the cross. He did this willingly, as an offering on our behalf, that we might be sanctified. The disciples were saved from the world and were followers of Christ, but they were not sanctified. Jesus is praying to the Father that they might receive the Holy Spirit

and be sanctified. It is the will and desire of the Lord Jesus even now that all who believe in Him might be sanctified, also.

(Romans 12:2), *"The renewing of your mind"*: The renewing, or renovating, of the mind is bringing our thoughts and attitudes up to the holy standard of the knowledge of God.

(I Thessalonians 4:3), *"Sanctification"*: The state of being holy and pure. Note: The words "sanctification" and "holiness" are both translated from the same Greek word, so they are one and the same thing.

(I Thessalonians 4:4), *"Possess his vessel"*: To possess here means to have and hold and own. This calls for responsibility and faithfulness in caring for and using properly and in honor. The term vessel here means our whole being: body, soul, mind and spirit.

(I Thessalonians 5:22), *"Abstain from all appearance of evil"*: This is what the Greek text says: "Keep back from every form of evil."

(I Thessalonians 5:23), *"Wholly"*: The Greek meaning here is "complete to the end, that is, absolutely perfect." God wants His people to be entirely, completely and fully sanctified and meet for the Master's use.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is taken from the words of our Saviour and from the writings of one of His apostles, Paul. We are dealing with a highly important and indispensable need that every soul has before God. This is to be wholly sanctified. We have in the first part of our Saviour's prayer to His Father, Christ's burden concerning the men that His Father had given to Him to be His disciples. This prayer, recorded by the beloved disciple John, climaxed His tender and loving discourse with His disciples in the upper room on the evening before His arrest that night, and crucifixion the next morning. He had spoken to them of the Holy Spirit that was to come from the Father after His departure from them into Heaven. His burden was that, as they were to be left in this world, they would be preserved and kept from the evil of the world in unity and holiness. He prayed explicitly that they be sanctified. He was

consecrating and sanctifying Himself to do the will of God in giving His life for them on the cross. And He desired that they also would partake of His sacrifice and be preserved in holiness as He was. We also have the writings of Paul concerning entire sanctification. Our scripture in Romans comes after a lengthy expounding of the workings of God with the Jews and the Gentiles and the important truth of the triumph of the Spirit over the flesh. In consequence of God's "past finding out" ways of bringing the Jew and the Gentile together in the Spirit in Christ, Paul exhorts us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, that we might be sanctified to do the perfect will of God. Then we have his writings to the Thessalonians concerning this matter of being sanctified. He gives various important duties and commands that we should remember to do in our consecration and submission to God in the reaching out of our hearts for this wonderful blessing of being wholly sanctified. Every child of God should see to it that he or she obtains this blessing. This experience is not received in being saved and becoming a new creature in Christ. It is to be sought for and received after conversion. It is the saved in Christ who need to be sanctified wholly. The infilling of the Holy Spirit and being sanctified are one and the same experience. Jesus gave His life that we might have it. May the Lord stir every heart to seek for this blessing until it is obtained beyond all doubt.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the burden Christ had in prayer for His disciples?
2. Why did Christ want His disciples to be sanctified?
3. What did Christ do that they might be sanctified?
4. What must we do to be sanctified?
5. Why is being not conformed to this world so important?
6. What does it mean to be transformed by the renewing of the mind?
7. What did Paul say is the will of God concerning us?
8. What does it mean to be sanctified wholly?
9. By what means are we sanctified?
10. What all does sanctification bring to us?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Every person who is saved and washed from their sins in the blood of Jesus needs to go on to perfection and be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. We need that cleansing the Holy Spirit fire brings and the seal of the Holy Spirit that will preserve us from the evils and contamination of this world. We need that purity and holiness of heart and life that is made possible by being sanctified. A person who will not fail to go forward to receive this wonderful experience and who will continue to yield to the Lord throughout life can prevail and conquer and be a success for God. To be sanctified we must first be clear in our souls with God. God does not pour out His Spirit upon an unclean vessel. Our consciences must be clean and not guilty with sin. We must know that we are forgiven and washed from our sins. We must be fully aware of our need. We do not need to know all about it or how it works. We just need to be aware of our need of being sanctified wholly. We have to come to the Lord and submit fully to Him. Consecrate yourself wholly to do the will of God, no matter what it might mean to you in your personal life or whatever else it may involve. Put yourself all on the altar for God. Be willing to do or to go or to be anything and everything He wants you to be.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We should seek all that God has for us. We can have power to live a clean, holy life. But we must have that cleansing of the nature before we can live the kind of life that is acceptable in God's sight—a life that satisfies the soul. How sad that so many today are living under an old law experience. They seem to think that they have to ask forgiveness for their sins daily. They are living far beneath their privileges. God has a plan, and if we live according to that plan, we can have power to live victorious and without sinning. Praise God!

I told some men who wanted to give me some tracts on their false teaching, that I lived every day without sinning. They acted as if they were amazed. They said that no one could live without sinning. But I declared that by the grace and

power of God working in my soul, I did. When they were leaving, one said that he was afraid that by my making the statement I had made, I had sinned. Dear Ones, it's sad today that the devil has so many deceived, when they could enter into that blessed experience of sanctification that seals our justification and gives us power to live holy before God each day. We thank God for the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith.

—Sis. Marie Miles (Written in 1981.)



SEPTEMBER 5, 1999

JESUS CHRIST EXALTED ON HIGH

Psalms 110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Psalms 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

Ephesians 4:9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Ephesians 1:19 (*That ye may know*) what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest,

that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Romans 8:34.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After Jesus had obeyed the Father in submitting to the horrible death of the cross, He was resurrected from the dead and exalted up on high at the right hand of God, there to remain until the time when all His foes will be subjected to Him. While He tarries in that high, exalted place, He is interceding for all in this world who love and obey and follow Him. He will come again in His Father's time to bring judgment upon the wicked and eternal life to those who are faithful to Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 110:1), *"The Lord said unto my Lord"*: The Hebrew reads: *A statement of Jehovah to my Lord*. The first Lord is Jehovah, the Almighty Creator and Father of Jesus. The second Lord is Christ Himself.

(Psalm 110:3), *"Willing"*: The Hebrew meaning is "sponta-

neous," which is defined as "free will without any force or constraint". This shows the reaction in the heart to the love of Christ, a response that is just as natural and instantaneous because it originates from within. *"The dew of thy youth"*: Christ arose from the grave unto eternal youth as the freshness of the early morning. So He is to all unto whom He in the Holy Spirit is revealed. Glory be to His Majestic Name!

(Psalm 110:4), *"After the order of Melchizedek"*: As Hebrews 7 brings out, the priesthood of Christ was to be different than the Levitical priesthood. It was to be an eternal priesthood like unto Melchizedek who was a priest who blessed Abraham in his day; being a priest, not because of his parentage, but because of his faithfulness to God and to the people.

(Ephesians 4:9), *"The lower parts of the earth"*: This refers to the depth of shame and sorrow that Jesus suffered in being wrongfully accused and unjustly murdered as a criminal and buried in the grave. He submitted to this in obedience to His Father's command, but His reward put Him up far above all heavens that He might fill (command or have control of) all things.

(Ephesians 1:20), *"Wrought"*: put into action, operation, or efficiency. It comes from the Greek word *energy* which is the capacity for vigorous action.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus has been given a name that is above every name. He is at the right hand of God, higher than the highest. From this exalted position He wields the rod of His strength. He sends the Holy Spirit to live and move in the hearts of His people who offer themselves willingly to Him and to His service. He intercedes to God for the poor and needy who call upon Him. And He is patiently waiting for the time when the Father will say, "It is enough! Go and bring this wicked world to an end and bring my faithful ones up here with us!" This is a vital and important part of the redemptive work of Christ. To ascend up on high, to reign in glory, to intercede for the souls of men, to save and sanctify, and to one day come again—all of this is the

great work of the Son of God. It could be a 4th verse to Fanny Crosby's sublime hymn, *Tell Me the Story of Jesus*.

Tell how He's gone back to heaven, Up to the right hand of God,

How He is there interceding, For us while here we must trod!

Tell of the sweet Holy Spirit He pours on us from above;

Tell how He's coming in glory For all the saints of His love!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the prophet say that God said unto Christ?
2. Why are the true people of God so ready and eager to obey Christ?
3. Where did Christ ascend to after His resurrection?
4. Why did He first have to descend to the lower parts of the earth?
5. What kind of power was activated when God raised up Christ?
6. What is Christ waiting for?
7. What is He doing while He tarries at the right hand of God?
8. What is our privilege in having Christ as our great high priest?
9. What all can Christ do for the souls of men while there in glory?
10. What is going to happen to all who prove to be His enemies?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

"Borne away in mind and spirit" let us view the sacred scene on Mount Olivet. Here we find Jesus and His disciples. They have come here, having been with their risen Lord for forty days since He came forth from the tomb on that third day morning. He had showed Himself to be truly alive after all of His sufferings and awful death on the cross by many infallible proofs. They were fully convinced that He was the eternal Son of God. He had opened up the scriptures to them and showed

how it behoved Him to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. He had foretold and promised over and over to them of the Holy Spirit that would soon come from the Father through Him. They knew that they were to tarry in Jerusalem and wait for this power from on high. As they stood and watched Him now, perhaps they were wondering what He was about to do. We can visualize Him as He stands with His hands up in blessing them. Perhaps He looked upon these earthly scenes with the visage of a Conqueror. There in the distance was Jerusalem, the city who had rejected and crucified Him. There was the Garden of Gethsemane where He had wept and struggled and won the victory in prayer that awful night. It could have been that Calvary could be seen where He was shamefully slain in agony. What might He have said to them? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature! Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world! In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I go to my Father's right hand to tarry until the time of the end. Be strong and of good courage. Keep love for one another and for all men. Be not fearful of what you will suffer, for, though your trials may be great, they soon will be over. Just a few days here and an eternity to share with me will be your reward. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!" Suddenly, while He was holding up His hands in blessing, the disciples noticed that a space was forming between his feet and the ground. As they watched speechless with wonder, the space grew wider, perhaps slowly at first and then increasing gradually in speed. All eyes were turned upward on Him. They watched Him as He went higher and higher into the upper air. They watched Him until a cloud took Him out of sight. Perhaps someone murmured, "He's gone!" Perhaps someone answered, "Yes, He is gone from our human sight, but He lives forever in our innermost being!" Today this vision of Christ's exalted power gives courage and comfort to our souls. We know that He lives on

high, triumphant over sin and all its stain. And someday He's coming again!
—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

History verifies that in later Judaism the high priests were corrupt. The high priesthood carried tremendous political and religious authority, and in some cases, it was actually sold to and bought by the highest bidder. It was corrupted by favoritism and politics.

Jesus Christ is the kind of High Priest we need. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Heb. 7:26.

Let us notice the phrase, "separate from sinners." Jesus lived in constant touch with human need. He did not isolate Himself and His disciples to form a little group separate from the society they lived in. He was known as the friend of publicans and sinners, and He did not get that reputation by holding them at arm's length. A better word to describe His relation to sinners and their sins was insulation. He mixed with the undesirables, having compassion upon their sorrows of heart, while His relationship with God insulated Him from their sins.

Surely, this is the High Priest we need, and One after whom we can pattern our lives. —Wayne Murphey



SEPTEMBER 12, 1999

JESUS, THE LIGHT FOR THOSE IN DARKNESS

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

9 That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 3:19 ...Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Ephesians 5:13 All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

John 12:35 ...Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light....

II Corinthians 4:4 The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

I John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. Ephesians 5:8, 10.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The world of sinful mankind was covered by gross darkness in ignorance and blindness of the heart. Jesus, the Son of God, came to bring light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Through Him we can be delivered from the power of darkness and made to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(John 8:12), "*Light*": Illumination, brightness, brilliancy, rays, that which reveals and makes things clear and evident. "*Darkness*": shadiness, dimness, obscurity, absence of light.

(John 1:5), "*The darkness comprehended it not*": The Greek text says, "The darkness did not overtake it". We might say that this is saying that the darkness of this world did not understand or comprehend the light of Christ. That is true in so many. But I believe the true sense of the text tells us that the darkness did not hinder the light. Men's darkness did not overcome the light to extinguish it. Regardless of how dark the world was, the light of Christ shone plainly enough for those who realized their darkness to be enlightened and saved. What is darkness? It is the absence of light. When the light comes the darkness disappears.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have in our lesson today scriptures that have to do with one of the most important of Christ's missions in His redemptive work in the earth. The world, in the ancient fall of man from the favor of God, was overrun with spiritual darkness and error. Without the inward light of the Holy Spirit, man was prone to any and every kind of lust, passion and evil possible. When man, through wisdom of the wrong kind, lost the knowledge of God, it threw the door open to an unending chain of evil ideas and thoughts that brought sorrow and damnation to his life. The veil of darkness settled over the nations. Ignorance took the reins and the blindness of men's hearts shut out any ray of true knowledge that was offered. There were those through the years who sought for and appreciated the light that God shone upon them. But the

majority of humanity groped on in sinful night. Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. As the prophet Isaiah said in 59:9, "We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness." It was upon this miserable and wretched state of the souls of men that the light of Heaven shone in the appearing of the Son of God. From the various writers of the New Testament we have gleaned precious expressions of the value of this glorious light and what it means to those who embrace it and walk steadfastly in it. Matthew 4:16, being a quote from the prophecy of Isaiah 9:2, pretty well sums it all up when he said, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Only those who become aware of their darkness are able to appreciate and receive benefit from the light of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of darkness is it that covers the earth and people?
2. Whose kingdom thrives and prospers in the dark?
3. What causes a person to resist and turn from the light?
4. What does light do?
5. Why is the coming of light to a man such a serious matter?
6. What happens when a person rejects the light of Christ?
7. Who is the "god of this world" and how does he blind the mind?
8. Why has God commanded the light to shine out of darkness?
9. Why is there no darkness at all in God?
10. Why and how is walking in the light of God associated with fellowship with Him and the cleansing of the blood of His Son Jesus?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

I sweetly recall a day when my heart was heavy with the

battles of life. I was working on a job delivering office equipment and printing supplies. I had come home for lunch and found out that I had missed a visit from some of the saints who were travelling by our place and had stopped for awhile. As I went back to work I remember how disappointed I was. I had a delivery to make of a nice florescent floor lamp. I took the lamp in and showed the people how to work it. I remember saying, "This will give you good light". Then I added, "We all need light. We need spiritual light, and we get that from the Bible and the Lord." After receiving their signature on the invoice I left. But the words that I had spoken still rang in my mind. As I drove down the street, the Lord's presence filled my soul. The scriptures began to come to me about the value and blessing of the light of God. Songs about the light of God started ringing in my heart. Oh, I had a feast with the Lord and was so richly blessed! Most of these scriptures that we have in our lesson today came so inspiringly to my inner man. I have pondered over this thought of light so many times since then. As I get older in years and farther along in spiritual knowledge I am made aware more fully just how serious and important as well as beneficial the light of God is to us. What a blessing natural light is! The light of the sun is so vital for life and health. What a blessing electricity is! We have a tendency to take it for granted, but when the lights go out during a storm or a problem with the wiring, we sense how dark it would be if we were without electricity. Just so the spiritual light of God for our souls is so blessed and beneficial. The light of the gospel shining and revealing the truths of Christ and what He accomplished for us is so wonderful! The Lord wants us to open our hearts and let His light shine in to give us the knowledge of His glory in the countenance of Jesus.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What in your estimation is the outstanding "message of light" that Christ brought to the world? Think this over seriously. What do we normally associate with the gospel of light? Is it the wonderful news that a Saviour has come; that

the Son of God is here? Ah, kind friend, think again! The understanding or "light" that is basic and essential and a prerequisite to any work of salvation, and the one that is most often refused and rejected is the one which teaches us that we are all lost in sin and undone before a holy God! No man can ever be saved until he is willing to acknowledge himself as a sinner.

Does it offend anyone's pride to recognize Christ as the Son of God? In most cases today it doesn't. Does it cast any reflection or place any responsibility on men to acknowledge Him as holy and just and pure in all His ways? No. All of this can be, and is being done all about us today in nominal Christianity by men who are living in sin. But when the truth begins to sound that men are lost in sin, and unless they humble themselves and plead His mercy and obtain His pardon or they will be banished forever, this they reject. Let Christ be whatever He wants to be, that is all right, but don't impose His standard upon me!

—Clifford W. Wilson (Written in 1972.)



SEPTEMBER 19, 1999

THE CHRIST OF THE CROSS

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

John 19:17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

Luke 9:23 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.

Matthew 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 16:25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

I Corinthians 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Galatians 6:14.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ submitted to His Father's will and allowed Himself to be crucified and slain upon the cross of Golgotha. His cross that he bore, endured, and died upon becomes a symbol of his humiliation, rejection, and sufferings which all who follow Him must also bear every day. We must never lose sight of the cross. We must never

allow it to be made of none effect nor its offence to cease.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(John 12:31), *"The judgment of this world"*: Christ is speaking here of His death on the cross. In despising his earthly life in preference to the death of the cross by the will of God Jesus brought judgment and condemnation to the selfish spirit of this world.

(I Corinthians 1:17), *"Christ sent me not to baptize"*: Paul is not condemning the rite of baptism nor despising it. He is simply stating that, although he had baptized some, his main burden and calling of the Lord was the preaching of the gospel, the gospel of the cross of Jesus. *"Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect"*: The true gospel of Christ is not a "wordy" gospel devised and set forth by the power of human intellect and excellency of speech. It is a simple gospel always centering around the cross of Jesus and the price that He paid thereon. Paul did not want the cross of Christ to lose its true effect.

(Hebrews 12:2), *"Despising the shame"*: This meant that Jesus counted lightly and thought not about the reproach and shame that came with the sufferings that the cross brought to Him. He was looking beyond the cross to the reward that was waiting for Him. We must also follow His example of suffering and patience, lightly esteeming the reproaches that come upon us, keeping in mind the joyful reward that God has promised.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we will consider another vital subject in the theme of the redemptive work of Christ in the earth. It is that of the cross. We are considering not only the wooden instrument upon which our Lord of glory was shamefully and wrongfully executed and slain. But we are thinking of the cross He bore on His soul, that is, the shame and rejection of men that caused them to want to do such a horrible deed. As we see in the words of our Master, the cross involves death to this present mortal life. It points to self crucifixion and a denial of

the selfish gratification of the flesh. The cross is a symbol of the world rejecting us and us rejecting the world. A gospel that will make one feel compatible and at home with this present life with no restraint or godly discipline or self denial is not the true gospel of God. Jesus tells us that we as His disciples must daily take up, accept, and bear (each one of us) our individual cross. We have a charge and warning from the apostle Paul to not allow the offence of the cross to cease nor allow the cross to have none effect. This is where the danger lies. It is the trick of Satan to get a soul to go into a treaty with this present evil world. It is to lighten up on the denial, the separateness, the differences, and the reproach incurred in living a meek, modest, godly, humble, and holy life. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the cross stand for to you?
2. What did the cross mean to Jesus?
3. Why was Jesus able to endure the cross so triumphantly?
4. What does it mean for us to take up our cross daily?
5. How can the cross be made of none effect in our lives?
6. How can we be worthy of Jesus?
7. In what way are we to "hate" our life in this world?
8. What did the apostle Paul see in the cross?
9. What does the cross in the Christian's life consist of?
10. How are we to think of the shame and reproach of the cross?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

I read a book years ago that had a tremendous effect on my soul. It was entitled "The City of Nocross." The writer drew its setting from a scene in the Pilgrim's Progress where Christian, at the suggestion of Worldly Wiseman, sought to turn from the way of the cross and go down the road to the town of Morality and get the services of one called Legality who had a son called Civility, who would be able to rid Christian of his burden of sin without going the way of the cross that Evangelist had instructed him to go. In John Bunyan's account in his book

"Pilgrim's Progress" we find Christian trying to take that road to Morality but was stopped by the threat of the law. In "The City of Nocross" the writer pictures what it would have been like to have gone down that road to Morality and engaged the services of this skillful agent of the devil. It is an absorbing treatise on the subject of eliminating the cross from the soul of man. It struck terror to my soul as I saw the potential of Satan getting us to compromise and find a way to ease our conscience without taking the way of the cross. Perhaps you have read the story of the man who was influenced by family and friends and acquaintances to lighten up in his standards and convictions so that he would be more accepted and esteemed. He was beginning to concede to their influence when he had a dream one night. In this dream he was travelling to heaven and was bearing his cross which was very heavy to bear. At various times, when it seemed to be so hard to bear, the suggestion was made for him to cut off a portion of the cross to lighten it. This he did several times. But when he came to the chasm of death, the gap that he must bridge to cross over to heaven, he wondered what he could do. Then he thought of the cross and how it could be used for a bridge. But, when he tried to lay the cross over the gap, it had been shortened too many times and it was not long enough and it fell with him and he was lost. These illustrations are serious. There is a tendency to make the cross of none effect in our lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What Jesus taught His disciples, and what He passed down to us, is that the way of suffering, motivated by love, is the way of power and mastery. Jesus' suffering was not simply added to the end of His journey here to give it sensation, but was the culmination of His love for mankind. It was His love which gave Him the mastery over self so that He could say, "Not my will, but thine, be done." Luke 22:42. It was that great love which gave Him the power to lay down and die.

He taught us that we gain infinitely by giving totally. If we desire to be of help to others, we too must have the same

understanding and practice. To take up our cross and follow Him we have to go outside of our own comforts and those things which pamper self. Ah, but the rewards are great. They are eternal!

—Wayne Murphey



SEPTEMBER 26, 1999

CHRIST'S LOVE FOR THE CHURCH, HIS HOLY BRIDE

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

II Corinthians 11:2 I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Romans 7:4 Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

II Thessalonians 1:10 He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Revelation 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice

of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb....

CONCLUDING SCRIPTURE FOR MEMORY: For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Ephesians 5:23.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The souls of mankind who are united with Christ through His redemptive work in the earth make up His spotless and holy bride with whom He will live forever in that blessed world to come.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 3:20), "*Conversation*": The word in the Greek means our commonwealth, or citizenship. Our hopes and affections are not in this world, and we have here no continuing city. We seek for one to come. Hebrews 13:14.

(Philippians 3:21), "*Our vile body, his glorious body*": The Greek says, "The body of our humiliation, and the body of His glory". "*According to the working*": This will be accomplished by the energy and power given to Him by the Father in subduing all things under His feet.

(Revelation 19:6), "*Omnipotent*": Almighty, All powerful.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Although we have very little if any record of Jesus Himself referring to the believers in Him as being His bride or wife, yet we have abundant testimony from other inspired writers concerning this both in the Old and New Testaments. Isaiah 54 is a message of comfort to the Church, and in verses 5 and 6 we read: "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts

is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God." Then again in Isaiah 62:4-5 it says, "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (My delight is in her), and thy land Beulah (Married): for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." Hosea 2:19-20 prophesied of the Church, saying, "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." When John the Baptist was asked if he was the Christ, he denied that, and, referring to Jesus, he said in John 3:29: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." We have included a number of writings of the apostle Paul on this wonderful subject and also the scene from the Revelations of John of the great overthrow of the false religions of the world and the triumph of the saints of God described as the marriage supper of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely it is a wonderful truth to know that Christ is united in love to His saints as sweetly as a young man who marries the object of his ardent love. We might say it is the ultimate fulfillment of the mission of Christ in coming to the world. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Christ do to show His love for the Church?
2. What kind of Church does He desire to have?
3. Why is Christ jealous over us?
4. How are we united to Christ?
5. What must we do to be sanctified and cleansed as He desires?

6. According to the scriptures, how close is the Lord Jesus to His Church?
7. What is Christ going to do for His bride when He comes again?
8. By what power and energy will He accomplish this glorious change?
9. What will be the feeling of God's people when they see the Saviour coming?
10. What will be the wedding dress of the Church?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

A man's wife, according to the plan of God, is one woman. It is a very serious decision to make as to who that woman will be. We need to seek the Lord with all of our heart and be very careful to be totally subject to the will of God in this matter. It is God's plan for man and wife to stay together for life. Where there is true love it will be no difficulty to stay together for life. The wife of Christ is a society and harmonious institution of saved and sanctified souls redeemed from sin and purified by His blood. It is a city, a nation, a race and a people united in one heart, one soul, and one mind. The Lord Jesus was subject to the will of His Father in the obtaining of His bride. He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me", and "no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John 6:37, 44. So Christ was very careful about His bride. He wanted her to be what would please His Father. He will live with His bride for eternity. At the present time Christ is stationed in heaven at the right hand of God interceding for His bride and earnestly anticipating the time when He will come and receive His dearly beloved wife to Himself. He is united with His bride in the Spirit and together they live in love and supreme happiness. But the time will come when the Father will give Him liberty to come and take His bride to Himself forever. Just think! A host and multitude that no man can number, all united in one Spirit, will be received by their blessed Bridegroom to enjoy each other's company for ever and ever! Christ wrought their redemption in the earth, then went back to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God. There He

will remain until the time of the end when God will make all His foes His footstool. He sends His Holy Spirit as a vital link between His Bride and Himself. But in that day the veil of the flesh will be entirely dissolved and we can see Him face to face and dwell in His sweet presence unending. All things have been put under His feet. But not yet has it all been put under. But in the resurrection the final enemy shall be destroyed. Then we will be united with Him in the great fulfillment of love that we have been yearning and living for. Oh, how we rejoice to know that we are a part of the Bride of Christ! One with Christ and one with all who are His are those who are truly born from above and led by the Holy Spirit. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Most every bride who walks down the aisle toward her beloved shines with radiance. At that moment she takes on a glow beyond the normal person going about everyday activities in everyday clothes. What makes the difference? It is the bridegroom's love which creates the beauty of the bride. This radiance is the reflection of a love connection.

It is the same with the Church, the bride of Christ. The light shining out of her originates in Christ. The fact that she is a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle; that she is holy and without blemish, emanates from Christ's sacrificial love. All of the beauty possessed by God's Church can be traced back to Christ Himself.

—Wayne Murphey



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