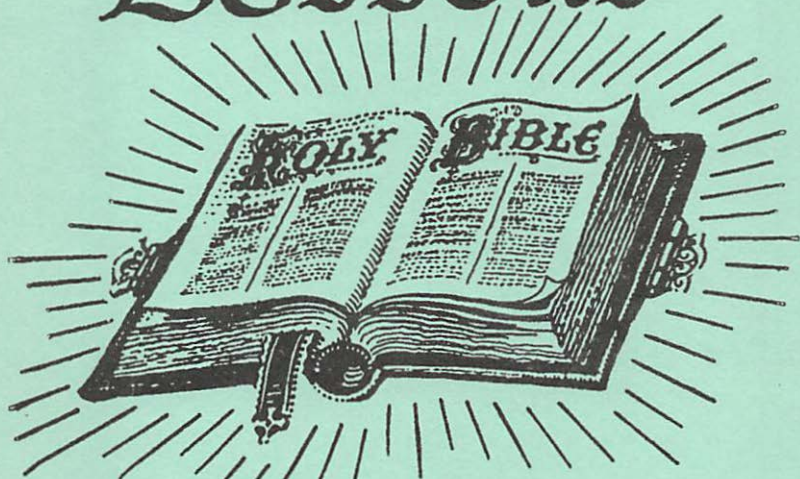


# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of**  
**Jesus Christ and His Church**  
**Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Willie E. Murphey**

Articles contributed by: Sis. LaDawna Adams,  
Sis. Angela Gellenbeck and Bro. Bob Wilson

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## THEME FOR FIRST QUARTER, 2003

We are inspired to set forth a series of lessons this quarter on the subject of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. We will study the different aspects and Biblical truths concerning Jesus that are so vital and beneficial to us, all that have so much to do with our eternal welfare. At the conclusion will be several lessons concerning the doctrines of Jesus and some of the important truths from the Word of God that He taught. We present these studies with prayer for the Holy Spirit to bless them for the good of all.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee



**JANUARY 5, 2003**

### THE PRECIOUS AND MIGHTY NAME OF JESUS

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Luke 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Matthew 1:21 ...For he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

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.

Philippians 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Ephesians 1:21 ...Every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:...

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Revelations 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Because of His faithful and humble submission to the will of God to suffer the horrible and shameful death on the cross, God has exalted His Holy Son JESUS to His own right hand in the heavenly places, and has made His name the greatest, most wonderful and most powerful name in all time and eternity.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Matt. 1:18), "*on this wise*": in this manner. "*espoused*": betrothed or engaged to be married. "*before they came together*": before their joining or becoming legally man and wife.

(Luke 1:31 and Matt. 1:21), "*JESUS*": This is from the Hebrew word "Jehoshua" which means Jehovah saves. It is the same word as "Joshua."

(Matt. 1:21), "*from their sins*": This means "off and away" in the Greek. Jesus Christ has the power to deliver a person out of the dominion and power of the spirit of disobedience and a rebellious nature. His grace is able to enable us to quit the sin business and to "...serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Luke 1:74-75.

(Isa. 9:6), "*government*": the rule, authority, power, dominion, jurisdiction and control. "*upon His shoulder*": This means that the weight of the responsibility for the rescue of man from sin and eternal doom would be upon the Saviour Jesus Christ for Him to fulfill and carry out to the utmost degree. What a great weight our Saviour bore so faithfully! "*called*": ascribed, pronounced and proclaimed to be. "*Wonderful*": The Hebrew says,

"A miracle!" He is marvelous, supernatural and everlastingly GREAT! "*Counselor*": One who can advise, deliberate, resolve, determine, guide and is safe to be consulted with. "*mighty*": valiant, strong, champion and a giant warrior.

(Phil. 2:10), "*under the earth*": generally believed to be speaking of the realm of departed spirits.

(Phil. 2:11), "*Lord*": One who is supreme in authority, having everything in His control. When we are in His favor we have nothing to be afraid of. He is Lord whether we acknowledge Him or not and He will have the final word to say about every one of us.

(Rev. 19:12), "*no man knew, but he himself*": Jesus has a name and a title that has never been given to any other person. He only has the name that means eternal life or eternal death. To no other creature in heaven or earth has been given the power and glory and dominion that He has. No other person was able to accomplish what He did and no other was qualified to do it.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Because of His faithfulness and obedience to the will of God in suffering the death of the cross Jesus was given such a name that brings salvation and healing to the souls of men. He was given the name JESUS before He was conceived in the womb of Mary. He was destined to save the souls of men from the dominion of Satan and sin.

We have the reference in our lesson to the prophecy in Isa. 7:14 about a virgin bringing forth a son whose name would be called Emmanuel. The Hebrew meaning of this word is "with us is God." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (II Cor. 5:18.) Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John 14:9. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14.

We also include the beautiful prophecy of Isaiah 9:6. This foretold the values and benefits of the name of the Child born unto us, and the Son who was given to us. His name brought blessings and benefits no one else could ever bring. How we love the name of Jesus, and how we should pray in His name! He was of a miraculous conception and birth. He brought counsel and teaching that has set us in the right way, the way of truth and salvation. He brought the Father to us in His wonderful person. He was the express image of the Almighty God. He, as a Prince, brought peace to our souls, a peace that the world could never give.

Revelations 19:11-16 shows several aspects of the name of Jesus. No one in all time and eternity earned and experienced the name that Jesus held. It was truly a name "that no man knew, but he himself." This means that no one else could be called that name, but He Himself. No one else was found worthy to open the book and loose the seven seals thereof. (Rev. 5.) Oh, let us exalt His name with holy lives and the fruits of holiness and humility!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was our Saviour given the name JESUS?
2. What was there about His birth that was different from all else?
3. How many different names does the name of JESUS include?
4. What all can we obtain through the virtue of the name of JESUS?
5. What will happen if we refuse to bow to and reverence His name?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The name identifies a person. It is a custom in our world to have three names. This helps identify us so that we will not be mixed up with someone else. Prov. 22:1 says that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." And it is true that the kind of life one lives helps to make his name.

Jesus Christ was given a name at birth that means Saviour to us. In Him we can find victory and salvation from the power of sin and evil that we inherited from Adam. In fact He, Jesus, is a second Adam. As in Adam we were made sinners, so through the virtue of the name of Jesus we can be made righteous. (Romans 5:19.) It is not the literal name that means so much. It is what is back of the name and what the individual that has the name can do. When you hear the name "Ford" you may think of the man who brought on the age of automobiles and the "Ford" car. Or you may think of Gerald Ford who became president at the resigning of President Nixon. It is not the name "Ford" that is so important. It is what is back of the name that we remember.

And so it is with the name of Jesus. The name of Jesus means the saving of our souls from sin. It means faithfulness and truth. It means dominion and victory over this world of sin and evil. He is the King over all others. No matter how high a man rises in power and conquest over his fellowman, that man will soon succumb to death and pass out of this life. His name will fade away. But the name of Jesus never loses its virtue. It is as strong and powerful today as it was when He gave it to us. Let us take the name of Jesus with us and lift Him up before others.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

New parents can appreciate the value of a name for their newborn child. Many times they will look through long lists of names trying to find just the right name for their newly arriving bundle of joy. The parents may even have difficulty coming to an agreement on a name. They might not even have a name selected until they are required to fill out the birth certificate and must finally write in a name for the child.

The name of our Saviour was foretold in the time of Isaiah the prophet many years before His birth to Mary. Isaiah 7:14 says, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Our lesson today quotes this verse and went on to state, "which being interpreted is, God with us." Notice how important the meaning of the name is. In Isaiah 9:6 our Saviour's name was also foretold, "...And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." These names are all descriptive attributes of our dear Lord. He does not need a name to distinguish Himself from other gods, because there is only one true God. He has a name that confers to mankind His great ability, His mighty saving power, and His eternal glory. One name cannot fully describe Him, because He is so much more.

When we find Jesus, we discover a wonderful, full salvation; more joy than the heart can contain, more peace than is imaginable. Jesus is able to meet every need of the heart and He is able to fill the deep longing and yearning the human soul has for God. No wonder the poet said, "Take the name of Jesus with you, Child of sorrow and of woe; It will joy and comfort give you, Take it then, where'er you go."

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey

**JANUARY 12, 2003**

**CHRIST, THE WORD FROM THE BEGINNING,  
MADE MANIFEST**

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made.

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.

1 Peter 1:20 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.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Ephesians 1:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ was the Word of God from before the creation of the heavens and the earth. It was with



Him, through Him, by Him, and for Him that the Almighty created all things. He was manifest in the flesh and beheld by faithful witnesses whose testimony we have with us today.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(John 1:1), "*the beginning*": The commencement or start; that which precedes everything else.

(John 1:3), "*made*": came or brought into being.

(John 1:5), "*comprehended it not*": The Greek says, "did not overtake it." There are two ways of viewing this verse, and both are true and applicable. (1), The darkness did not overwhelm and put down the light. When the light shone, the darkness did not stop it. When the light shone, the darkness was dispelled and could not withstand the light. (2), The darkness of people's minds did not receive nor understand the light. He was in the world and came unto His own, but they did not perceive who He was and what He offered to them. Their ignorance was a veil that kept the light from shining unto them.

(I Pet. 1:20), "*manifest*": to render apparent, make known, bring to sight, reveal.

(I John 1:1), "*handled*": verified by touch or contact; felt.

(Col. 1:16), "*by him*": Christ was the channel through which God worked His creative power. Christ was the vital part and associate with all that God accomplished. "*for him*": On his behalf and with His pleasure in mind.

(Col. 1:17), "*consist*": Constituted or held together. Scientists have acknowledged in their study of the structure of the atoms and elements that there is a mysterious power that holds things together. Certain particles of the atoms, the various positive ones, have the potential to repel each other. But they do not repel each other, for they are held together by the Word of God. In the splitting of such atoms great power and heat are released. What terrible heat and destruction will there be when the Word of God that holds everything together loosens the elements and everything is dissolved and melted into nothing!

### LESSON BACKGROUND

We can see in our lesson today that it was the firm conviction of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ that our Saviour was the Holy and Divine Expression of the eternal God of creation, and

that He existed from eternity. He was not an ordinary common man born by natural process of the flesh. He was begotten of God, conceived in the womb of a virgin, and His roots were from eternity before the foundation of the world.

This makes Jesus Christ a very special and important Personage. If we believe it is true what is spoken in the scriptures we have before us, then we mortals need to give special heed and be deeply concerned. He is from eternity, and is therefore eternal Himself. But He was manifested and openly made known in human flesh. He tabernacled among us in a mortal body like ours. He felt the same feelings, shared the same sorrows, and bore the same pain and suffering that we do. He came from God and went to God. He was totally aware of who He was and where He was going. "Before Abraham was, I am." He said in John 8:58.

Our main source of scriptures for this lesson come from the beloved apostle John. He is plain and without doubt in his expressions concerning His beloved Master. He knew Jesus was the Son of the living God. He beheld His glory, handled Him, heard His gracious words of comfort and counsel, and was one of His witnesses to the world. In his writings we see and feel the warm invitation to enter into the sacred fellowship He had with Christ and experience the joy of His embrace.

Simon Peter was another of the eyewitnesses of His glory. And he affirms in our lesson that Christ, the One who had been so wonderfully manifested to them, was predestined before the world was formed. Oh, how we need to appreciate and treasure these witnesses that have been given to us! The apostle Paul, who at first was so against Christ and His people, joins with the others in declaring that Jesus is the Lord and that He was from the beginning and that all things are upheld together by His power. Let us gaze with rapture on these holy truths and rejoice that we have a Friend, such a precious and Mighty Saviour, who is able to save us to the uttermost!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is Jesus called the "Word of God?"
2. What kind of darkness does Jesus seek to dispel?
3. How was John so fully persuaded about Jesus?
4. Why should it be so serious to us that Jesus was from eternity?
5. Of what value is Jesus to us, and what are some of His benefits?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Jesus Christ is the Word of life today just as He was to those who beheld His glory and bore witness of Him. He was the Word made flesh. The Divine and Holy expression of the will and disposition of the Almighty took form in the likeness of men. He expressed and manifested the love and mercy of His Father to us mortals of earth. He showed His miraculous power to heal and control the elements of the earth. He opened blinded eyes and unstopped the deaf ears. He made people rise up and walk who had never walked before. He stilled the raging sea when it threatened His disciples. He was the Almighty God come down in human flesh. His relationship with God was that of a Son to His Father. And He was faithful in that way to God and fully submissive to do His will and fulfill all of His requirements.

The pride and wickedness of men recoiled against Him, and succeeded in putting Him to death. But this only gave His Father the chance to show Him in a greater way by raising Him from the dead, and placing Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. Now He is really able to help all that come unto Him. He who was from everlasting and who partook of this vain mortal existence has been granted eternal glory. This is His gift to us of Himself. It enables us to rise above sin and fear and care, to have faith and assurance in God, the Father. He sits upon a throne of grace, constantly hearing and answering the prayers of all who call upon Him. Let us rejoice in Him and take advantage of the wonderful opportunity to partake of Him. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There were those in the Old Testament who had the special privilege of meeting with and talking with the Lord in person. We understand now that this Personage was none other than Christ, the Son. (Dan. 3:25, John 1:18, 12:41, Col. 1:15.)

Adam walked with the Lord in the garden until he sinned and the fellowship was broken. We know that Enoch walked with Him, until one day, their visit culminated in a one-way trip to glory. Abraham, His "friend," interceded with Him for his loved ones in Sodom, when the Lord came to destroy that wicked city. Jacob, left alone before meeting with Esau, encountered a "man" Who wrestled with him, crippled him, changed him and blessed him. He communed with Moses at the burning bush and at Mt.

Sinai. Joshua saw Him as the "Lord of Hosts," with outstretched sword. Isaiah saw Him, high and lifted up, with a train of glory. He spoke to Daniel and appeared in the furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Ezekiel saw Him in magnificent visions, and Zechariah saw Him as the "angel of the Lord," who took away iniquity. In all these encounters, He was the magnificent Lord of Glory, untouchable in His eternal state.

That wonderful night in Bethlehem, the Eternal Word became flesh, to walk among sinful human beings—all of us—the rich, the poor, the sick, the leper, the demon-possessed.

The invisible and unknown ways of God the Father were now made MANIFEST in the earthly life of His Son, Jesus Christ. He "became US."  
—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**JANUARY 19, 2003**

### **CHRIST'S REDEEMPTIVE WORK IN THE EARTH**

Isaiah 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 40:10 ...behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

Isaiah 42:2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

Isaiah 42:4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Matthew 20:28 ...The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

John 6:32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

35 ...I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting

life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

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.

I Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,...

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.

28 ...Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The work of Jesus Christ was to bring deliverance to the souls of men from the bondage of sin. He came to bring judgment and true righteousness for our lives, spiritual food and nourishment for our souls, to bring healing for soul and body, and to give us hope and assurance of life everlasting. All this was fully accomplished when He died for us and rose again from the dead.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Isa. 42:1), "*uphold*": sustain or support. "*judgment*": just and right decree and verdict.

(Matt. 12:20), "*bruised reed shall he not break*": A cracked rod will he not burst. "*smoking flax shall he not quench*": A wick growing dim will he not snuff out. These are expressions of God's mercy and forbearance in Jesus in His effort to bring a solution rather than destroy in anger.

(Isa. 42:4), "*not fail nor be discouraged*": The Hebrew says, "He (Jesus) shall not grow dim nor be crushed." Christ did not allow Himself to be defeated nor downhearted in the face of any kind of opposition or adversity.

(Matt. 20:28), "*ransom*": The price which is paid to loosen or release a captive. The price to bring deliverance from the bondage of sin and death was the subsequent death of an

innocent person. We could not loosen our own souls from the consequence of our sins, for the death incurred would be eternal and not retrievable. But if an innocent Man of our own standing would pay the price of death, such a One could justly be brought back to life. Thus the price for our redemption could be paid and all could be restored to life and favour. This was one of the greatest of Christ's accomplishments as Saviour.

(John 6:40), "*seeth the Son*": To behold, discern, experience, and acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God and accept everything that He was and all that He accomplished.

(I Tim. 1:15), "*acceptation*": acceptance, to be taken in fully, welcomed and approved.

(Heb. 9:24), "*heaven itself*": The very realm of the Almighty God, right up close by Him at His right hand. Oh, the wonder of Christ ascending up to that high and holy place, acceptable to God, as an intercessor and High Priest for our salvation and victory!

(Heb. 9:28), "*without sin*": apart and completely delivered from sin and its pollution and defilement. Being thus made back into the image of perfect holiness before God we are fit and qualified to obtain the likeness of His resurrection unto eternal salvation.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today we want to consider from the Scriptures the work that Christ accomplished in His visit to the level of humankind. We have chosen several scriptures from prophecy and from the New Testament that have a worthy bearing on this subject. There are a good many more of the wonderful Scriptures that could also be included in this study. Let each one be free to make mention of any other scripture that comes to your mind.

The vision of Christ's work is an important thing to accurately know and understand. Our scriptures show the judgment of God in Christ against all unrighteousness. The Law of Moses could not bring the needed victory over sin, for it was weak through the flesh. But God sent His Son down in the likeness of sinful flesh, and on the behalf of our sinful plight, condemned sin in the flesh and made it possible for us to escape its woeful bondage and consequence. (Rom. 8:3.) It was love and tender

concern for us that caused our Saviour to take upon Himself our punishment and be the ransom price for our release. He also offered Himself to be the food that would endure unto eternal life, that we can eat of Him (spiritually speaking), that is, absorb into our hearts and lives the essence of His Word and Holy Spirit.

Submitting to the death of the cross to pay our ransom was Christ's part of His work, and God's part, as a reward, was the transporting of our Lord from the grave unto life again and on up into the heavenly realm to appear in the presence of God for us. And someday He will finish the great work He began by coming in the clouds of heaven to resurrect and change us from this mortal phase to immortality. Look and behold all that Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the King of kings and Lord of lords, accomplished for us!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Can you name the various things Christ accomplished in His work?
2. What accomplishment is the greatest and means the most to you?
3. Is it possible that Christ's work can be in vain to anyone?
4. What caused Jesus to be willing to accomplish this great work?
5. What part of His work is yet to be fulfilled?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is very needful for us to understand the fullness of what Christ accomplished in His great redemptive work. We need to be consecrated and so given over to Him that He will fill us with the Holy Spirit, who will teach us and guide us in all the truth about what Christ accomplished. To lessen its values and lower the standard of the holiness that Christ purchased for us is a terrible affront and offence to Him.

Christ conquered sin and made it possible for us to die to sin and live unto righteousness. The old man of our sinful disposition and nature can be crucified with Christ, and the essence of sin can be destroyed out of our lives, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (Rom. 6:6.) To say that we must still sin more or less everyday, that everybody sins and cannot keep from it is gross error, and yet so many people are deceived in thinking that way.

Jesus was loving and helpful in His approach to sinful mankind. He knew that we were bruised and abused and needed comfort and uplift along with judgment and reproof. This He supplied in His gentle and loving Spirit that He atoned for us to receive in His plan of salvation. He supplied the needed food for the spirit of man. We, who fed on the husks of worldliness and vanity and the pleasures of the flesh, needed a change of diet. Jesus came down from heaven to our level to offer Himself, to be the bread for us to partake of, to give us life and health for our souls.

Let us look forward to His final work. All things have not yet been put under Him. He is at the right hand of God looking earnestly for the day of His power when He will finish the work. He will come in power and great glory, destroy this world, punish the ungodly and reward the righteous. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.

Our Saviour defined friendship when He willingly laid down His life for our salvation. This salvation was a deliverance from our sins, not in our sins. His ultimate sacrifice paved the way to our deliverance. When we could not love ourselves, Jesus loved us. When we could not save ourselves from sin, Jesus saved us by His perfect sacrifice.

The story is told of a child about to drown in a body of water. A nearby neighbor heard the desperate cries of the child, waded into the water and rescued the child from certain death. The neighbor could have walked on and pretended not to hear the desperate cries or he could have sympathized with the child's agony and stayed on the shore. This would have meant death to the child. But the neighbor willingly waded out into the water and rescued the child.

This can be applied spiritually. Our Saviour laid down His life for us so that we could be rescued from sin. He did not intend for us to wallow in despair while He stood safely on the shore sympathizing with our sins or worse, ignoring our cries. But He



willingly rescued us. He lifted us up and out of that horrible pit. (Psalm 40:2.)

Thank the Lord for His perfect plan of salvation! What a friend we do have in Jesus. —Sis. LaDawna Adams



**JANUARY 26, 2003**

### **THE HOLINESS OF JESUS CHRIST**

Romans 1:3 ...Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

I Peter 1:18 ...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.

I Peter 2:21 Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who 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.

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.

Hebrews 7:26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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 9:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, was holy, pure and without sin before God, His Father. There was no fault or blemish in His character. He was perfect and upright in the sight of God and was thus qualified to be the spotless Lamb for a sacrifice to atone for our sins.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Rom. 1:4), "*declared*": marked out to be, appointed, decreed and specified.

(I Pet. 1:18), "*vain conversation*": worthless living. "*received by tradition*": handed down. The sinful lives of parents are reflected in their offspring. Blessed are the fathers and mothers who set a godly example before their children, showing the way of holiness as beautiful, desirable and profitable.

(I Pet. 2:24), The Greek text reads: "Who Himself carried up our sins in His body onto the tree, that dying to sins, we might live to righteousness, of whom by His wounds you were healed." Our Saviour not only bore our sins on the cross, but was bearing in His body our sins all along this mortal journey clear to the cross.

(Heb. 4:14), "*profession*": confession, acknowledgement or testimony.

(Heb. 4:15), The Greek text reads: "For we have not a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our infirmities (feebleness, frailty or weakness), but was tempted in all respects to our likeness apart from sin."

(Heb. 7:26), "*became us*": was made suitable, proper or fitting for us.

(Heb. 7:28), "*consecrated*": The Greek meaning here is "perfected." The high priests under the law were not without guilt of sin in their own life. But Jesus who was sworn of God to be the

eternal High Priest for the souls of men, was perfect, without spot and blameless.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today we will consider how holy, pure and perfect our Lord Jesus Christ was before God. Even though He was condemned and hated by His enemies and His own nation, yet before God He was attested to be without spot and blemish. We have selected various scriptures from the New Testament that declare His innocence and purity from the defilement of sin. Jesus said very little about His moral and spiritual integrity, but He did say in John 8:29, "...The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." And the Father verified the purity and innocence of His Son by raising Him from the dead after He had been so shamefully betrayed, condemned and murdered. He bore in His body the weight of sins, but they were not His own. They were our sins. Because of His spotless life He could justly bear the punishment of our sins and become the means of our salvation.

He was a Lamb without blemish or spot, tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He never yielded to the devil. We have in Matt. 4 the account of His temptation in the wilderness in a weakened state from a forty day fast. No suggestion from satan did He accept. He triumphed over sin and its alluring power. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and completely set apart from the sinful ways of men. Thus it was proper and fitting that He be our Saviour, made perfect and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How did God show that Jesus was pure and holy in His sight?
2. Why was it necessary that our Saviour be pure and holy?
3. What was the proof of His purity and victory over sin?
4. Whose sin did He carry in His body up to the cross?
5. What can we do concerning sin because of His atonement?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The prophet in Isaiah 53:9-10 declared concerning Christ that "he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his

mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Jesus was a holy and righteous Man. He had not been conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity as all other mortals were. (Psa. 51:5.) He had no evil nature, foolish pride, uncontrolled anger, loose tongue, lustful attitude, unholy desires, selfish greed, love of money, brazen immodesty, worldly ambition or any other defilement in His character. He was holy and perfect before God His Father.

And because He was thus pure and innocent of any transgression or iniquity, He was qualified to bear the sins of the whole world and die for the salvation of men. God could justly justify the souls of men on the basis that Jesus bore the punishment of their sins. And Jesus could bear the guilt of the sins of others and die in their stead, because He was pure and undefiled. Oh, the wisdom and goodness of God, and oh, the love and sweetness of a Saviour who was willing to bear our sins in His own body up to the cross!

How sad that such a Man who was vindicated and approved of God by being resurrected from the grave can be so readily and deliberately rejected and disapproved by foolish and blind humanity. He was chosen as the precious foundation Stone for the holy saints of God, but was disallowed and rejected by the disobedient souls of men. (1 Pet. 2:6-8.)

He who was condemned by the world was made higher than the heavens. And those who have followed Him down through the ages have also suffered in like manner. The holy and pure saints of God have been rejected, condemned, persecuted, hated, despised and slain over and over again. This evil world, controlled by lust and pride, has the blood of the righteous to answer for in the last great judgment day. But the righteousness of the saints will prevail at the last. When the Lord descends from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, we will rise to meet Him in the air and thus be forever with Him in that new Heaven and new Earth. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The angel proclaimed with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" In the book of Revelation we read, "And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither

under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book,... And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book,..." Revelation 5:3-5. "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." Isaiah 59:16.

Jesus mentioned that "he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth;..." John 10:3. A porter was a gate warden that watched the door. You remember the seraphims who with flaming swords guarded the way to the tree of life. All of humanity was defiled by sin, which rendered human sacrifice unacceptable, the door closed, and the book sealed for the souls of men. There was only one way and that was the righteousness of Jesus Christ. One sacrifice paid the debt of sin in full for those under the first covenant, us and those who come after us from now until eternity. What a sacrifice! Let us not take for granted the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. As the Israelite of old placed his hand on the sacrifice to identify that it was dying because of his sin, let us put our faith, trust, hope, confidence in the lamb of God; recognizing that He went to Calvary because of my sin.

— Bro. Bob Wilson



**FEBRUARY 2, 2003**

### **THE MIND AND SPIRIT OF JESUS**

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 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

II Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

II Corinthians 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But 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.

John 12:24 (Jesus said) 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.

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

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The mind and spirit of Jesus Christ was utterly free from selfishness and the pride of life. He was humble, submissive to God, strong in faith, full of wisdom and spiritual understanding, and did not cleave to mortal life, willing to shed His blood for the salvation of mankind.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Isa. 11:2), "*counsel*": advice and wise planning. "*might*": power, force, valor and victorious, overcoming strength.

(Isas. 57:15), "*contrite*": crushed and bruised. "*humble*": depressed and lowly. "*revive*": to quicken, give new strength, restore, recover, heal and save.

(II Cor. 8:9), "*poor*": The Greek says, "to be a beggar," that

is, to be destitute and with little or no means.

(II Cor. 4:13), "*I believe*": I have faith and confidence in; I completely trust; I give credit to; I am fully assured beyond all doubt.

(Col. 3:12), "*Put on*": Invest yourself with, clothe, sink into, discipline yourself to be. "*bowels*": pity, sympathy, deep inward feelings of affection and mercy.

(Phil. 2:5), "*Let this mind be in you*": The Greek meaning is: "Exercise your mind to entertain and have the same sentiment and opinion; be mentally disposed and interest yourself with concern and obedience in the same direction."

(Phil. 2:6-7), The Greek says, "Who existing in the nature and likeness of God, counted not equality with God to be held on to, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men."

(John 12:25), "*hateth*": to love less, that is, not making it the priority.

(Heb. 5:9), "*being made perfect*": having completed and fully accomplished His obedience to the will of God, bringing up His character to the full pleasure of His Father.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Today we want to focus on the mind and Spirit that was in our blessed Saviour. This is what caused Him to do what He did and in the manner He did it. It was the likeness and image of His Father in heaven. God is gracious, kind, merciful, generous, patient, longsuffering and helpful. Christ came in that same humbleness and tenderness of feeling for us that God had in His great loving heart.

We are drawing scriptures, first from Isaiah who pictured Christ so precisely. Then we continue with the writings of the apostle Paul in his various epistles to the congregations of his day. In these Holy Scriptures we see a beautiful and challenging image of our Lord Jesus. We see His strength of character, His wise leadership and authority, and His loving attitude of help and grace for people. Christ assumed a place among mortals and showed forth the kind of spirit and attitude that drew God's mercy and help. He was strong and yet He was weak. He could have defended Himself and escaped the woes heaped upon Him, but He would not. He was strong and bold as a lion, but He was also meek and gentle as a lamb. He submitted to the cruel and

unjust sentence of death that the crooked Jewish court handed down to Him. He was holy and pure, but became sin for us, taking upon Himself the blame and punishment for our sins.

He had the true Spirit of faith and confidence in God. Doubts, fears and unbelief were not a part of His soul. He never wavered in the face of the impending doom of the death of the cross, because He knew that God would bring Him back to life. Oh, His was a splendid example of faithfulness and unstaggering trust in God's promises that had been given of Him.

He was humble and meek, not raising any defense or retaliation. He was mocked, reviled, spat upon, slapped, bruised, humiliated and deprived of right and justice. But in all of this He maintained a forgiving attitude toward His persecutors and abusers.

He did not cling to this physical life. He relinquished it and was not afraid to die. He committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. He had the true Spirit and holy attitude that pleased God and prevailed to come forth victorious from all of earth's hate and harm. And through His grace and the power of His Spirit we can do the same in our lives today. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Make a list of the various attributes of Christ's spirit.
2. Which of these would you say are the more difficult to have?
3. Is it possible for us to have the same mind and spirit He had?
4. How important was it for Christ to have all of these qualities?
5. What did it all cost Him, and what was His gain from it?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

One of the most important attributes of a true Christian is that of being teachable. Through this means, by the inspiration and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, a man can learn what the mind of Christ is, and by allowing its precepts to control his thoughts, emotions, attitudes and dispositions, he can put the mind of Christ as foremost in his actions and ways. The mind of Christ shows up most vividly in one's relationship with his fellow beings. Striving to understand the other man and to share his need is a vital function of the mind of Christ. Christ cared enough for us to come all the way from heaven, down into this cold world



of sin and sorrow, to minister to us. He came to serve and minister, not to be ministered to. The world was already condemned. He came not to condemn. He came to take our place in the punishment and wrath of God. He took our blame and bore the consequence of our sins and transgressions. This is why He had to die. For that person that is doing wrong and is not treating you right, what would you be willing to do? Would you die for him? Some say that they are willing to go to the stake, but in reality, are not willing to bear with another's mistake. To help a person improve their life, they must be won. And this takes love, the kind of love that Jesus manifested. Oh, we do not know and we may not need to know the mind of the Lord concerning the creation of the earth and the heavens. Some of those mysteries man will never be able to fathom. But we can have the mind of Christ. We can treat our brother and our fellow man with love, humility, patience and longsuffering. I heard one young man pray, "Oh, Lord, give us the power of God!" How much better it would have been for him to have earnestly and humbly prayed, "Lord, help us to have the mind of Christ!" —Bro. Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There are several places in the New Testament that can give insight into the thought process that directed the mind of Christ. In John 5:30 Jesus said, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." The dedication Jesus had to do the will of His Father was the underlying principle that directed His life. It was a characteristic that was evident in all that He did. His supreme desire to do the will of His Father was greatly contested by the enemy, but Satan was unable to move Him from fulfilling the Divine purpose God had for His life. His perfect consecration to do the Father's will was greatly tested in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He knew they were coming to take Him and subject Him to a torturous death on the cross. His prayer is recorded in Matthew 26:39. "...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*."

One time when Jesus finished praying, one of His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray. "And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy

name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth." Luke 11:2. Jesus wanted His disciples to likewise desire to do the will of the Father. In Matthew 7:21 Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

In Luke 15:1 it says, "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." Jesus taught them about repentance. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> verses when teaching them about the prodigal son, the son repented. He said: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." He was finally ready to submit to the will of his father. When we also are ready to submit to the Father's will, we are then able to begin to understand the mind of Christ. Our spiritual eyes will be opened and as we discern the mission and purpose Christ came to fulfill and the great love that He had for mankind, we too will see that what Jesus taught was right. Our focus in life will be shifted from "me" and "us" to Christ and doing the will of our heavenly Father. We will also desire the work of Christ to prosper and understand how important it is to treat our neighbors in the right way even when we are mistreated. The mind and spirit of Christ will rest upon us and we will also share in the blessings that come from a close walk with the Lord. His power and victory over sin and disobedience will be ours. We will be His!

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**FEBRUARY 9, 2003**

### **THE GREAT AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST**

Psalm 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.

Matthew 28: 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

John 5:25 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.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

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 15:24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet...

I Timothy 6:15 ... In his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

**MEMORYVERSE:** (God) ...hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Acts 17:31.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Lord God Almighty has invested all of His authority and power upon His Son, Jesus Christ. By this authority and power Christ is able to save the souls of men from the power of satan and sin, raising them up from the dead state of sin to a new life in God. He also, by this same authority and power, will one day raise back to life all that are in the graves, and bring them to eternal judgment.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psa. 110:1), "*The LORD said unto my Lord*": The Hebrew expression is: "A statement of Jehovah to my Lord." This means that the LORD GOD Almighty spoke to my Lord, and the New Testament writers unquestionably attribute "my Lord" to be our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This prophecy was referring to

when Jesus Christ had finished the work His Father had given Him to do, and was raised from the dead. And after appearing to His disciples for forty days, He answered this summons and decree from His Father and ascended up and sat down on the right hand of God.

(Psa. 110:2), *"out of Zion"*: Or, "forth from Zion," Zion meaning the true Church of God through which the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit would go forth conquering and to conquer the nations by the everlasting gospel of the kingdom of God.

(John 5:25), *"dead"*: Those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

(John 5:27), *"because He is the Son of man"*: God invested Jesus with the power and authority to execute judgment over humanity and the world because as the Son of God in human flesh He had overcome and conquered the power of sin and evil and had been obedient and faithful and well pleasing to the Father, "...tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4:15.

I Cor. 15:24), *"Then cometh the end"*: Paul had just spoken previous to this that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ...Every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." And that is what Paul is terming here to be "the end." This will be when the dead are raised in that last great day. *"when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God"*: This means when Christ transmits the kingdom His grace and salvation has founded in the hearts of men back to the Father who gave Him the power and authority to establish such a dominion.

(I Cor. 15:25), *"he must reign"*: Christ ascended up on high to reign over all who believe in and who follow Him. Sending forth the power of His grace from Zion (His Church), He was to rule in the midst of a crooked and perverse world over the power of Satan and sin. He is to continue in this wonderful reign of grace and victory until the time when God decrees that all things will be put under His feet.

(I Tim. 6:15), *"in his times"*: In the set and proper time when the Father decrees it. "Whom the heaven must receive (contain and hold) until the times of restitution (reconstitution of all things in the new heaven and new earth) of all things,..." Acts 3:21. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

Mark 13:32. *"he shall shew"*: Make manifest or reveal. It is now a hidden wisdom and His people are dead to this present evil world, their lives being "hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3. It is only revealed and possessed by those who follow Christ in the holy, strait and narrow way. But in that day He will show openly to all in the judgment, too late to be savingly known. *"only Potentate"*: The sole Possessor of all Authority and Power, the only One surviving to sit in eternal judgment.

(I Tim. 6:16), The Greek says, "The only one having immortality, living in light unapproachable, whom no one of men has seen, nor can see; to whom honour and might everlasting." *"Amen"*: This word is from the Hebrew which is the basis for the words like "faith," "verity," and "truth." In the Greek it means "firm," "unfailing," "surely" and "So be it!"

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today we want to study about the great authority that God has given our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. We have first the prophecy in Psalm 110:1-2 of God's command to Christ to take up the position of power at His right hand and to hold that position until He would put all in subjection under Him at the last day of judgment. This scripture is quoted in several different places by the New Testament writers, once by Jesus Himself in Matt. 22:44. Peter quoted it at the conclusion of his message on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:34-35. It is also quoted in Heb. 1:13. Paul alludes to this in our lesson in I Cor. 15:25.

We have the words of Christ in John 5:25-29 that reveal His power and authority to raise the dead, both spiritually and physically. The spiritual dead are those separated from the life of God because of sin and disobedience. Such who hear and obey the gospel of Christ can be quickened and made alive in God to walk in newness of the Spirit of God. And then Jesus will execute His power and authority in the final day of judgment by raising all those who are dead and in the graves back to life and awareness again. Such will be the setting of the final day of judgment.

Paul in I Cor. 15:24-27 speaks of that great day when all power and authority will be put down and Christ will give back to God the power that was invested in Him that God will be all in

all. Christ is reigning now, but His reign is principally for the sake of all that will choose to follow Him in holiness and truth. He allows the world to go right on with its pride and vanity for the present, but in that day, the day of final judgment, He will show, as our text in I Tim. 6:15-16 says, His great power as the sole reigning Monarch with the final word to say about every one of us.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did God Almighty say to Christ our Lord?
2. How can Christ reign while the world goes on in its wickedness?
3. What is the first resurrection that every soul needs to experience?
4. What will Christ have the power to do when He comes again?
5. How can we be sure that we will be on the Lord's side in that day?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Jesus Christ is reigning on His throne of grace today! Sin had reigned unto death over the souls of men, but "...much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17.

When Jesus "ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8. On that wonderful day, forty days after His glorious resurrection from the tomb, Jesus rose up from the ground in view of His disciples and disappeared into the clouds. He passed from human sight to sit at His Father's right hand. There, as our great High Priest, He intercedes for all who come unto God by Him. From His position of power and authority He is able to save to the uttermost all who will believe and obey Him. He can quicken the poor lost soul from the ways of sin and transgression and help him to walk in the way of life and peace. From His seat of authority He sends the Holy Spirit to fill the hearts of His children. Through the Holy Spirit and with Christ as our intercessor we have access to the comfort and blessings of our heavenly Father, the Lord God Almighty.

How wonderful this all is! But the best is yet to come. Some day He will come in power and glory to destroy this world and bring all that have ever lived in this world to face His eternal

judgment. For the saved in Him; He will give them a place in the new heavens and new earth. But for those who disregard His gospel, it will mean everlasting destruction. It will pay every one of us to take heed to Christ's authority and surrender all to do His perfect will.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Jesus met a centurion who greatly amazed Him because this man recognized the position of authority that Christ had. The centurion likened Jesus to himself, as one set under authority (sent from God His Father) and having authority (over sickness, devils and death). Do we recognize the authority of Christ?

To foreshadow this position of Christ as the authority, God instituted marriage, and put the man, who is himself to answer to Christ's authority, over his wife, as leader, protector and head. She is to reverence his authority in all things. Her attitude to him, as taught in example by Sarah, is to be one of submission, as unto a "lord." She is to be obedient to him—as the church is to Christ. To live in rebellion to her husband is to live in rebellion to God's order and plan.

How was it that Christ was highly exalted to His position of authority? He gave up his life. A man demands the respect and obedience of his wife by being her "saviour," giving up his selfish interests for her sake, as Christ "loved the church, and gave himself for it." He is to honor her, knowing that she is the weaker vessel.

The Christian family is to show to the entire world the relationship that Christ has with His church. Do I portray this in my home?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**FEBRUARY 16, 2003**

### **JESUS CHRIST, THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

Isaiah 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Hebrews 13:20 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 wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**MEMORY VERSE:** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. John 10:27-28

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ is the loving, all wise, and all powerful Protector and Shepherd of all who follow and put their trust in Him. He paid the price and gave His life for our salvation, and if we will continue to follow Him, He will preserve us from all evil, and give us an abundant entrance into His everlasting kingdom.



## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isa. 40:11), "*shepherd*": One who tends a flock; feeds, provides it pasture, rules, guards, guides, protects and associates with as a Friend.

(John 10:7), "*door*": opening to an enclosure, entrance, means of passage and access.

(John 10:9), "*go in and out*": To enter into and then issue out and spread abroad, partaking of the pasture and its fulness. "*find*": To discover, behold, obtain and partake of.

(John 10:10), "*abundantly*": The Greek meaning is super-abundant in quantity, and superior in quality. It is the same word for "exceeding abundantly above" in Eph. 3:20.

(John 10:11, 14), "*good*": The Greek meaning is: "Beautiful; good, valuable and virtuous for appearance and use": also profitable, effective and beneficial.

(Psa. 23:1), "*want*": lack.

(Psa. 23:2), "*still waters*": waters of rest, repose, peace, quietness and consolation to the heart and mind.

(Psa. 23:3), "*restoreth*": To be turned back and returned to where one drifted from. It is the same word as "converting" in Psa. 19:7. That is, to be redeemed, saved and ransomed from death. Also, to be revived, refreshed, and to be reformed and reshaped into the image of God that was taken from the soul by sin and evil. "*for his name's sake*": On account of, for the purpose and good will of, that His name would be honored and sacred in the eyes of others, revered and respected.

(Psa. 23:4), "*the valley of the shadow of death*": This is the description of our mortal state. We are all under the sentence of death. Death will come to every one. We live constantly with the threat and danger of death all around us. But because of our Shepherd, Jesus, we are not afraid and have confidence that He will shield us and when it does come our time to die, we have hope of being resurrected with Him to eternal life. "*thy rod and thy staff*": The rod and staff that Jesus wields for the good of our souls is His Word and His Spirit. We find comfort and overcoming strength therein.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Oh, the blessing of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ being a tender loving Shepherd to us! It is a wonderful experience for

the soul to have far beyond any relationship with any one else. It was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah and also by Ezekiel 34:23 where the Lord God said, "...I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them...." He spoke in that same chapter of false shepherds who scattered the flock.

We have Christ's own words concerning Him being our Shepherd in John 10. He had spoken of how He had entered by the door, being opened by the porter (the doorkeeper). Jesus came by entrance of the prophecies that went before concerning Him. He fulfilled them through the Holy Spirit that inspired them. This opened up the door to our hearts, winning our confidence and trust. We hear His voice and we know He is the true Christ, our Saviour.

Then, in turn, He becomes the door for us to enter into the favor of God and be saved. We enter in and go forth into His spacious and wonderful pasture. He is a good Shepherd because He laid down His life for us. He knows us and we know Him. He is our Friend and Lover of our souls.

The 23rd Psalm covers the various aspects of our relationship with Jesus as our Shepherd. We can experience these blessings in our walk with Him. This can be more than just a beautiful Psalm, it can be a reality in our lives.

Our text in Hebrews 13:20-21 comes at the close of a wonderful treatise on Jesus Christ and all He accomplished in His life, death and resurrection. He is called here that great Shepherd of the sheep and God promises through Him to accomplish in us the full extent of His matchless grace and salvation. Oh, may the Spirit of our Shepherd work in our souls these glorious blessings while we are in these mortal bodies, and count us worthy to be in His likeness in immortality!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of food does Jesus our Shepherd have to give us?
2. What door did Jesus enter through to get to us His sheep?
3. How can we know our Shepherd's voice?
4. What are the various blessings mentioned in Psalm 23?
5. What has God promised to do through this great Shepherd?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Our Lord Jesus fulfills every attribute of a good Shepherd. He brought us food from Heaven for our souls, food that endures

unto eternal life. He laid down His life to pay for our redemption and deliverance from sin and its consequences. He thus rescued us from being lost forever. He protects and guards us from the harm, injury and death that the devil would like to have come our way. He gives us His Holy Spirit to inspire and reveal His Word to our hearts, and helps to guide the steps of our feet lest we walk in the ways of destruction. He leads us in the paths of righteousness for our happiness and for the sake of His wonderful name and influence.

We are in the valley of the shadow of death. From the cradle to the grave we walk in this shadow. But we are not afraid, and we are not afraid to die. For us to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Phil. 1:21.) We have been delivered from the bondage of the fear of death. (Heb. 2:15.) He feeds us from His life giving Word and Spirit, oftentimes right in the face of the temptations and battles that satan seeks to throw at us. We can have the victory every time. We need never suffer defeat.

He anoints us with the richness and sweetness of His Holy Spirit. We are overwhelmed as we experience His rewards for what we suffer for His sake. Though unseen, yet He is always there, helping and giving us power and grace to triumph and be victorious.

We have a bright future with our Shepherd. Goodness and mercy is going to follow us all the way and we will be with Him in eternity. Oh, how sweet it will be with Him and all of the holy and pure of all ages who have partaken of His salvation! Let us cleave to Him with purpose of heart and never cast away our confidence in Him!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Psalm 100:3. What a comforting scripture this is. We have all been like that naughty little sheep that wandered away from the fold only to find ourselves lost in the mountains. But our dear Saviour was willing to leave the safety of the fold to come looking for that little lost lamb.

How we rejoiced to hear His kind and loving voice in response to our desperate cries. What a comfort it was for us when we heard His footsteps coming. How wonderful it was to feel His

strong arms of mercy reaching toward us in love; rescuing us from the dangerous pit we were in.

"I was a captive, but mercy released me,  
I was in darkness, but now I can see,  
Over the mountains, where lonely I wondered,  
Jesus, my Saviour, came looking for me!

Filled with the fullness of perfect salvation,  
Washed in the blood that was shed on the tree,  
This my rejoicing through ages eternal,  
Jesus, my Saviour, came looking for me!"

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



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**FEBRUARY 23, 2003**

### **JESUS THE LORD OF THE SABBATH**

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 12:1 At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat,

Luke 6:1 ...Rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

Matthew 12:2 But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the

shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

Mark 2:27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

Hebrews 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest,..."

**MEMORY VERSE:** Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Col. 2:16-17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ, as the Lord of the Sabbath, has changed it from a one day a week Saturday observance, and has fulfilled it as being a spiritual rest, a Sabbath of the soul, in which we believe the Word and promises of God and cease from unbelief, fear and despair through faith in Christ and taking His yoke upon us.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Matt. 11:28), "*rest*": This word in the Greek means repose and ceasing from labour, and has the same base as the word "rest" in Heb. 4:1.

(Matt. 11:29), "*my yoke*": The joining of Christ's Spirit and service with our hearts and lives.

(Matt. 12:5), "*profane the sabbath*": This means to desecrate or violate the sacred order of the Sabbath. By the priests doing their work by slaying and offering up sacrifices and doing their services in the temple, they violated the Sabbath law that forbade any kind of work on the Sabbath.

(Matt. 12:7), *"guiltless"*: innocent. The priests broke the law of the Sabbath but were not charged with sin or transgression.

(Matt. 12:8), *"Lord even of the sabbath"*: This means that Christ had the authority to change, fulfill and make complete the law of the Sabbath day by making it a spiritual rest of the soul instead of a literal day. This He did as with all other aspects of the Old Testament law. The circumcision of the flesh is fulfilled as the circumcision of the heart. The animal sacrificial system is fulfilled by Christ and the offering of Himself as one sacrifice for sins forever. Even so the literal Sabbath of desisting from work on the seventh day is fulfilled in a spiritual rest of ceasing from our own works of self and the fleshly pursuits of life in order to be led by the Holy Spirit to allow the work of God to be done in us.

(Mark 2:27), *"Sabbath was made for man"*: The Sabbath was instituted with the good and welfare of man in mind. *"not man for the Sabbath"*: The Sabbath law is not what we are bound to satisfy. If Christ brings fulfillment and perfects the Sabbath rest to be a spiritual one, that is all so much for the better and we should not mourn to see the literal Sabbath come to an end.

(Heb. 4:1), *"fear"*: To be alarmed or in awe. If it was a serious thing to neglect to keep the Sabbath under the law, how much more serious and a fearful thing it is to violate the spiritual Sabbath and fail to enter into the rest that God wants us to experience in Christ.

(Heb. 4:3), The Greek text reads: "For we, those believing, enter into the rest." The word "believe" is a key word in the New Testament, far more serious and full of meaning than so many realize. There are several words that are associated with this vital expression. They are: confidence, credence (giving due credit to), persuasion, conviction, trust, reliance and truth.

(Col. 2:17), *"body"*: The substance. The Mosaic Sabbath was a shadow, and the spiritual rest of faith that Christ instituted is the substance that causes the shadow.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our study today is about Jesus being Lord of the Jewish Sabbath and how He dealt with it and fulfilled it into a spiritual rest for the soul. We have the account of the criticism He drew from the Jews when they saw how He allowed His disciples to gather corn on the Sabbath day. In the following scene in

**Matthew 12:11** Jesus asked the Jews if they would not lay hold on a sheep that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day and lift it out.

Jesus mentioned the two instances in the Old Testament that clearly shows how the law can be misapplied and abused. David and his men were very hungry, driven out from their homes by the wrath of King Saul. The high priest allowed them to have some of the shewbread that had been taken from the tabernacle when fresh bread was put out. No one was permitted to eat that bread but the priests. But because these men were hungry and needy of nourishment, the high priest permitted them to have it. (1 Sam. 21:6.) Then Jesus also mentioned about the priests doing their work on the Sabbath day in the temple and being innocent. He states these things to show that the law of the Sabbath was not sufficient to satisfy the need of man in every case.

When Jesus said that He, the Son of man, was Lord also of the Sabbath He made it clear that He was making a change for the better. He declared that the Sabbath was made for the benefit of man and the literal Sabbath was not the true end or purpose of the commandment of God.

From Hebrews 3 and 4 we gather the truth that there is a rest that God wants us to enter into. In Israel's time the rest God willed for them was the Canaan land rest. Because of their unbelief they drew back from going over and taking the land of God's rest for them. In His anger God swore that He would never allow them to enter His rest, and turned them right around and sent them back to wander in the wilderness until they perished.

He emphasizes that the spiritual rest of believing and obeying Christ is a far more serious and important rest to enter into than the literal day of rest enjoined under the law. All of that was a shadow, but Christ came to bring to us the true rest of ceasing from our own works and letting God's works be accomplished in us.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. For what purpose was the Sabbath day instituted?
2. Why did Christ allow His disciples to break the Sabbath?
3. What two incidents did Christ refer to in the Old Testament?
4. What did Christ do with the literal seventh day Sabbath?
5. What kind of rest are we to enter into now in the New Testament?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The true Sabbath rest that God wants us to enter into now is one that we must keep every day. It is a ceasing from the works of self-gratification and the fleshly mind to be able to perform and function as spiritual godly people should in obeying the will of God according to His Word and Holy Spirit. We cease from unbelief, doubts and fears and take God at His word. We cease from selfish indulgence in the appetites of the flesh and the material things of life and we seek to please the Lord and live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us. (Gal. 2:20.) We crucify the inclinations and attractions of the natural man and seek to be led by the Spirit in all we say and do. We cease from our own pleasure and our own words, and seek to let the Lord have His good pleasure fulfilled in us. Oh, it means so much for us to enter into the rest that God has called us to! How sad that so many are ignorant of the true rest, feeling content with just a one day a week laying aside literal work! They do not know the sweet soul rest and happiness that they are missing. May the Lord give us understanding of this sweet rest of the soul that we do not miss the blessing and happiness that it truly brings. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Christ made mention that the Sabbath was made for man. God in the beginning created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. God recognized that man needed a day of rest. As a young boy, I remember Sunday, traditionally, being a time that businesses were closed. It was a time to set aside our busy schedules, give the Lord some time, to worship, reflect and rest. Now it seems that the traditional Sunday has become almost as ordinary as any other day. Businesses are open, some 24 hours a day, and everyone seems to be on the go. Although the Sabbath was a shadow of the spiritual rest we have in Christ and we are not bound to a ceremonial observance, we would do well to recognize that we need rest. How many health problems could be helped simply by allowing the body to obtain its needed rest? In Mark 6:31 Jesus instructed the disciples to "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while."

We like Martha can be troubled in our heart about many



things. We can get burdened down, overtaxed, heavy laden with the cares, responsibilities, burdens, etc. Have you ever felt yourself weakening and sinking under life's everyday load? What a blessing it is to come to the Lord and commit ourselves, our life, our burdens, all the unknowns, into His hands. Sometimes we struggle trying to do this or that, trying to figure this out and we forget that He is there all the time wanting to help us. One song says, "I've ceased from all my struggling, tis no longer I but he..." Let us remember that there remaineth a rest for the people of God.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**MARCH 2, 2003**

### **JESUS CHRIST, THE GREAT PHYSICIAN**

Matthew 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

Matthew 8:14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him 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.

Matthew 9:10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, *they* said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what *that meaneth*, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

James 5:13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. Acts 10:38.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God brought, through His Son, Jesus Christ, healing for the soul from the disease of sin and healing for the physical body from sickness and disease. Healing for the soul and the body was in Christ's atonement and was purchased for us in His suffering and death on Calvary. Healing is still available in Christ today and He is pleased when we seek Him and put our trust in Him for healing.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Matt. 4:24), "*lunatick*": an insane or mentally unsound person.

(Matt. 8:17), "*infirmities*": feebleness or frailty of mind or body, any condition that is not healthy or normal.

(Matt. 9:10), "*publican*": a collector of taxes and public revenue.

(Matt. 9:13), "*I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*": Jesus quoted this saying from Hosea 6:6 here and also in Matt. 12:7. Both times He spoke it to the Pharisees who were finding fault

with Him. Here it was concerning Him eating with publicans and sinners, and the other time it was concerning the disciples plucking off ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath day. Both of these incidents show the error of the Pharisees. While holding to the letter of the law they strayed from the mercy and forbearance of the Almighty. It shows that God esteems acts of mercy and benevolence as of greater importance than carnal ordinances such as being separate from sinners and keeping the literal Sabbath and not doing any kind of work on that day. God desires that we know His infinite mercy over all and the provision of redemption through the blood of His Son rather than through the animal sacrifices.

(James 5:13), "*afflicted*": undergoing any hardship or trouble whether physical or otherwise.

(James 5:16), "*confess*": This means to acknowledge and fully own up to. "*faults*": These can be errors, failures, trespasses, deviations, or offences. The final part of this verse in the Greek says, "The effective petition of one righteous is much strong."

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The scriptures we have selected for our lesson today help to bring out the truth that God gave Jesus Christ the power to heal all manner of sickness and disease, which He did extensively while here on earth and He still has that same power today. We may yet trust and look to Him in time of sickness and affliction for healing for soul and body. Besides the incidents of miraculous healing that we have on record in the Bible that Jesus did, we have also, in our day, a great cloud of witnesses of divine, of physical and spiritual healing administered to those who sought the Lord for His wonderful help.

The text from Matthew declared that Jesus did heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. Jesus also sought to heal the soul from the disease of sin and transgression. It is certain that He accounted the healing of the inner man much more important than the healing of the body. That is why He held friendly association with publicans and sinners, eating with them and conversing with them. In Matthew 8:17 we have the reference to Isaiah 53:4, which says, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." The writer

expressly implies that what Jesus suffered in His mortal flesh was atonement for physical infirmities as well as spiritual needs.

We see in Hebrews 13:8 and James 5:13-16 that Christ still is in the healing business in our day. We can go to the Lord in prayer, call the elders of the church to be anointed and prayed over, and trust the Lord for our healing. He says nothing about calling for the doctor or seeking help from the arm of flesh. Let us not forget the requirement of confessing our faults and praying one for another that we might be healed. Jesus still has power to heal sickness and disease, and He is still doing it. Let us be encouraged to look earnestly to Him and exercise faith in His blessed promises.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why can we call Jesus Christ "The Great Physician?"
2. What kind of healing is the most important for us to receive?
3. How can we know that Jesus can and will heal us in our day?
4. What are the various things we must do to be healed?
5. Why is trusting the Lord for healing such an important matter?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We have many religious people who are persuaded that the days of healing and miracles are passed, and that we must look to doctors and medicine today for healing. People believe that we must do all in the power of medical science that can be done, and only then can we look to God for His miraculous healing. So we have a conglomeration of ideas and beliefs to deal with in our mixed up and confused world.

Psalms 118:8 declares that "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Jeremiah 17:5 says, "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Then in verse 7 it says, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." These and other scriptures from the Old Testament help to support the truth that it is wise and better to trust in the Lord for physical healing. Now if one can prove by the Scriptures that healing was not in the atonement, or that healing and miracles were to pass away after the time of Christ and His

apostles, then we would have just reason for abandoning the persuasion of trusting in the Lord for the healing of the body. But the scriptures do not teach such things, and we have the plain truth from the scriptures in our lesson that Jesus can heal and does heal today as He did of old.

Healing for the body is in the atonement of the New Testament plan of salvation and it really ought not to be something we feel we just have to carry out, but rather it is a blessed blood-bought privilege that we have in our blessed Saviour to trust in Him for the healing of our bodies. Many of God's saints have died trusting in Him, but is that not what we really are living for? Let us not be afraid to step out on His promises and trust Him for our healing all the way, whether we live or whether we die. We will be persecuted and criticized, but in the Lord's sight we are precious and He will never leave us nor forsake us.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

You do not have to read very many chapters in the life of Jesus before you are made to realize that He was filled with the power of God and that sickness and dreaded diseases had to flee at His command. It did not matter whether the affliction had plagued a person from their birth or whether it was a life threatening disease that had a death grip on its victim. These miracles are very real and enjoyable to read about, but there may be questions that arise in your mind. Does Jesus still have the same power today to heal like He did when He was on earth?

Yes, In Hebrews 13:8 the writer clearly states that, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." His power to heal has not changed and even though the miracles that Jesus wrought did help establish His church, they did not end with the apostles in the early morning time. We are still living in the gospel day and James 5: 14 instructs how to exercise our faith in seeking for the healing that we need.

Jesus is concerned about the total man. Healing of the body is only part of the needs the total man has. Healing of the mind, healing of the spirit and healing of the soul are all important concerns that Christ has for man. Many times people are greatly distressed when they have a physical disease but their soul and spirit is corrupted with sin and they do not have the same level of distress. Actually we should have the greatest concern for the

healing of the soul, spirit and mind. The soul and spirit of man is eternal, the physical body is going to break down with age and go back to dust, therefore you could understand why the Lord might allow afflictions of the body to linger to help refine the eternal soul. III John 2 says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." So let our faith be inspired to reach out for all the blessings of healing and victory that our Great Physician has won for us.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**MARCH 9, 2003**

**WHAT JESUS, THE MASTER TEACHER, TAUGHT:**

**LOVE FOR GOD:** Mark 12:30-31 Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

**LOVE FOR ALL MEN:** Matthew 5:44-45 Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

**FORGIVENESS:** Matthew 18:21-22 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Matthew 6:14-15 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**EVIL OF COVETOUSNESS:** Luke 12:15, 33-34 Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**THE DEFILEMENT OF THE HEART OF MAN:** Mark 7:20-23 That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For

from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER:** Matthew 6:6 Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Luke 18:1 ...Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

**MEMORY VERSE:** He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. John 12:48.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** In His teachings, the Master got right to the real basis of man's problem and offers the only real solution. If we will be willing to follow His counsel, it will lead us to victory and salvation and we will be able to stand before Him in that final day of judgment.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Mark 10:30-31), "*with all*": The Greek says, "from the whole," which means the complete and fulness with nothing held or kept back. "*heart*": The center of one's being; the source of emotions, personality attributes, conscience, dispositions, attitudes, feelings, affections, desires, devotions, sympathies, admirations, objectives and intentions. "*soul*": one's life, being and awareness. "*mind*": one's thoughts, imaginations, ideas, etc. "*strength*": force, energy, ability, power and might.

(Matt. 6:14-15), "*forgive*": The Greek meaning is "to send forth, or let it go." To forgive is to not hold on to resentment, hurt feelings, anger, displeasure or revenge, but rather to let it go from you and never pick it up again. "*trespasses*": errors, offences, transgressions and any thing else that brings displeasure.

(Luke 12:15, 33), "*covetousness*": greedy and selfish desires for wealth or gain. "*alms*": These are acts of mercy and compassion toward the poor and less fortunate. "*bags*": This refers to a place where one deposits or keeps in safety his goods. There is no real safe place where one can keep his wealth in this world, but

what we commit to God's care, though we may be deprived of it here, will be kept and remembered to our benefit in our eternal home with Christ.

(Mark 7:20, 23), "*lasciviousness*": lustful desires; uncontrolled passions. "*evil eye*": To look on or toward others with desire to hurt or injure. "*blasphemy*": To slander, revile, defame or speak evil against. "*pride*": haughtiness; the lifting up of one's self above that which is pleasing and acceptable with God. "*foolishness*": lighthearted, senseless, reckless and unwise behaviour and thought.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today covers several areas on what Jesus, our beloved Lord and Master, taught in His ministry to us. When we survey the gracious teaching and counsel that we have on record that fell from His blessed lips, we are overwhelmed with a deep sense of admiration and wonder. His doctrine was truly not from carnal and worldly man's viewpoint and speculation. It was from above, given to our Saviour from His Father above. Oh, how we need to remember the things that He taught and sincerely follow them to the fullest! If we will diligently obey His Word, we will be, as He once said, like a man who built his house on the solid rock, which will endure the storms and winds of adversity and trouble and prove to be a house that we will inhabit for all eternity.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is it possible for us to fail to love God with our whole being?
2. Why is it best and wise to love and forgive rather than take vengeance?
3. How often would a trespass occur if committed 490 times (70 times 7) in 24 hours?
4. What harm do we inflict upon ourselves by being greedy, stingy, and covetous?
5. Where did Jesus say that our real source of defilement is found?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

What keeps a man from loving God completely with his whole heart, soul, mind and strength? One of the main reasons is that



there are so many other things that man allows his affections to go out after, This brings about a divided condition in the heart. He is drawn toward God but is also attracted to material things of self and earth. I remember hearing Bro. Ostis Wilson preaching on clean straight decisions, he mentioned what he called the duplicity in man's heart. This meant the divided affections that plague men's being. He told about reading about a dog that was part dachshund and part beagle. The combination of these two different breeds of dog produced a most frustrated and miserable creature. The dachshund is a home-loving house dog while the beagle is a hunter and loves to roam around. The account said that the beagle part of the dog would motivate it to get out of the house and out to the front sidewalk ready to go out to wide open spaces. Then the dachshund nature would rise up and assert itself and draw it back to the house. The poor frustrated creature would go back and forth for hours, whining in a most piteous manner. Bro. Wilson likened this to many people. They have a love for God but they have allowed their affections to go out to other things also. This makes for a wretched and unhappy life. Our Lord Jesus knew what was hindering us from real fellowship and peace with God. He is calling for clean and straight, total and irrevocable decisions on our part. We must renounce all of self and the flesh and the world, and give ourselves wholly to love and obey God. Only then can we have success and a happy, satisfying life.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

An optometrist once described to me the condition of one of my eyes. He said that the eye was not single. Without correction, strain would be put on the other eye, as it would constantly try to compensate for the duplicity.

"Oh sir," I said, "Did you ever read what Jesus taught us about the single eye? He was referring to the spiritual eye of a man, the heart."

The heart is mentioned several times in our lesson. What a sordid picture is presented of the unregenerate, unsanctified human heart! Is this potential of evil in every human being? Yes, and unless we receive the "double cure," that is, the forgiveness of committed sins, and the purifying of the sinful nature, we will

see these things coming out of our lives. "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." (James 4:8.) "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:8.) "And God...bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost...purifying their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:8-9.) David said, "Unite my heart to fear thy name." (Psa. 86:11.)

How can we do this? "...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God...be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Rom. 12:1-2.) The Holy Spirit, like a refiner's fire, does the purifying and the renewing. There is a definite, initial cleansing, and as we continually remain on the altar, we find that He continually purifies and renews our minds, actions, ways and thoughts. Have you been "renewed" by the Holy Ghost?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**MARCH 16, 2003**

### **CHRIST'S PARABLE ON STEWARDSHIP**

Luke 19:12 A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is thy pound*, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou wicked servant*. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

Matthew 25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Matthew 25:29.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The grace of God and the wealth that has been bestowed upon us in Christ is a sacred trust for which we must give an account to Him of how we have done business with it in sharing it with the souls of men.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Luke 19:13), "*pound*": This was a certain measurement of money called in the Hebrew "*mina*." Adam Clarke calculated that the mina would be worth about 9 "*pounds*" in English currency. Using the current value of the English pound as being worth about \$1.56, we could evaluate the "*pound*" in our lesson to be equal to about \$14.04. "*Occupy*": The Greek meaning here is: "*Busy yourself with,*" or, in other words, "*Do business with, put it to work by buying, selling and trading.*" In the spiritual thought this means to share it with others, ministering it and setting it forth for the benefit of the souls of men.

(Luke 19:15), *"trading"*: thoroughly occupying one's self with.

(Luke 19:17), *"faithful"*: trustworthy; which includes being dependable, dutiful, true, and attentive.

(Luke 19:20), *"napkin"*: A handkerchief or cloth used to wipe sweat from the face. Better off this servant would have been to have energized himself to dutiful labor and the sweat of his brow and to use this cloth for its rightful purpose instead of using it as he did.

(Luke 19:21), *austere*: rough, severe, exacting.

(Luke 19:23), *"bank"*: the exchangers or those who handle and do business with money. *"usuary"*: interest.

(Matt. 25:29), *"hath"*: To hold and possess; also to ably and faithfully use. "Hath." Hath what? Here are some of the things that we must have if we hope to receive and have abundance: Faith, patience, humility, willing and ready mind, understanding, reverence and godly fear, vision, spiritual life, courage, determination, decision and many other things. What else can you think of that we must have to be good faithful stewards of the grace of God?

(Matt. 25:30), *"gnashing of teeth"*: The grating of the teeth in anguish, rage or pain.

(I Pet. 4:10), *"steward"*: A house-distributor, manager, overseer; one who handles and is responsible for the use of another's wealth.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have recorded in the blessed account of the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ two renditions of the man who entrusted his goods to his servants while he went into a far country. Both point to the same lesson but are brought out in a somewhat different manner. In our lesson today we have the one in Luke 19 but have included two verses from the one in Matthew 25.

The main subject of our lesson is stewardship and the dire importance of being faithful as a steward. The word "stewardship" is from the Greek word "oikonomea" from which comes our English word "economy." Webster defines economy as "the management of the income, expenditures, etc. of a household, private business, community or government; careful management of wealth, resources, etc.; avoidance of waste by careful

**planning and use; thrift or thrifty use."** It is one of the most serious and important words in the Holy Scriptures and in mortal tongue for that matter.

We are stewards from birth. God has given us life and our being, a mind to educate and train, a body to control and care for, and an eternity bound soul to save and be faithful with. He has planned that we have responsibilities to bear, work to perform and places of importance to fill. This is in our natural and physical life and, more important, in our spiritual life before God. Paul well put it, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." A keen and observant eye reveals life to be full of responsibility and stewardship.

In I Corinthians 9:17 Paul expressed it like this: "A dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." The word "dispensation" is from the same word as "stewardship." This is the same word as is spoken of in Eph. 1:10 of the "dispensation of the fulness of times."

In our lesson we have the account of the man of high rank and nobility entrusting his goods to the care and management of his servants. He charged them to do business with his money while he was away. When he came back to reckon with his servants, he was pleased to find that some had been dutiful and faithful to trade with his money, and had come up with an increase in revenue. But he found that one had not done so, but had laid it up in a napkin. He was also angry and distraught with that particular servant accusing him of being austere and over-exacting.

The outcome was that the slothful servant was punished severely while the faithful ones were richly rewarded. And the Lord made this statement that we today should take seriously to heart and seek to really know what it means for us. "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." This is by no means the first time our Saviour made this statement. In Matt. 13:12, Mark 4:25 and Luke 8:18 He said this in connection with His parable about the sower and the seed. Every one should be concerned with what this implies to us, and pray earnestly for grace to be the faithful steward that God is pleased with.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How did the nobleman discover how responsible his servants were?
2. How important is it to be faithful in the little things of life?
3. Can you image how the slothful servant had spent his time?
4. What are some of the areas of life that call for responsible duty?
5. How can we faithfully "do business" in the manifold grace of God?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Our life on earth is attended with responsibility. It is part of parenthood to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of God and teach them faithfulness in being responsible. We need to be aware of the things we must HAVE, and the sad result of not having them. I felt the seriousness of this thought when I checked on my tape recorder after service one day and found that, not only had I failed to get the service recorded, but that all I had on the tape was erased and gone too. What was the problem? Simple. I had failed to plug the microphone in. And so it is with life. If we do not have the right connections and receive the counsels that will instruct us to be responsible and faithful stewards, we will not receive what God has for us and we will lose everything we had to start with. Think of the awful doom that will be ours at the end of this life because we have failed to do business with what God has so graciously provided for us. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

This parable contains so many spiritual parallels. Our attention is drawn to the unprofitable servant who hid his pound in a napkin. Various reasons or excuses could have caused his lack of motivation.

Maybe this servant had a lack of vision or a fear of failure. Many neglect their soul because they have a fear of failure and have no vision of what the grace of God can do for them.

Perhaps he thought this amount was too little or insignificant to worry with. Thousands of souls put little or no emphasis on their spiritual well being. It is just not a priority in their lives.

Maybe this servant had a bad habit of putting off responsibilities. Procrastination is the reason many souls are lost. They reason themselves into believing they will take care of their soul when they get old. What a dangerous risk.

Perhaps the slothful servant was just too busy to take care of this particular matter. "Time for business, time for pleasure, time to revel on in sin..."

Maybe this servant had convinced himself that his lord would be merciful and not require much of him. This is also an excuse we hear commonly. "The Lord is too kind and merciful to send me to hell."

Whatever the reasons were, this servant did face a day of reckoning. Someday we will all face this day. How careful we must be in our salvation experience. The slothful servant did not escape the punishment for his neglect. We, too, will suffer the consequences if we do not take care of our soul business.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!"  
Hebrews 2:3.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**MARCH 23, 2003**

### **CHRIST'S TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE**

Matthew 5: 27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Matthew 19:4 ...Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

8 Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

I Corinthians 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. Luke 16:18.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus points us to the original plan of God for the wedded union of husband and wife. Since God joined them together into one flesh they are to remain that way as long as they both shall live. Under the law of Moses, He permitted men to be allowed to put away their wives, but this was because of their sinfulness and hardness of heart, and was not part of God's original plan, and there comes a time when a man must sacrifice marriage for the sake of his acceptance in the kingdom of God. This is when such a marriage would be adultery, when either or both have a living companion and not everyone is willing to make that kind of sacrifice.



## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Matt. 5:27), "*adultery*": Sexual relations between a married man and a woman who is not his lawful wife, or such between a married woman and a man who is not her lawful husband.

(Matt. 5:31), "*divorce*": a complete disunion or separation.

(Matt. 5:32), "*fornication*": willful sexual relations between unmarried people, including adultery. "*saving for the cause of fornication*": The Greek expression is, "apart from a matter of fornication." This is practically the same expression as what is said in Matt. 19:9, "*except it be for fornication*": which the Greek puts it, "if not for fornication." Here is where so many are inclined to make an allowance for marrying the second time, for they say that their former husband or wife have committed fornication, and for that cause they are free to marry. But really, are we sure that this is what our Saviour is meaning here? Would He excuse one sin because of the influence of another? Would He excuse murder in this way, or thievery, or any other sinful practice? Would it not be more in accord with the holiness of our Lord to say that He was separating the sin of fornication between unmarried men and women from the sin of adultery between people already married? We had better do some serious and prayerful study before we assume such a stand that allows us to enter an adulterous marriage on such grounds.

(Matt. 19:6), "*put asunder*": separate.

(Matt. 19:8), "*hardness of your hearts*": hardheartedness, denoting a condition of being destitute of spiritual perception.

(Matt. 19:10), The Greek text renders this: His disciples said to Him, "If thus is the case (or matter or cause) of the man with the wife (the one he is considering to marry), it is not gain (wise, of good judgment, proper, expedient, acceptable) to marry." The substance of this statement is: If the woman a man considers to be the one he wants to marry has been married before and she is separated or divorced from her first husband, it is not good, nor wise, nor pleasing to God for him to marry her. And we know that Jesus agreed with this statement because of what He immediately said next.

(Matt. 19:11), "*All cannot receive this saying*": The Greek says, "Not all make room for this word." "*save to whom it is given*": Except to those who are willing to obey the command of God and deny themselves of the marriage relation with regard to keeping from sinning against Him in an adulterous relationship.

(Matt. 19:12), "*eunuchs*": Our Lord is speaking of three different kinds of what is termed here as eunuchs. 1. Those who are so born from birth. 2. Those who are made eunuchs of men, that is, by surgery or physical alteration. 3. Those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. There can be no mistake about what our Lord is speaking of here. He is speaking of those who deny themselves the pleasure and advantage of being physically joined in marriage because of their conviction to be clear and pure from being in adultery. And, as our Lord inferred, not all are willing to make this sacrifice of their fleshly lusts for the sake of spiritual values.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have gathered from the words of Jesus and a few statements from the apostle Paul a lesson about the seriousness of marriage and the great sin of adultery and double-marriage. Along with these we would refer to two other scriptures. Romans 7:2-3 says, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." And we read in Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Jesus was responding to the Pharisees concerning the putting away of a man's wife. His teachings are plain and worthy of our consideration. The lusts of the flesh are so prevalent that it is easy to condone actual sin and be unaware of it. May the Lord help us to take heed to our Saviour's warning.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How can adultery be committed even though no action is taken?
2. What was God's original plan concerning marriage?
3. What made hardheartedness the reason for granting a divorce?
4. What can one do to make certain a marriage will succeed?
5. Why is God so displeased for people to divorce and remarry?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

If we as mortals would be wise and put the Lord first in our lives over and above our fleshly appetites there would be much less divorce and double-marriage. The world has made a god out of sexual gratification. The tendency in our today's youth is to fulfill the lusts of the flesh rather than to seek to be led by the Spirit of God. It takes both husband and wife being saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit for a marriage to really work and be all that God planned for it to be. It is a gross sin for people to marry for lust and self and then break up and remarry.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The subject of marriage is one that should be taken very seriously. A scripture in Malachi gives insight to God's feeling towards it. Malachi 2:14-16, "...The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. ...Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away (divorce): for one covereth violence with his garment,...therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously." The Lord has helped me to recognize the importance of the husband's responsibility in the marriage. My wife, as the weaker vessel, has entrusted me with her life and happiness when she gave herself to me in marriage. She only has one life and life is brief. Paul in I Corinthians 7:33 says, "He that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife." Husbands have a responsibility to do what they can to please the wife. Love, kindness,

gentleness, consideration, help, patience and communication are qualities that will help us in pleasing our companions.

Some seem to get the idea that marriage maintains itself. After the marriage is over days, weeks, years they just expect the other one to be there. If we were as responsible after the marriage as we were before the marriage we would most likely have a good and happy union. The Lord intends for the home fires to burn bright between husband and wife. —Bro. Bob Wilson



**MARCH 30, 2003**

### **THE POOR RICH MAN AND RICH BEGGAR LAZARUS**

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

**MEMORY VERSE:** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. Matthew 25:46.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** This mortal life is but temporary. Whether it is spent in luxury and pleasure, or whether it is attended with poverty and suffering, it will soon be over. Then we must go where everyone will receive just retribution for the deeds done in his earthly body. There are but two places to be in eternity. Either we will be with the righteous in unending joy and happiness, or we will be in the flames of eternal shame and contempt.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Luke 16:19), The Greek text says, "And a certain man was rich, and customarily donned a purple robe and fine linen, having been merry day by day in luxury."

(Luke 16:20), "*beggar*": One who is poor, destitute, having no support or means. "*full of sores*": He was ulcerated with open sores that discharged pus and corruption.

(Luke 16:21), "*crumbs*": little bits or morsels of food.

(Luke 16:22), "*Abraham's bosom*": The embrace and soothing love of the father of the faithful. Here is Abraham and one of his children of the seed that was promised to Him by the Almighty God whom he faithfully trusted and obeyed. Because he proved that He loved God more than his mortal seed, (in that he offered up Isaac) he lives now to receive and embrace the souls of all who serve God faithfully into paradise and eternal comfort.

(Luke 16:23), "*hell*": The Greek word is "hades" which means the realm of the unseen, the place of disembodied spirits, which has two compartments, one being a place of comfort and love, and the other being a place of eternal torment.

(Luke 16:24), "*dip the tip*": He who once had the sumptuous fare is now desiring just a drop of water, while he who was content with the crumbs before has now the sumptuous fare. "*flame*": The Greek says "a blaze of fire."

(Luke 16:26), "*gulf fixed*": An impassable chasm set fast and

resolutely turned and confirmed, never to be altered or changed.

(Luke 16:30), "*repent*": To think differently; reconsider, feel regret and be sorry for.

(Luke 16:31), "*persuaded*": convinced to recognize the evidence and authority of God.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our Saviour's account of the rich man and Lazarus has definite connections and relates well with the rest of this 16th chapter of Luke. The opponents of the doctrine of a burning hell and place of torment have questioned this account as being out of place and not relating to the rest of the Saviour's discourse. But considering the truth of the parable Jesus set forth in the first part of this chapter, we are persuaded that it all does relate together. The first part of the chapter is the account (and in one sense it is a parable, for it holds a special meaning and application to other thoughts) of the unfaithful steward and what steps he took to insure a dwelling for himself when he was about to lose his position. He used the things that he yet had the control of to make friends who would take him in when he was cast out. This relates well with our lesson of "Stewardship." And Jesus gave us this counsel: "Make to yourselves friends of (The Greek says "by or with") the mammon of unrighteousness (money or material wealth); that, when ye fail (The Greek says "when it fails"), they may receive you into everlasting habitations." The meaning is very plain. We are to use the money and what wealth we are entrusted with to share with and to help the poor and needy and the cause of Christ, thereby making friends who will receive us into everlasting habitations at the end of our life. Just as Lazarus was picked up by the angels and received up into glory to live for ever, so we can have that same blessing at the end of our life if we will use what we have in a material way to bless others and the cause of Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the most evident downfall of the rich man?
2. What did the poor beggar desire from the rich man?
3. What was the rich man desiring in hell?
4. Why were the rich man's desires not granted?
5. Why was there no hope in a testimony of one risen from the dead?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

If there was anything that the Spirit and doctrine of Christ hit harder than covetousness and the love of money and carnal security I do not know what it could be. Very little is known about the moral life and character of the rich man except for his customary extravagance and daily merry making. There is a weakness in human character that falls prey to moral decay and apostasy in the midst of plenty and prosperity. "Give me not riches" is scarce the prayer of anyone these days. He may have been well thought of and extolled as a man of virtue by the eyes of the world around. I remember hearing Bro. Ostis Wilson preaching about three rich men: 1. The rich young ruler who turned away from Christ, 2. The rich man who decided to tear down his barns and build greater ones so that he could say to his soul, "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" and 3. The rich man who had his good times now and ended up in the flames of torment. In this message Bro. Wilson linked these three men up together as if they were the same man. Even in the old Testament we have warning after warning concerning wealth and its threat to our souls.

Let us consider the poor beggar, Lazarus, now. He was not asking for much at all. Just some of the crumbs from the floor would have been a real blessing to him. He had consolation from the dogs who came and licked his seeping ulcers. But he had something else that the rich man did not have. He had faith and hope in God. And when he died the Lord sent an envoy of holy angels to bear his pure and stainless spirit to the heavens. There awaited him the father of all the faithful, Abraham. His sufferings were ended. He could now enjoy the comfort and bliss of his eternal home in heaven.

The poor man in hell thought of his relations on earth. He, like them, had underestimated the value of Moses and the holy prophets, just like so many today. God has given us His Word through His holy prophets and apostles. Let us hear them. They are His faithful witnesses. If we will give them an ear and take heed to their message it will help to prepare us for that departure we will make from this life out into the great beyond.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is great change going on about us and within us. With the swing of the pendulum the clock registers the passage of time, night turns to day, summer turns to fall and winter. There is constant motion in the sun, the moon, the earth and the planets of our universe. The cars are changing. The size, style, composition and engineering of the cars change from year to year. The bright shiny automobile that once purred so smoothly, now has patches of rust and the engine smokes and misses. A few of you may even still remember what it was like before you had a car and the busy highways we now must cope with.

The political climate makes great change. Kingdoms rise and fall. Societies and cultures change. The financial markets are alive with change as they rise and fall. Wealth comes and goes. Things that we cherish and have worked a lifetime for can easily be swept away in a short space of time by tornadoes, earthquakes or hurricanes. Insurance is a big business, but it cannot stop the change from occurring. The scripture in James 4:14 is so real. "Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

The change that will be most dramatic and have a tremendous impact on us, is the transition that will take place when we close our mortal eyes in this life and lift our eyes in eternity. Adjustments that could have and should have been made in this life will forever be sealed by the decree of God.

We have in our hands the precious, limited commodity of time. Today we can have compassion on our fellowman, we can have a part in the cause of Christ, we can forgive, we can be forgiven, we can be pure, we can be patient. We even have the ability to invest earthly dollars into a heavenly bank reserve that dwarfs the rate of return being offered by the banks and savings institutions of this world and the dividend never quits paying. Act today! This opportunity expires soon! —Bro. Willie E. Murphey



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